



# Building Seattle Better

The City of Seattle is committed to equitable climate action for a more just and livable future.

For the health of people and our planet, Seattle must dramatically reduce the use of polluting fossil fuels in our buildings over the next decade. Mayor Durkan's 2018 Climate Action Strategy and 2020 Green New Deal Executive Order underscore the ways climate change is already impacting Seattle, especially Black, Indigenous, and people of color. From toxic air pollution to the impacts of extreme heat and flooding events, communities of color bear the brunt of climate impacts.

Here in Seattle, buildings are one the largest and fastest growing sources of Seattle's climate pollution, responsible for more than one-third of our city's greenhouse gas emissions. Over 90 percent of these emissions come from burning fossil fuels like fracked gas and oil for heat, hot water and cooking. And, we're consuming more and more energy as our city's population increases.

## Proven Strategies to Cut Emissions

We're committed to a clean energy future that's healthier for people and the environment, and supports an inclusive, local economy. We're working with communities to meet this goal.



### Energy Benchmarking

Owners of nonresidential and multifamily buildings that are 20,000 square feet or larger track annual energy performance, which can highlight inefficiencies and opportunities for energy, emissions and cost savings.



### Building Tune-Ups

Building owners implement low- or no-cost actions to improve their energy and water efficiency, resulting in 10 to 15 percent energy savings on average.



### Seattle Energy Code

This construction code ensures that commercial and large multifamily buildings are constructed to be efficient from the start. The proposed updates strengthen the code and transition buildings to cleaner electric energy that is healthier and safer for us all.



### State Energy Performance Standards

Washington State is implementing the first ever statewide Energy Performance Standards to improve the efficiency of existing large commercial buildings and encourage the use of renewable energy, with financial incentives for early action.



### Seattle Building Performance Standards

Building on the state standards and existing city actions, the City is exploring greenhouse gas emissions targets to help transition Seattle's large buildings to clean energy in phases, paired with equity-centered support and incentive programs.



## Better Buildings, Better Future



### Healthy Buildings, Healthy People

Americans, on average, spend about 90 percent of their time indoors. Indoor and outdoor air pollution from buildings worsens asthma and other respiratory health conditions, especially for children, the elderly, and communities of color. By using clean electricity to operate our buildings, we can reduce harmful indoor byproducts of fossil fuel combustion, such as carbon monoxide, while cutting climate emissions outdoors—resulting in cleaner air that supports people’s health.



### Creating Jobs and Boosting Our Local Economy

Investments in buildings can grow our local economy by creating new clean energy and energy efficiency jobs, from electricians to sheet metal workers and plumbers, to engineers and building operators. These are high-quality jobs that can’t be outsourced elsewhere. We recognize some people, such as workers in the gas industry, will need to adjust to a changing landscape, and we are committed to working with stakeholders to design equitable policies for transitioning to clean energy in a way that works for everyone.



### Savings for Owners and Tenants

Energy-efficient buildings cost less to operate, meaning owners and tenants alike will save money on their monthly utility bills. In a city with rising costs of living, these savings add up for your home or businesses’ bottom lines.

## Join Us

We’re working collaboratively with you—and communities across Seattle—to design equitable policies that create clean, healthy buildings for all.

To request more information or schedule a meeting, contact [CleanBuildings@seattle.gov](mailto:CleanBuildings@seattle.gov).



**Seattle Office of Sustainability & Environment**

[www.seattle.gov/environment](http://www.seattle.gov/environment)