Climate Action Planning Institute (CAPI)

Data Collection Checklist and FAQ

for the Climate Smart Communities (CSC) program

PE2 Action: Government Operations GHG Inventory

Bronze and Silver Priority Action; 16 Points

Data Collection Checklist

- List of all owned/occupied municipal buildings and addresses
- List of all energy supplier account numbers

For all municipal buildings, whole month energy use:

- Electricity Usage (kWh)
- Natural Gas (therms or BTUs)
- Propane (gal)
- Fuel/Gas/Diesel/Heating Oil (gal)
- Kerosene (gal)

Lighting (building lights, streetlights, and all other lights) whole month energy use:

- Electricity Usage (kWh)

For municipal fleet (including off-road vehicles):

- Gasoline (gal)
- Diesel (gal)
- Electricity (kWh)
- Lawn care or landscaping equipment (total gallons of fuel per year)

Employee Commuting (total gallons of fuel to/from work per year)

Other, if applicable:

- Landfill - only communities owning their landfill
- Garbage – tons per government (1 year)
- Water Supply – electricity associated with pump stations
- Wastewater Treatment Facilities – for communities owning a facility
- Refrigerants

Note: Scope 3 emissions associated (such as emissions resulting from the extraction and production of purchased materials and fuels, transportation in vehicles not owned or controlled by the reporting entity, outsourced activities, or waste disposal) are not required for this inventory.

Government Operations GHG Inventory FAQ

1. What should the baseline year be?

The baseline year(s) for the GHG data can be from any point in the past. A note that the Covid-19 pandemic may have disrupted municipal operations, so using data from that time may not accurately reflect a municipality's GHG emissions from day-to-day operations. For that reason, for CAPI, we have chosen a baseline year of 2019, the most recent year pre-pandemic.

2. I have previously used Energy Star Portfolio Manager to benchmark our municipal building energy use. How does this Government Operations GHG Inventory differ?

Portfolio Manager only accounts for buildings, and only buildings over 1,000 sq feet. This tool helps benchmark buildings against similar building types and provides EUIs and Energy Star ratings. Accounts like streetlights, pump stations, vehicle fuel usage, and small sheds may not be included, but are important for a GHG Inventory of ALL government or community emissions. The good news is that the portfolio manager data can be exported and used for the inventory. We will just need additional accounts not included in portfolio manager.

3. Can I get data electronically from my utility? What about fuel deliveries?

Yes, most utilities can provide the most recent 2 years of data for electricity and/or natural gas. You can request more if needed, but will sometimes be charged a fee. For CAPI, HVRC will be requesting the data on behalf of the participating communities to save time. For fuel deliveries, the company in question should be able to provide a municipality a record of dates and gallons for at least the last 2 years. Most companies have online accounts where this can be downloaded. We strongly suggest setting up an online account for municipal operations, if you have not already done so, to ensure you aren't missing any entries.

4. Will the ClearPath tool calculate renewables used by the municipality, such as rooftop solar?

The GHG Inventory calculates only energy use from government operations to develop a baseline of GHG emissions. The Climate Action Plan, which follows the GHG Inventory, will itemize the municipality's progress towards emissions savings from existing renewables, like rooftop solar. Switching to cleaner, renewable sources of energy can bring down GHG emissions from facilities, although renewable energy credits may not be considered in the CAP as GHG reductions. (see question 6)

5. What about communities that subscribe to community solar?

In terms of Community Distributed Generation (CDG), such as community solar, your baseline 2019 GHG Inventory will probably calculate pre-CDG emissions. However, if you did have community solar credits in 2019, these green power credits or renewable energy certificates (RECs) may not be considered in the CAP as GHG reductions.

The reason you may not deduct green power or renewable energy certificates (RECS) from Scope 2 emissions is because doing so would constitute double counting (as per section 6.2.4 of the LGOP). This is because the renewable energy portion of a utility's power supply is already accounted for in the GHG emission factor for the region in which the electricity is generated. While the CSC program encourages you to include information about these green power purchases in your government operations GHG inventory reports, they should not be included in GHG calculations.

6. Do I need to have this data by month – or is it OK to have the data aggregated by year?

Monthly data is ideal for decision-making, but not required by CSC for completing this GHG inventory. The protocols require annual numbers only. However, we know that considerations around seasonality (summer vs winter load), prioritizing the least-efficient buildings, differing departmental budgets (and more) call for a more refined snapshot of buildings energy usage. Therefore, all communities should strive to obtain monthly data. Those that cannot do so, however, need should not feel stalled or left behind.