



Dutchess Climate Action Planning Institute

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10 Questions & Answers

Note – these are questions asked by the cohort in the last few months.



10 Questions and Answers: Question #1

Why did we choose 2019 as the baseline year?

- The baseline year(s) for a GHG inventory can be from any point in the past. We chose 2019 because it is the most recent pre-pandemic year.
- Covid19 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.
- Choosing a year farther back in time also may make it easier for municipalities to achieve CSC points for PE 12: Reduce GHGs from Government Facilities.



10 Questions and Answers: Question #2

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

- For CAPI, HVRC requested the data on your behalf from Central Hudson. Brian Finn provided the 2019 data free of charge.
- Municipalities may have online accounts where this can be downloaded. We suggest setting up an online account, if that is an option.
- Most utilities can provide the most recent 2 or 3 years of data for electricity and/or natural gas. The same goes for fuel companies, such as Suburban Propane or Paraco Oil. Sometimes they charge a fee.



10 Questions and Answers: Question #3

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 protocol also only requires annual numbers.
- That said, considerations around seasonality (summer vs winter load), prioritizing the least-efficient buildings, differing departmental budgets (and more) often call for a more refined snapshot of buildings energy usage. So if you can report by month, that is ideal.



10 Questions and Answers: Question #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.



10 Questions and Answers: Question #5

What about communities that subscribe to community solar?

- In terms of Community Distributed Generation (CDG), such as community solar, your 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 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.



10 Questions and Answers: Question #6

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. You will just need to ensure that additional accounts not included in portfolio manager are included in your GHG Inventory.



10 Questions and Answers: Question #7

Should I address refrigerant leakage even if we don't have a large-scale HVAC system or ice rink?

- You are not required to include small-scale refrigerants. However, it is important to address the topic of refrigerants in your GHG inventory, even if you only have small-scale HVAC systems, since HFCs are such powerful GHGs.
- If you do choose to include refrigerants in your emissions data, you may find this data on the back of your heat pumps, for example, or you could reach out to your HVAC maintenance resources. When they do recharges on equipment (i.e., add more refrigerant), they may track refrigerant type and amount.
- The mention of refrigerants (or the lack of emissions data included on refrigerants) would probably be included in the buildings sector, even though refrigerants may not just be linked to building energy use.



10 Questions and Answers: Question #8

Do I need to include wastewater treatment facility emissions in our GOGHGI?

- All municipal owned/operated water and wastewater facilities (pumps, lift stations, plants) should be included.
- In the case where there was shared ownership with another municipality, you should include and account for the percentage of ownership.
- If your municipality does not own or operate the wastewater treatment facility used, you do not have to include these emissions.



10 Questions and Answers: Question #9

Do I need to include solid waste emissions in our GOGHGI?

- If your municipality owns or operates a waste facility or has a landfill within its borders, you should include these emissions.
- If not (i.e. the municipality does not have a landfill and a 3rd party hauls and handles the trash), these emissions are considered scope 3 and you do not have to include these emissions.
- While optional from a CSC perspective, however, it is considered best practice to include emissions from waste for your government operations. There are various methods to calculating this, but one method is estimating % of government waste to total municipal waste, based on the % of government employees to total municipal population.



10 Questions and Answers: Question #10

Do I need to break out fleet by department? Emissions by building?

- This depends on your municipality's strategy and goals for tracking, managing and reducing your government's greenhouse gas emissions. More granular data is not required by CSC for completing this GHG inventory. The protocol also does not require a more granular breakdown.
- That said, considerations around individual department or building performance often calls for a more refined snapshot. So if you can break out the data, that is ideal, since you will most likely be in a better position to effectively track and manage emissions.



Review

- ❖ Office Hours
 - ❖ Weekly office hours: Tuesdays 10 - 11 am
- ❖ SharePoint folder
 - ❖ Shared document and data repository
 - ❖ Time tracker lives here
- ❖ CAPI Web Site <<https://hudsonvalleyregionalcouncil.org/dutchesscapi>>
 - ❖ Meeting presentations, relevant resources and homework assignments
- ❖ ICLEI ClearPath
 - ❖ ClearPath tool for emissions data and forecasting



Homework for Data Resource(s)

- ✓ Customize and send out remaining data request templates.
- ✓ Ensure all account numbers are included in the electricity and natural gas data from Central Hudson (or NYSEG).
- ✓ Identify the buildings, facilities, and/or department associated with each account.
- ✓ Cross-check and consolidate/group data as desired
- ✓ Input data into the Excel Data Workbook as it is received.

Team Homework



- ✓ Research and review visual aids in other reports in the CSC portal.
- ✓ Begin to populate the GHG Inventory Report template with high level information.
- ✓ Continue to document and publicize this project.



Reminders

- Keep meeting as a Team at least once a month.
- Keep meeting minutes and notes on process.
- Document key contacts and progress on data gathering.
- Ask questions: weekly office hours, cohort meetings, or just schedule a meeting with us.
- If you're unsure what you should be working on, check the [CAPI](#) [Duchess site](#).
- Track your time in your time tracker in Sharepoint, including any time worked 2021-2022 (starting 3/15/21).



Monthly cohort meetings: third Wednesday of every month

Next Meeting (virtual):

Wednesday, April 19th

10 am – 12 pm



Thank You!

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