



For Immediate Release  
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## REAL SAVINGS COME FROM BENCHMARKING ENERGY USAGE IN COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

NORWALK, CT – On November 5<sup>th</sup>, 75 people met at 301 Merritt 7 in Norwalk to learn how simple U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website tools can benchmark energy usage in commercial buildings leading to great efficiencies and significant energy cost savings.

Richard Tesoriero, a senior mechanical engineer and project manager with Steven Winter Associates, Inc. introduced the audience of building owners and managers to the Energy Star Portfolio Manager and Target Finder programs. These EPA online programs allow for inputting of current energy usage for cooling and heating, for example, and can make comparisons to similar buildings nationwide, pointing out ways to improve usage through lowering of an overall energy score.

“The message is very clear that there are real benefits from benchmarking and 95% of all office buildings have not been benchmarked,” says Donald M. van Rhyn, founder and chairman of the Fairchester Green Buildings Council whose members attended the event. “Improving scores from 54 to 90 (out of a possible 100) can reduce annual energy costs by \$1MM. Everyone should leave this meeting knowing they can do it for themselves.”

Keith Crosby, VP construction for ADP Services Corporation, owners and managers of Merritt 7 Corporate Park, has been benchmarking all six buildings for the past 18 months. He pointed out that many of the buildings started out with a low Energy Star score and the newest building actually had the lowest score of all. Today, Merritt 7 is the primary example of sustainability in Connecticut with one building, 401 Merritt 7, having obtained LEED EB Silver certification with an Energy Star rating of 97. This now becomes a viable goal for each of the buildings in the corporate park. The greening efforts have resulted in savings of “hundreds of thousands of dollars,” according to Crosby, which have been passed on to tenants.

The Fairchester Green Building Council is a non-profit organization with a goal of making sustainability mainstream. As a next step, van Rhyn reports the Fairchester GBC intends to follow up with all event attendees, providing them with a short explanation of the benefits of benchmarking and a link, showing them how to get started down the path of greater energy efficiency.

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