

# TIPS FOR WRITING A CASE STUDY OR FACT SHEET

**There are many ways to tell an energy story.** Case studies and fact sheets capture specific successes and goals of a project or program. The overall achievements and benefits to the community should also be captured. A case study usually profiles a specific building or project, with a focus on results and, often in the case of energy, improvements. A fact sheet generally describes a program or policy effort and is produced by the city to communicate larger goals and priorities.

CASE STUDIES	FACT SHEETS
<p><b>A case study usually incorporates:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic building information: building name, address, year built, size, typical use, ENERGY STAR score. Details on energy and cost savings</li> <li>• Interviews with building owner(s), building managers, operators, engineers, and major tenants, if applicable</li> <li>• Images of the featured building or person. People interacting in building shots are generally more engaging than empty building shots</li> </ul>	<p><b>A fact sheet should provide details on a specific policy or program and highlight key ways to engage with a program, including how to participate in public meetings, information on policy or program requirements, and other engagement opportunities like trainings and educational sessions. It usually includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background information on the policy or program and the benefits for the community</li> <li>• Who should participate in the effort and how to do so</li> <li>• Details on any requirements or key deadlines (can also include upcoming public meetings or trainings)</li> <li>• Links to website and additional resources</li> </ul>

## CITY EXAMPLES

- [Boston's Building Energy Reporting and Disclosure Ordinance – Assessment Requirement Guidance](#)
- [Exploring Benchmarking and Transparency in Des Moines](#)
- [Reenergize Reno](#)
- [Building Energy and Water Challenge in Des Moines](#)





See all  
**COMMUNICATIONS  
RESOURCES** in the  
City Energy Project  
Resource Library

Looking for more tips?

Check out the  
**MUST-HAVES FOR  
PUBLICLY LAUNCHING  
AND ONGOING  
COMMUNICATIONS**

[VIEW GUIDE >](#)

## QUESTIONS TO ASK MAJOR TENANTS AND BUILDING OWNERS AND MANAGERS

- What makes the building distinctive? What is its history and how does energy efficiency fit with that legacy?
- How has the approach to energy efficiency progressed over time? Can you briefly describe the efficiency measures and management practices you have pursued, and in what order, and how that order was chosen?
  - » What set of measures and management practices did you pursue for this project?
  - » What criteria did you have to develop to prioritize and select measures or management practices to pursue? Who was involved and what were the deciding factors for each stakeholder?
  - » Why was each measure a smart business decision?
- How are you tracking performance over time?
- Can you tell me in one sentence why the project was great? (Use this for a quote to be pulled out in the case study.)
- What future projects, measures, and management practices do you plan to pursue?

## COST AND ENERGY SAVINGS

Stats and figures give your story a factual punch. Think about how you can describe the various gains efficiency gives your building in terms of costs and energy savings. You can also think about how carbon is reduced, or what operational improvements resulted, such as:

- Up-front cost (if you received rebates, list what those were, and give total cost after any rebates)
- Annual cost savings
- Payback
- Kilowatt hour or therms saved
- CO<sup>2</sup> savings
- Staff and operational improvements

## THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE PROJECTS

It can be more compelling when voices in the community share in the story you are telling. This can be done by including direct quotes from building representatives, and public officials about the importance of impact of the project.

## SHARE YOUR CASE STUDY AND FACT SHEET

Once you have created these communications materials you can promote them in newsletters, post them on your website, include them with training materials, and share them with media. It can also be helpful to include these materials in press announcements and make them available for meetings with internal staff and interested stakeholders.