

Benchmarking and Shared Practices Program for Utility Facility Managers

Why a Program for Utility Company Facility Managers?

Facility Issues provides facility metric benchmarking services and custom analytic/planning services for those who manage facilities in the Utility Industry. This is the benchmarking group of the International Facility Management Association ([IFMA Utilities Council](#)) that has been active since 1995. Participation typically includes leading North American utilities and is open to all those who manage investor-owned, government, municipal, and co-op utility facilities.

Utility organizations have a wide variety of facilities, some unique to the industry, some typical commercial properties, some critical for infrastructure management, and some that support geographically local operations. Most need to be reliable for 24x7x365 operations.

The program has evolved since its start (with refinements and improvements every year) to encompass a full spectrum of metrics for utility properties & operations, and to provide a valuable forum for discussion of emerging issues among utility facility managers.

Utility Council Benchmarking & Metrics Reporting

While facility metrics are useful for all organizations to manage and plan their physical plant, they can be especially useful for utility facility management due to the need to balance asset reliability and cost management in a regulated environment along with other facility management issues.

Benchmarking may be the easiest and most cost-effective way to establish a baseline and document how your metrics compare with other leading utilities, whether you self-perform or outsource your facility management services. Our participants use the results to demonstrate responsible performance to regulators, identify opportunities for potential improvement, and as a basis for establishing appropriate space, budget, and staffing forecasts.



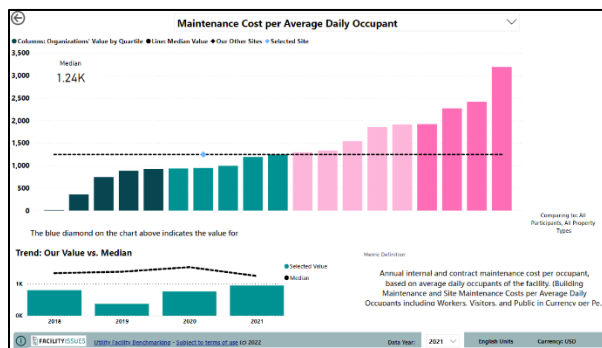
[How to Get Value from the Benchmarking Process](#)

Data Categories Include:

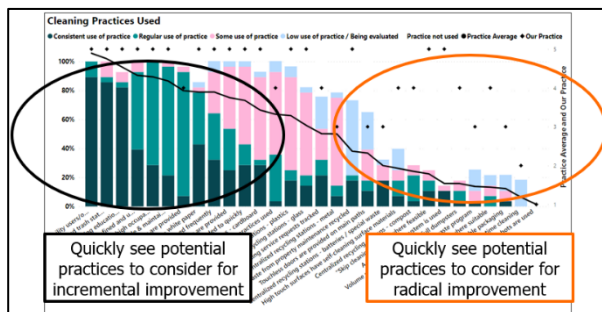
- Organization Demographics
- Organization Staffing
- Organization Costs
- Facility Operations Greenhouse Gas
- Custodial & Waste Practices
- Facility Maintenance & Reliability Practices
- Space & Occupancy Management Practices
- Utility Management Practices
- Property Demographics
- Property Areas
- Property Occupancy and Use
- Property Operating Expenses
- Property Utility Usage, Waste, GHG
- Property Capital Assets & Systems
- Property Work Orders
- and more.

FM BENCHMARKING SURVEY: Utilities Council			
Section A: Organization Info >> Demographics (Required)		Your Answer/Data	Units / Clarification
ORG_NAME	Organization name *		Text Used for administration only.
ORG_ID	3-6 character acronym to use on the charts (if you wish to customize your code)		Text Optional: If you enter a value, it will be the label used on the charts as your sitecode instead of the anonymous one assigned to you. NOTE: Others will see this also.
ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION			
ORG_TYP	Type of organization *		List Select the one category that best describes the primary industry/focus of your organization.
ORG_PM	Where does the facility management organization report? *		List Select the best match of the top level executive who's organization includes facilities management (and facility projects /other services reported in this benchmarking survey).
ORG_STAV	Facility Management Staffing Approach *		List Select the option that best matches the approach for how you staff your facility maintenance and operations group.
UNITS OF MEASURE			
UNITS	Units of measure *		List English units = square feet, acres, gallons, degrees F, etc.; Metric units = square meters, hectares, liters, degrees C, etc.
CURR	Currency *		List Select the currency used for your cost data.
WAREN0	Data are for year ending *		Date Enter the last day of the 12-month period used for reported costs (MM/DD/YYYY format).
ORGANIZATIONAL METRICS			
ORG_UC01	Approximate number of customers		Number Enter the approximate number of unique customer accounts. If combined utility with 10 electric only + 50 combined + 15 gas only, would = 75 customers.

Easy to Use Excel Data Templates Data can be manually entered/edited in online forms or uploaded from Excel templates. Templates allow assembly of data by topic with clear DIY instructions and definitions of what to include. Direct reference to source data files is possible for advanced users and data can be easily downloaded for reference and re-loaded as many times as you wish.



Business Intelligence Reporting The Microsoft Power BI system is used to report the results allowing you to filter data and export presentation graphics based on your needs. The most popular charts show your position with respect to other organizations, and your 5-year trend vs. the group median.



Other charts show the practices you use vs. those most commonly used by others to let you identify potential actions you can take to accomplish your objectives.

Personal Support & Input In addition to the program documentation, you get personal phone and email support from Facility Issues on data questions, use of the templates, and use of the results. You can also participate in the monthly steering committee meetings to suggest refinements to make the program more useful. Custom support and supplemental services are available if you are just getting started or want help with data collection or interpretation of the results.

[Learn more about the benchmarking program](#)

Shared Practice and Networking Meetings

Equally valuable as the metrics is the ability to discuss “best practices” with Facility Managers at other utilities. IFMA has an annual conference and other meetings with general facility management content. The Utilities Council has national spring/fall meetings (typically 25-35 persons) that provide more industry-specific content and discussion. Facility Issues arranges WUG/EUG regional meetings (typically 8-15 persons) and monthly online meetings to supplement these opportunities (more on next page).

Regional Meetings The Eastern Utility Group and Western Utility Group are regional winter/summer in-person meetings, hosted at a utility company. These 1½ day meetings typically include the opportunity to tour one of the host’s facilities, and ample time for in-depth small group discussion and networking with your peers. Hear firsthand what others are doing and share lessons learned. [More Information](#)



The group tours a LEED Platinum operations center.

Shared Practice Meetings & Surveys Facility Issues coordinates a 1-hour monthly online shared practice meeting. These meetings include short presentations on topics of interest, case studies, and open “town-hall” sessions where you can ask others how they are dealing with current issues you face. [Registration page with example agenda](#)

2022 Monthly Survey / Shared Practice & Networking Topics	
Jan	Topics of Interest for 2022
Feb	Environmental Leadership
Mar	The 5 C's of Post Pandemic Management: How to Motivate, Engage, & Retain Your Best People
Apr	Unlocking Workplace Purpose
May	Metal Coatings for Asset Preservation, Cleanliness and Safety
Jun	General Town Hall
Jul	What KPIs are of most interest?
Aug	Snow Removal & Landscaping Practices
Sep	How Zero Waste Can Benefit Your Facility
Oct	Case Study: Using PBI for Facility Project Status Tracking
Nov	What to do when your FM systems go down

Most months there is also a short, shared practice survey and everyone who completes it gets the results. Benchmarking organizations can request a custom shared practice survey on topic of their choice.

[Join our mailing list](#) to get monthly notices about these meetings and surveys.

About Facility Issues

Many facility organizations are lightly staffed with analyst support and need some help getting started with benchmarking and other facility management metrics.

Facility Issues provides benchmarking, metrics, and strategic planning services for selected industries. We are a small firm with experience in corporate facilities management and can provide project or ongoing support customized for your needs.

[Schedule a chat about your situation](#)

Available References

The Facility Issues website contains free references about metrics, benchmarking, facility planning, and recordings of some shared practice presentations at:

<https://facilityissues.com/articles/>

