



3. Defining a *single building* in BOMA BEST

The BOMA BEST Sustainable Buildings program is dedicated to assisting facility managers and operators improve their building's environmental performance. To do this, buildings must be assessed individually. Each building must complete its own assessment questionnaire and will receive its own score and certificate.

A *building* is usually free-standing. A free-standing building is one that is not connected to other buildings except only superficially (e.g. a walkway). It may or may not be part of a larger campus of buildings and may share a common mechanical system with other buildings. Each free-standing building must complete its own BOMA BEST Sustainable Buildings questionnaire and will receive its own certification.

A *building* can also include multiple structures. In certain cases, multiple buildings can be considered a single *building* and complete a single BOMA BEST Sustainable Buildings assessment for these structures.

3.1. When can multiple buildings be considered a single *building*?

For multiple buildings (or structures) to be considered a single building and complete only one BOMA BEST Sustainable Buildings questionnaire, the following three requirements must be met:

1. The buildings must share an actual, physical connection that is complete and indivisible (i.e. a shared functional space that cannot be divided such as underground parking, an atrium, or conference space). Hallways or interior walking paths between buildings are not considered functional, shared space, even if they are lighted and/or heated. This requirement is consistent with the Energy Star Portfolio Manager (ESPM) definition of a "single structure".
2. Buildings must have the same primary use type (75% or more of each building is dedicated to the same use, such as "office").
3. Buildings must be managed by the same management company and share policies.

Aspects that are not taken into consideration in the definition of a single *building*:

- Age of construction of each structure in the building.
- Whether utilities are shared.
- Whether consumption is sub-metered.
- Whether HVAC equipment or other technologies are shared.

Buildings composed of multiple structures that meet the requirement for a single *building* may be assessed using a single BOMA BEST Sustainable Buildings questionnaire, or may submit multiple BOMA BEST Sustainable Buildings questionnaires to capture the specificities of each structure (e.g. building tower). This decision is left to the applicant. Contact BOMA Canada if you are unsure about how to proceed.

In the case where multiple structures fit the definition of a single building in BOMA BEST Sustainable Buildings and the applicant wishes to continue using a single questionnaire, the applicant must assess all areas in that building to obtain a certification. For example, in the case where four towers sit atop a shared podium, the applicant must include all four towers as part of the single assessment/questionnaire. The applicant cannot choose to only include part of the structure (e.g. two out of the four towers). If the



applicant only wants to assess a part of the building (e.g. two out of the four towers), he/she must use separate questionnaires for each tower.

3.2. Benchmarking energy and water in BOMA BEST buildings

Depending on how HVAC or utilities are organized, different approaches must be followed to determine the Energy Star Score (ESS), Energy Use Intensity (EUI) or Water Use Intensity (WUI) associated with a given BOMA BEST assessment.

In free-standing buildings

Separate meters: If the building has its own utilities and can account for consumption specific to it, connect the building with an ESPM account and report the ESS, EUI and WUI calculated by ESPM in the survey.

Shared meters: If the free-standing building shares utilities with another building (but together they do not meet the definition for a single *building* in BOMA BEST), connect one of the building with an ESPM account that represents the shared consumption. Do not enter estimates. Report the common ESS, EUI and WUI associated with the shared consumption in the questionnaires for each building (same values in each questionnaire). Since an ESPM account cannot be associated to more than one BOMA BEST account, simply link 1 building with ESPM and show that building's Property Characteristics page to the verifier for the other buildings.

- E.g. Building A and Building B share utilities and are not sub-metered. They do not meet the criteria for a single *building*. Both must complete their own BOMA BEST questionnaire. Link the account for Building A with the ESPM account that represents the shared consumption for Building A and B. Enter the ESS, EUI and WUI value that is generated in BOMA BEST in the appropriate fields in questionnaires for both buildings (A and B). During the verification, explain to the verifier that the values generated for Building A also represent the consumption for Building B.

Shared HVAC: If the free-standing building shares HVAC equipment and systems with another building (but together they do not meet the definition for a single *building* in BOMA BEST), questions about this equipment should be answered as though they were in the building itself. This means that many buildings might report on the same equipment – this is acceptable and necessary to understand the efficiency of the equipment serving an individual building.

In buildings composed of multiple-structures using only one BOMA BEST questionnaire

There is no sub-metering of the structures: If there is no sub-metering of the structures within the building, follow these steps:

1. Create an account in ESPM for the totality of the space, entering the total area and associated consumption for all structures in the building.
2. Connect this account with the BOMA BEST assessment.
3. Enter the values for ESS, EUI and WUI in the appropriate place in the BOMA BEST survey.

Each structure is sub-metered: Even if each (or some) structure is sub-metered, only one value for EUI, WUI and ESS can be entered in the single BOMA BEST questionnaire. This value cannot be estimated. It



must be generated by the ESPM system. Follow the steps listed above, as though there was no sub-metering in the building.

If individual accounts exist for each structure in ESPM already, and if the EUI, WUI or ESS specific to each building is known, you will be invited to enter this extra detail in the BOMA BEST questionnaire. No additional points are awarded.

Shared HVAC: If the structures within the building share HVAC equipment, report these in the BOMA BEST survey as required.

Separate HVAC or efficient technologies: If the technologies and/or HVAC are not identical in each structure of the building, report the average in the questionnaire.

- E.g., calculate the how many LEDs are present, on average, in the common areas of all structures. This will be the number reported in the survey and must represent the entire building (all structures).

A note regarding consistency with ESPM:

As much as possible, BOMA BEST strives to replicate the requirements from ESPM to avoid confusion. One area where policies do not match is regarding using a common ESS, EUI or WUI for multiple buildings that do not sub-meter yet are not considered a single structure. BOMA BEST allows users to calculate the ESS, EUI and WUI based on the shared data and apply this value to both buildings. ESPM does not allow this.