Building EQ Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

General Questions on Building EQ:

Q: Is there information that demonstrates the value of doing a Building EQ
A: The May 2014 ASHRAE Journal includes an article, *Putting bEQ in Practice*, that includes case studies on four fire stations in Florida.   The case studies demonstrate the value of the process to those facilities.

Q: What do the Building EQ Performance Scores mean in terms of performance? Can you give me an explanation of the new rating system?
A: The Building EQ Label Report will show your building on a barometer scale (as described below). That report is available for free to all approved submissions.   The barometer scale illustrates how a building's Building Performance Score indicates a buildings energy performance.   The score ranges from zero (zero net energy) and goes to 200 or beyond.   The baseline value of 100 represents the median (similar to mid-point or average) energy use intensity for existing buildings of that building type.
- An average building will fall near the median value of 100.
- An Inefficient building has a score greater than 100 (above average energy use = high energy use)
- An efficient building has a score less than 100 (low energy use = energy use approaching zero net energy use).
- A zero net energy building will have a score less than or equal to zero (zero net energy use)

Q: What qualifies as a credentialed user/practitioner?   Will other certifications be added?
A: The following qualify as a Building EQ credentialed user/practitioner:
- Professional/Chartered engineer licensed in the jurisdiction where the building is located
- Building Energy Assessment Professional (BEAP certification) – In Operation rating
- Building Energy Modeling Professional (BEMP certification) – As Designed rating

There are no other certifications currently recognized as credentials for the Building EQ program, but the committee continues to review additional credentials for addition to the list. Any credentials that ASHRAE cannot automatically verify within their system would be subject to the one time set-up/verification fee.

Questions on the Portal:

Q: What are the main changes from the old workbook system to the new Portal system for Building EQ?
A: The main change is that the workbooks have been "automated" into an on-line data entry system and database.   New functionality for users, accounts, and projects is also included in the Portal, which will make it easier for someone to manage multiple projects. The on-line portal also has built in validation and error checking, so you can not submit for a rating if there is something missing or in error (this improves the submission and approval process).   The Portal also has responsive screens so that it can be used on laptops, notebooks, tablets (and even phones).   In terms of the calculations, the median EUI is now calculated two different ways.   ENERGY STAR compatible building types use the Architecture 2030 ZeroTool, which will provide a median EUI aligned with Energy Stars current calculations.   All other building types (and all buildings outside North America) will still use the Standard 100 methodology to calculate the median EUI.   The reports have also changed.
- There is an Input report that details everything entered into the database for that project (and in blank form could be used to collect data offline).
- The disclosure report has been simplified from its previous version to just provide the data needed to disclose a building's energy use.
- The label no longer has letter grades and has merged the most requested parts of the old label and the old dashboard.   It has the Building EQ Performance Score and shows where that score falls on a barometer of performance.

- Also, in the final stages of development is a set of Excel spreadsheets that follow the requirements outlined in ASHRAE Standard 211P (the energy audit standard) and will be populated with all the information collected in the Building EQ assessment.   This report will assist with the preparation of an ASHRAE Level 1 Energy Audit and applies to just the In Operation rating.
- Other reports intended to assist in a Level 1 Energy Audit are also being explored.

Q: What is the fee to use the Building EQ Portal?
A: There is no fee to use the Portal.   Fees apply to the verification of credentials and to report access.

Q: How do I register as a credentialed practitioner?
A: This is done as part of the user registration process.   This information is entered on the individual user's profile screen.   If you are a BEAP or BEMP, the Portal will automatically verify your credentials against ASHRAE's database.   If you are a Professional/Chartered Engineer, a small one-time set-up fee is required to verify your credentials.   You will provisionally approved while your credentials are verified so that you may immediately use the Portal as a credentialed user.

Q: Which of the blue or green or both input data fields are required in order for Building EQ to simply provide a Score.
A: The Building EQ Performance Score shows at the top of the each webpage in green letters.   The fields with green text indicated the minimum information required to just calculate a score to show on the screen.   However, if you want to submit the project for approval and be able to print reports, you must provide information for all fields (both green and blue text) unless they are indicated as optional.

Q: What are the symbols on the end of the accordions and what do they mean?
A: There are three possible symbols on the accordions.
- A green check (✓) mark means all required information has been filled in and validated.
- A red X mark means either that required information is missing or the information does not meet the validation requirements. When you open the accordion, there will be red message at the top telling you what the problem is.   You cannot submit a project with red X marks.
- A yellow triangle with exclamation point means that you have entered data that is outside the expected range for that data (for example, humidity of 90% on the IEQ tab).   You can still submit your project, but the when you open the accordion there will be a warning message at the top which is a suggestion to verify your data.

Q: Can metered data for a candidate building be continually input into each project (representing a building) on any frequency desired in order to update their In Operation Building EQ score?
A: You can update data as much or as often as you want until you submit a project for an official rating. Once submitted, the project is locked.   Each project will allow for the input of 2 years (24 months) of data.   Only the most recent 12 months input are used to calculate the score.
The committee is looking at adding a copy project feature that would allow you to copy a locked project to enter new data or to do "what if" analysis.   Because the official rating process includes information to support a level 1 energy audit, the process is intended to be a snapshot of your building at a specific moment. Because there is no cost to submit, you can enter as many projects as needed for a building and compare the results over time.

Q: Is it possible for utility companies to directly provide metered data inputs into Building EQ?
A: This ability is not currently available in the Portal.   The committee will be looking at this type of capability for future enhancements.

Q: Why am I having trouble accessing my account/profile when using a MacBook?
A: Browser cookies need to be enabled for the Portal to operate correctly.

Questions on the Building EQ Processes/Calculations:

Q: Can a single Building Score can be provided for an entire site that includes multiple buildings (similar to E* Portfolio Manager) which may also consist of multiple meters as opposed to only being able to provide a Score for single, physical building.
A: Building EQ provides an option for a multi-use building or property (listed as the first building type in the pull down menu in the building demographics accordion).   This was primarily designed for properties that have multiple buildings on a single meter.   If you have multiple buildings that each have their own meter, you should probably enter them individually.   A campus feature will be added in the future that will allow you to group those buildings together.   Details on that feature are still being developed.

Q: What modeling programs are required to be used for the As Designed rating?
A: Right now, there are no restrictions on which modeling software can be used. Whatever is used must allow for the input of all the standardized inputs and must be able to output all of the information required by the Building EQ Portal.   The credentialed practitioner is required to report what software was used.

Q: Is the credentialed practitioner required to measure ventilation for the In Operation rating?
A: The credentialed practitioner is asked to measure flow rate at the outdoor air (OA) intakes.   Ventilation is calculated using methodology from Standard 62.1.

Q: Can the credentialed practitioner use information from a TAB report for the measured flow rates?
A: The credentialed practitioner is responsible for assuring that the information entered into the Portal accurately represents the conditions in the building at the time of his visit.   If the credentialed practitioner is comfortable that the measurements from the TAB report meet those requirements, that information may be used.

Q: The site to source multipliers are for the US, how does that affect ratings outside the US?
A: Because the same site-source multipliers are used in the calculation of the median/baseline EUI as are used for the candidate building, the effect of the multipliers is diminished.   The Portal will eventually allow for the set up different site-source ratios, but that is Phase 2 of the Portal development.

Q: Will water efficiency and/or waste consumption/diversion information be added to Building EQ?
A: Water efficiency and waste consumption/diversion are not currently part of the Portal. The committee will look at those for future enhancements and additions.

Q: How does Building EQ handle net metered energy?
A: Instructions for Net Metered buildings are included in the main Help information (at the very bottom) and repeated here:
> For a net-metered building, the annual energy use input should be the NET annual energy use, including renewables. In this case, no renewable energy is input under Qualified Renewable Energy as it is included in the energy values entered for the buildings electricity usage. The format of net-metered bills varies depending on jurisdiction. When a single net kWh is given, this is the number to input into the spreadsheet. Some bills give two values: net kWh used and net kWh exported. In this case the exported energy is subtracted from the energy used to produce a single net electricity value for input into the table. Note: the annual electricity usage for a net-metered building may be negative if the building is a net exporter of electricity.

Q: How does Building EQ handle combined heat and power?
A: Answer Pending