Resident Utility Data Collection Overview

Utility data collection for Fannie Mae Green Mortgage Loan Borrowers

With an experienced partner, resident data collection is easy! Bright Power is here to make the process seamless.

Why does Fannie Mae need resident utility data?

Fannie Mae Green Financing products are designed to reduce energy and water use across the entire property, typically resulting in the reduction of utility costs for both owners and tenants. Collecting resident data allows a full assessment of energy and water consumption and savings.

How do I collect whole property (aka "aggregate") data?

Whole property data, also called "aggregate" data, is the sum of all utility accounts at the property including common areas and apartments. Where available, whole property data provides the easiest and most accurate option for collecting resident data. Some utilities will provide aggregate data to property owners upon request. Your Bright Power Energy Analyst will request a signed authorization form, called a Letter of Authorization or LOA, which allows Bright Power to request this data from the utility.

In cases where aggregate data is available, Bright Power will still need access to the owner-paid utility bills. This allows the calculation of tenant and owner consumption and cost. Reporting owner- and tenant-paid utility data separately is critical for meeting your property's Fannie Mae Green Mortgage Loan requirements.

My utility doesn't offer whole property data. What's next?

If whole property data isn't available, Fannie Mae will accept a sample of data from individual apartments. Bright Power will need your help in securing the tenant release forms required by your local utility. Here's the process:

Step one
Through conversation with you, Bright Power will determine which utilities tenants pay directly to the utility company (e.g., electricity, gas, water).

Step two
Bright Power will provide you with an authorization form for residents to sign. This allows the utility to share resident data with Bright Power.

Step three
Your property staff will collect forms from a sample of residents with signatures, bill copies, and the required information, including name, utility account number, and phone number.

Step four
You or your property staff will scan and email these forms to Bright Power.

Step five
Bright Power will review the forms and send them to the utility to request data on the apartments.

How many units do I need to sample?

Bright Power will help you determine how many units you are required to sample. The tenant sampling rate for Measurement is aligned with Fannie Mae Form 4099 (Table 5.08.C.4.1 – Required Unit Sampling Rate).

My property cannot collect enough tenant releases? Now what?

Even in situations where tenants refuse to sign releases, the obligation to report whole building data remains. You might consider offering a small incentive to the first tenants that complete their forms.

What if my property bills a utility back to our tenants?

Many properties pay the utility bill and then bill a portion of that bill back to each of the tenants. This often goes by the name of RUBS (Ratio Utility Billing System). If your property utilizes RUBS or a similar system, it is essential that you indicate so on the Measurement Property Setup Form for each utility this applies to, as well as the portion (percent or amount) billed back to the tenants. Our Energy Analysts will do the calculations necessary to determine the tenant usage and costs. As in all cases, we still need access to all utility bills paid by the property owner.

Am I using the correct utility forms?

Be sure to check with your Bright Power Energy Analyst before collecting authorizations. Utilities can be very particular and will only accept a specific authorization form. Let's work together to make sure tenants are signing the correct form so you only have to do it once.

Tips for success

- Explain the benefit of data collection to your tenants. Collecting energy and water data will enable you to maintain the property as efficiently as possible, minimizing utility costs for the tenants. If tenants are concerned about the security of their personal information, assure them that their utility company will only report energy and water usage and cost data. No tenant payment information will be obtained or given to the property owner or Bright Power.

- Collect more tenant utility authorizations than you need. Some forms you receive from residents may have incorrect information, such as an incorrect account number. Collecting some extra authorizations ensures that you will have enough to meet Fannie Mae's requirements.

- Leverage staff who know the residents best. On-site staff, resident services coordinators, or others who are regularly in contact with residents will have the most success requesting utility authorizations.

- Get a sample of different apartment types. If the property has many different unit types, include a representative mix of units in your sample.

- If the property has implemented energy and water efficiency measures that impact tenant utility bills as part of your Green Mortgage Loan commitments (e.g., refrigerators, in-unit lighting, in-unit domestic hot water heaters), make sure to get samples from units where those measures were installed.

- Consider including the tenant data authorization as part of your upfront lease package. Your Bright Power Energy Analyst can work with property staff to make sure the proper form is included. This is a great way to get a large number of authorization forms with minimal effort for both property staff and residents.

What if we have further questions?

Additional information is available on Fannie Mae's Green Financing website.

Please contact FannieMaeGreen@BrightPower.com with questions at any time.