



## New Energy Rules Planned for Government Buildings

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Government office buildings and large public structures will face energy quotas, higher utility rates for overuse and public releases of their efficiency ratings this year, the Beijing News quoted officials with the Construction Ministry as saying Thursday.

The measures are just a few of the new energy-saving programs in the pipeline.

Data suggests that government offices and large public buildings use 22 percent of the total electricity consumed in cities every year.

In Beijing, State buildings use 85.4 kWh of electricity per square meter of space every year. That is 10 to 20 times what residential buildings use, according to a release by the Beijing municipal committee of construction and the Beijing development and reform committee.

The statistics are based on audits of the offices of 20 State bodies and several large public buildings, including student dorms, hospitals, hotels, shopping malls, sports venues and commercial office buildings.

Vice-Premier Zeng Peiyan called on State bodies to take the lead in reducing their energy use during a national work conference on Party- and State-level energy-saving initiatives last week.

Zeng said this year the central government will cap the construction of State office buildings and employ more energy-saving technologies.

The central government will also introduce a contract system for energy-use and push for reform in the fees charged for air conditioning.

In October, the Ministry of Construction and Ministry of Finance jointly released a notice calling for the establishment of an appraisal system to reward or punish State office buildings and other large structures according to how efficiently they use energy.

In 2006, the State electricity bill fell 12 percent from its 2005 level. The water bill fell 19 percent and fees for overall energy consumption on a per capita basis fell 6 percent.

Kang Xiaoguang, a public management professor at Renmin University of China, said State bodies should set an example when it comes to saving energy.

"As energy pressures grow, the government should demonstrate its willingness to restrict use so other sectors, especially industry, which is hungry for energy, follow suit," he said.

New measures, especially economic tools such as pricing, will help fix the situation, he said.

Source:China Daily

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