

Case Study – Utility Bill is going up, and I am doing great!

Property Managers spend hours, days even weeks throughout the year monitoring costs and maintaining budgets. Can you imagine a case where the utility bill has in fact gone up and the Property Manager and Engineering staff is recognized for their great work?

We are all under tight cost constraints. How can the utility bill going up be a good thing?

Well, it's not necessarily a good thing that one of your largest operating costs is rising. At face value, it is in fact bad. But what about the data – can it tell us more about why the costs have gone up? Could it even tell us that we would have expected costs to rise even faster than they did?

Weather Normalized data may be the key to answering this question. On one such occasion it became the difference between a reprimand and an accommodation.

Property Snapshot		Energy Type: Chilled Water		
UNITS	PREVIOUS 12 MO	CURRENT 12 MO	% CHANGE	
Cost/sq. ft	\$1.02	\$1.13	10.7%	↑
kBtu/sq. ft	25	33	33.5%	↑

For this property, Chilled Water consumption rose over 33% compared to the previous period and the cost increased nearly 11%. First win – the cost didn't rise as fast as the consumption due to reductions in demand charges and a consumption bill audit. Nonetheless, the cost still went up.

The key question related to the temperature. Did consumption rise because there was a warmer summer in this location?

Weather Normalized Data ?		Cooling		
UNITS	PREVIOUS 12 MO	CURRENT 12 MO	% CHANGE	
WN Cooling - Btu/CDD/sq ft.	30.58	24.83	-18.8%	↓
Billed Cooling - kBtu/sq ft.	25.04	33.43	33.5%	↑
Cooling Degree Days (CDD)	818.8	1346.6	64.5%	↑
Est. Cooling Cost (Avoidance)/Opportunity			(\$75,989.24)	

We see the cooling degree days (the cooling demand on the building) increased by nearly 65%, while the actual consumption only increased by 33%. The net effect was this property was consuming less energy to cool the building that we would have expected. This benefit may have helped avoid over \$75,000 in energy costs. The engineering staff was on the ball insuring the cooling activities for this property were optimized and the data proves their activities worked.

Moral of the story, the data is very powerful. Use it to tell the story and share the wins across your portfolio.

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