

# MULTIFAMILY UTILITY DATA COLLECTION DATABASE

For multifamily building owners with utility accounts paid for by tenants, benchmarking energy consumption can be challenging, in part because each utility provider requires owners to follow a different procedure to access tenant-level energy consumption data.

This database helps owners navigate that challenge with a comprehensive catalogue of many major United States utilities and their procedures to release tenant-level and whole building energy use and cost data.

This utility profile summarizes the process for requesting data from **Columbia Gas of Virginia**. See the back page for detailed instructions and definitions. Visit the [HUD Exchange](#) to find the full utility database.

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## UTILITY NAME

Columbia Gas of Virginia

### USER-FRIENDLY SCORE

1 (most challenging) to 4 (most user-friendly)

*Overall User-Friendly Score: 3.0*

*Provides Tenant Data to Owner Score: 4*  
Provides actual monthly tenant-level data

*Tenant Data Release Forms Score: 3*  
Accepts generic release forms

*Tenant Data Comprehensiveness Score: 3*  
Historic energy use and cost data, by billing period

*Data Format Score: 2*  
Screen shot, print out and/or PDF

*Connected to Portfolio Manager: No*

### DATA RELEASE FORMS

[Generic tenant data release form](#)

### SERVICE AREA

Virginia

### ADDRESS

Columbia Gas of Virginia  
P.O. Box 742510  
Cincinnati, OH 45274

### WEBSITE

[Utility main website](#)

### CUSTOMER SERVICE CONTACT

Customer Service Back Office  
[Document Upload Form](#)  
Phone: 1-800-543-8911  
Fax: 1-866-234-2879

### SUPERVISOR CONTACT

None available

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VISIT THE [HUD EXCHANGE](#) TO SEE THE FULL DATABASE AND FIND OTHER UTILITIES

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## DEFINITIONS

**AGGREGATED DATA:** Some utilities can consolidate data for entire properties, rather than for each tenant. This option eliminates a need to collect forms from tenants to access data.

**ANTICIPATED DIFFICULTY:** This database scores utilities based on their ability to provide tenant data, aggregated data, whether they charge to release data, and format of the data they provide.

**BENCHMARKING ORDINANCE:** Some jurisdictions have legislation that requires building owners to benchmark their buildings. Utilities in these regions typically provide better access to data.

**GREEN BUTTON:** A standard data format that utilities can use to issue energy use data.

**PORTFOLIO MANAGER:** The Environmental Protection Agency's Portfolio Manager is a free tool that property owners can use to evaluate building performance. Some utilities have compatibility with the tool's Web Services feature, which can auto-populate energy data.

**TENANT WAIVER:** To protect customer privacy, many utilities require building owners to collect tenant waivers before they will release data to the owner.

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## POTENTIAL CHALLENGES WORKING WITH THIS UTILITY

Challenge 1: Property representative must submit a data release authorization for each tenant.

Challenge 2: Utility will not accept data requests by email. Property representatives must submit requests via fax or upload them online using the Document Upload form.

Challenge 3: Utility provides data via mail or fax only.

## HOW TO REQUEST DATA FROM THIS UTILITY

### HOW TO REQUEST TENANT-LEVEL DATA

Step 1: Property owners or their third party representatives fax or upload online a set of tenant release forms, specifying a date range and a contact to whom the utility should provide data (i.e. name and email, fax, or mail). A property representative may use a generic form.

Step 2: Within 1-3 days, the utility will provide data in the format of one screenshot per account. The screenshots will display energy use, billing, and cost data for the length of time requested.

### HOW TO REQUEST AGGREGATED WHOLE-BUILDING DATA

The utility does not provide actual aggregated data for the whole building, but rather just the average monthly energy use and cost.

Step 1: Property owners or their representatives may upload online or fax aggregated whole-building data requests to the customer service contact, providing a list of addresses at the property and specifying a contact to whom the utility should provide data (i.e. name and fax, or mail). A property representative must indicate that he or she wishes to receive average monthly cost and energy data for the accounts associated with each address.

Step 2: Within 1-3 days, the utility will provide average monthly cost and energy data for the whole building.

*Disclaimer: This data is current as of 3/29/17. Please note that utilities regularly update energy data release policies. This database includes scores, challenges, and steps associated with obtaining tenant data for multifamily properties, as reported by customer service agents. Contact your utility to confirm their process before requesting data.*