



NABERS

NABERS for Hotels

FAQ



NABERS for Hotels – FAQ

What is it?

NABERS for Hotels is a voluntary rating system that measures your hotel's energy and water efficiency on a scale from 1 (poor) to 6 (market leading) stars. It was developed specifically for hotels. The benchmark and methodology only contains data from real, operating hotels.

What types of hotels does NABERS rate?

NABERS hotel ratings assess all standard, suite, boutique, conference, gaming/casino, ski and spa hotels.

Why should I get a NABERS for Hotels rating?

To meet the sustainability expectations of the following customers:

Government

Under the NSW Government Resource Efficiency Policy¹ (GREP) the Office of Environment and Heritage will engage with NSW Procurement to introduce energy efficiency criteria in NSW Government hotel bookings. This is already the case in office leasing where new NSW Government office leases require a 5 star NABERS Energy rating. Get a NABERS rating and you'll have a great head start over your competitors.

Corporate

Corporations are starting to encourage staff to stay at environmentally sustainable accommodation. Property group Stockland for example asks hotels whether they have a NABERS rating as part of the procurement process which influences its decision-making. The more corporations commit to improving their green credentials, the more you'll be asked whether you have a NABERS rating.

Tourists

Sustainability is proving a magnet for green-minded tourists. Research by booking.com found 87% of travellers want to travel sustainably.² To cater for this demand, some travel booking sites are adding information and filters for green hotel ratings including NABERS. Get a NABERS rating and make sure your hotel comes up in the search results.

To save money

NABERS for Hotels helps you lower your energy and water bills. For example, Amora Hotel Jamison Sydney – a five-star luxury hotel with 418 rooms – is using NABERS to drive energy efficiency. The hotel used City of Sydney grant funding to get a NABERS rating and action plan which helped it prioritise upgrade works.

Since then, Amora has achieved significant operational savings, upgrading their chiller plant, replacing their old building management system and adding variable speed drives to exhaust, cooling tower and carpark fans and pump drives. These measures are helping the hotel reduce its annual electricity use by 25%, gas by 17% and per room carbon footprint by 27%.

Your hotel could make similar improvements.



Melbourne's Downtowner Hotel on Lygon also used NABERS to improve its efficiency. See our video case study at: [youtube.com/c/NABERS1](https://www.youtube.com/c/NABERS1).

¹ Source: <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Energy-savings-and-resource-efficiency/nsw-government-resource-efficiency-policy-180458.pdf>

² Source: booking.com research, page 8, Impact Travel Alliance's Thought Leadership Study <https://www.impacttravelalliance.org/thought-leadership-2018>

All hotels are different – how does NABERS compare and rate them fairly?

Hotels come in all shapes, sizes and operation levels. But NABERS only compares like with like. Two of the core principles of NABERS are:

- fair comparison
- measurable and verifiable data

NABERS recognises that there are fundamental differences between hotels in each quality star band in both building design and operation. A five-star hotel is expected to use more energy and water than an equivalent size 3 star hotel. This is due to the range of services offered to guests (e.g. reception, room service, food, gym) and hours of operation of those services. This is an important factor that NABERS does adjust for.

In addition to the hotel quality star rating, NABERS also adjusts for:

- number of guest rooms
- onsite laundry services
- size of heated pools
- function rooms

Note, the hotel quality star rating is managed by Star Ratings Australia with specific criteria. If there is no such hotel star rating the Assessor will determine a self-assessed star rating by comparing the hotel to similar hotels.

Does NABERS take occupancy rates into account?

A NABERS rating assumes occupancy to be 100%. This is because our research shows:

- occupancy rates are very consistent and very high across Australia
- hotels with very high occupancy rates are not disadvantaged in the rating

Will NABERS recognise my new solar array or building management system?

Only if they significantly decrease your hotel's energy/water use. NABERS is based on actual consumption data. So merely having sustainability features is not enough to influence your NABERS rating.

Solar panels, for example will only improve your hotel's rating if they are:

- installed in a place where they will generate electricity
- installed in sufficient size and capacity to make a difference to the energy use profile
- connected, cleaned and maintained

If they are not generating anything, or anything of substance, they will not improve the rating.



What can improve my rating and what's the payback period?

This depends where your hotel is on its efficiency journey.

First steps

Start with system optimisation. It's not capital intensive and you can make great savings within a short payback period. The following areas can be a cost-effective way to start:

- set points on hot water systems
- increasing dead bands
- plant start optimisation
- filter regime
- duct pressures
- air balancing

Next steps

Think about capital items like:

- lighting upgrades – particularly with 24-hour operation
- controls and items that improve control – for example Variable Speed Drives on pumps and fans
- solar panels

You can consider the energy efficiency of larger capital items like chillers and boilers when you're looking to upgrade them at the end of their life.

Do I need to disclose my rating publicly?

No. If you get a poor or below average rating the first time, don't worry – it's not uncommon and NABERS doesn't require you to disclose it publicly. The good news is a poor rating means you have an opportunity to make improvements, save energy, water and money – and get a better rating next time.

How much does a rating cost?

Rating lodgement fee

All NABERS ratings are subject to lodgement fees, see the [pricing page](#) on our website for current costs.

Assessor costs

Costs for an Assessor to carry out a rating vary depending on:

- the Assessor's fees
- the difficulty of gathering the appropriate data

Find an Assessor

Use the [Assessor Register on the NABERS website](#) to search for and commission a NABERS Hotel Assessor to do your rating. We recommend you source more than one quote to ensure you're receiving a competitive price.

Grants

Your council may offer grants. Hotels in the City of Sydney local government area for example can apply for a grant of up to \$10,000 to get a

NABERS rating. Visit the [City of Sydney website](#) for more information.



About NABERS

NABERS stands for the National Australian Built Environment Rating System.

NABERS has been highly successful in the commercial office market. Office buildings using NABERS to measure their environmental performance report an average improvement in emissions of 11.5%.

Over the life of the program NABERS-rated buildings have saved over \$792 million in energy bills.

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