

2020 Federal Energy and Water Management Awards – Frequently Asked Questions

Nomination Criteria and Guidelines Questions

Q. Are projects that save the most energy and/or water most likely to win awards?

A. No, energy and water savings is only one of several criteria considered as per Section 6 of the Criteria and Guidelines. Nominations that achieve the highest average scores from evaluators based on ALL the nomination criteria are most likely to win awards. Projects to consider submitting should also go beyond “business as usual” types of strategies, take an integrated approach to energy and/or water management, provide other types of non-energy benefits, and be replicable and transferable.

Q. What is the difference between the Project and Program award categories?

A. A Project nomination may include one or more activities implemented at a facility or campus such as application of new technologies, deep energy retrofits, process improvements, or installation of distributed energy systems. A Program nomination should focus on an innovative management approach, including the institutionalization of policies and strategies that contributed to meeting or exceeding one or more energy, water, and/or fleet management goals across an organization, region, or campus.

Q. My team installed a project in FY 2019 through a performance contract. Do I select the Contracting category or Project category?

A. Where the nomination is focused on the details of a project installed and accruing first savings in FY 2019, select the Project category. You should not select the Contracting category for a completed project strictly because a performance contract was used. The Contracting category should be used for contract/procurement-related efforts as described in the Criteria, where a contract was awarded in FY 2019.

Q. Do I use the Career Exceptional Service category to nominate an individual for FY 2019 achievements?

A. No, the Career Exceptional Service category is restricted to recognition of individual federal employees for exemplary career-long terms of service to the federal government (e.g. 15 or more years). If the individual is not being recognized for career-long accomplishments, please select the appropriate category based on the eligibility requirements and evaluation criteria, and select the “Individual” classification in the Nominees section of the nomination portal as described below.

Q. How do I differentiate an individual nomination from a team nomination?

A. Select the correct classification in the Nominees section of the nomination portal to nominate an Individual, a Small Group (team of two to five individuals who directly contributed to the nomination), or an Organization (a large team or organization that may be represented by five or fewer individuals). For individual efforts it is also strongly recommended that the written narrative include references to the attributes and contributions of the nominated individual.

Q. I would like to submit a nomination under the Project category for an effort that was completed before FY 2019 but did not win an award. Can I submit the nomination for the current competition?

A. No, FEMP will not accept nominations for Project efforts that were completed and/or began to generate savings prior to October 1, 2018. However, a project completed prior to FY 2019 may be referenced in support of an eligible Program nomination. Please see Section 3 of the 2020 Criteria and Guidelines for timing restrictions related to each category.

Q. I'd like to submit a nomination I recently developed for my agency's internal awards program. Can I submit the narrative as-is?

A. No, FEMP requires the narrative be organized by and respond to the applicable criteria per Section 6 of the 2020 Criteria and Guidelines. Nominations will be declined if the narrative does not follow this format. The goal of this requirement is to help ensure that nominators are addressing all the required criteria and providing adequate information for evaluators to fairly score the nominated efforts.

Q. Who is my Agency Coordinator?

A. Visit <https://www.energy.gov/eere/femp/federal-agency-coordinators-award-nominations> to find your Coordinator(s). If you are with the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Army Corps of Engineers, or Defense Logistics Agency, contact the Coordinator specific to your organization; for all other Defense organizations select the "Department of Defense" Coordinator.

Online Nomination System Questions

Q. I submitted a nomination in a prior year, but the system looks different. How do I access my old account?

A. The FEMP Central system was upgraded in 2019, and users must now log in with a Google account using a federal or organization email address. As a prior FEMP Central user, to have access to your historical data you should set up (or use) a Google account with the same email address used to create your old FEMP Central account. [Click here](#) for a step-by-step log-in guide. If you cannot remember the email address associated with your past FEMP Central account, contact FEMP_Communications@ee.doe.gov for assistance.

Q. I have logged into the system. How do I begin creating a nomination?

A. As soon as you sign in using Google, your personal dashboard will load. Click the "Add a Nomination" box on the top right to get started.

Q. I began developing an award nomination and saved my changes. How do I find/edit my nomination when I return to my account?

A. As soon as you sign in, your personal dashboard will load. Click on the nomination name or select the "Edit" link to continue developing your nomination. Use the "Previous" and "Next" buttons at the bottom of each screen to move through the nomination.

Q. What savings data is required to be entered into the Savings Information section of the nomination portal? Do I need to provide data for every field listed?

A. Project and Program nominations must include savings data for at least one savings category listed for the nomination to be accepted by the system; you don't need to provide data for all fields. For the Career Exceptional Service category, there is no requirement to include data, and these nominations will not be penalized in evaluation for not providing savings data. The Contracting category also does not require savings data to be entered in the system, but it is requested that nomination narratives include applicable savings estimates for the nominated procurement effort, as available. Section 6 of the Criteria and Guidelines outlines a complete list of savings data requested for each category; it is strongly recommended that the nomination narrative provide all available and applicable savings data requested.

Q. There is a mistake in a nomination that I already submitted. When I go to my dashboard, I no longer see an option to edit the nomination. How can I make the correction?

A. Once you submit a nomination for Agency review, the nomination is locked to you for editing. You may contact your Agency Coordinator to make the correction, or request that they "return" the nomination back to you for editing. Visit

<https://www.energy.gov/eere/femp/federal-agency-coordinators-award-nominations> to find the Agency Coordinator for your agency. After making corrections, you must click the “Submit” button in the lower right corner of the Submit screen to return the nomination to your Coordinator for review. If you believe your Coordinator has already approved the nomination for FEMP review, or if you are unable to reach your Coordinator and the submission deadline is approaching, please contact FEMP_Communications@ee.doe.gov for assistance.

Q. I created a test nomination (or I no longer wish to submit my nomination). How do I delete it?

A. It is not necessary to delete a “test” nomination, as the same entry may be edited to include the final information you would like to submit for evaluation. However, if you no longer wish to submit a nomination for evaluation, or if you already created a second nomination, in your dashboard click the “Delete” link that appears toward the right in the row of the nomination you wish to delete. *Please note, once a nomination is deleted it cannot be recovered.*

Q. I am a supervisor in the field for my organization, but I cannot see my organization’s nomination(s) in my dashboard when I log in. How can I review and approve the nomination(s)?

A. FEMP’s system cannot accommodate online review at the sub-agency or bureau level. Only the primary Agency Coordinator(s) at the Headquarters level has review capability. Aside from the Agency Coordinator, only the account holder who created the nomination in the system has access to the data for that nomination. FEMP therefore recommends that all reviews required by sub-agencies and bureaus are completed offline, prior to entering the nomination data into FEMP’s system.

Q. FEMP’s submission deadline is approaching and I have not talked to my Agency Coordinator about my nomination. Will my nomination be evaluated as long as I make FEMP’s deadline?

A. Not necessarily. You must submit your nomination into FEMP’s system no later than the deadline of **May 29, 2020**¹. However, FEMP requires that all claims made in an award nomination are reviewed and approved by the Headquarters level Agency Coordinator before a nomination can be submitted to FEMP for evaluation. Some agencies set internal processes and deadlines far ahead of FEMP’s deadline to provide adequate time to review nominations. FEMP strongly recommends contacting your Coordinator as soon as possible to see if your agency has a separate process or schedule. To find your Agency Coordinator visit <https://www.energy.gov/eere/femp/federal-agency-coordinators-award-nominations>.

Q. What if I complete and save a nomination in my account, but I forget to submit it prior to the deadline. Will my nomination be lost?

A. Several days prior to FEMP’s nomination deadline, the system administrator will check the system for open nominations and send you an e-mail notification reminding you to complete and submit the outstanding nomination(s) in your account. FEMP will work with your Coordinator separately and make every attempt to get your nomination approved by the final deadline.

For more information, please contact FEMP_Communications@ee.doe.gov.

¹ FEMP will issue additional guidance and information should it become necessary to make further changes to the 2020 Awards cycle.