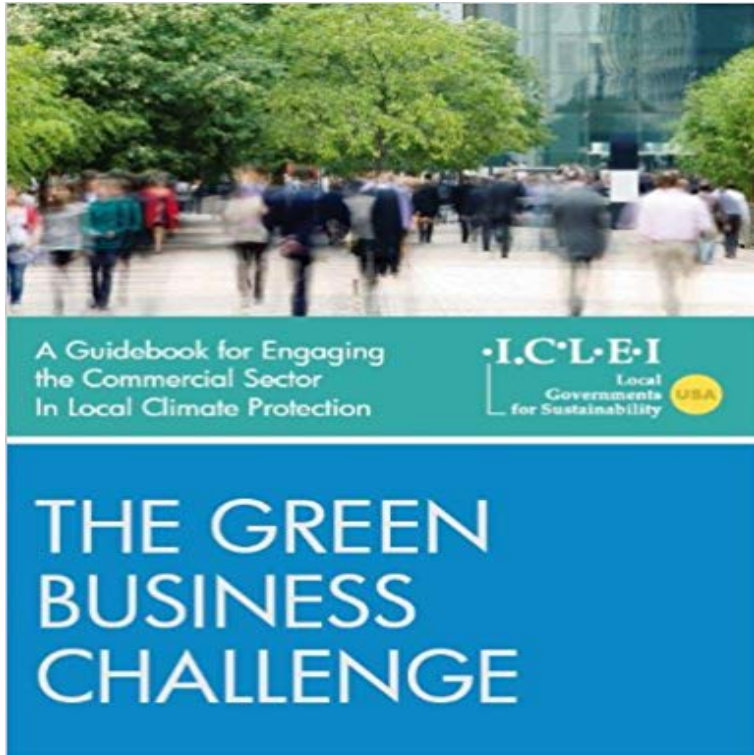


The Green Business Challenge: A Guidebook for Engaging the Commercial Sector in Local Climate Protection



This Guidebook distills the lessons learned from communities that have launched their own Green Business Challenge programs, and provides step-by-step guidance on developing a Challenge for your community. It is intended to assist local governments and Chambers of Commerce in determining how to design the program that will best meet their goals, and includes administrative tools, templates, best practices, and other resources to set your program up for success. The Green Business Challenge program evolved from a 2009 initiative by Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, who launched the Chicago Green Office Challenge as a way to significantly improve the environmental performance of commercial buildings. The program, developed in partnership with ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, was launched as a means to address greenhouse gas emissions from the commercial sector, which accounts for 39% of Chicago's greenhouse gas emissions. In its first year, over 150 companies participated and collectively saved more than \$5 million in energy and water costs, yielding a reduction of 54,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents. Chicago's Green Office Challenge garnered significant interest by local governments throughout the country as an innovative tool to inspire environmental awareness and friendly competition within the business community. By the end of 2011, ICLEI had assisted six additional communities in launching their own programs based on the Chicago model. The lessons learned from Chicago and these additional communities have been incorporated into this Guidebook as a framework for communities that are interested in starting their own Green Business Challenge program.

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