BLCC Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) (08/11/2025)

For detailed questions about using BLCC, please see the BLCC User Guide

Question: Does the BLCC web application generate the same results as the BLCC 5.3?

Yes. It was designed to provide the same types of results for the same project types as the desktop app. When comparing the results, there will be minor differences due to rounding and some nuanced methodological changes. For example, mid-year discounting is now applied to all future costs (excluding residual value) to align with new military branch guidance. The reporting will be different as well because the reports have been condensed and reformatted to provide a better user experience.

Question: What are the differences in how the BLCC web app functions relative to BLCC 5.3?

BLCC 5.3 is a desktop application that requires installation and runs everything on your local machine on which it is installed. The BLCC web app runs in your browser. It can call on project files you have stored on your local machine. The web app is Powered By NIST's Economic Evaluation Engine (E3) web API, which is a generic economic calculation engine that any web application can use to complete life cycle cost analysis (and other types of economic analysis). The BLCC web app sends E3 a request file and then E3 runs the calculations and returns an output file that the BLCC web app converts into the results reported in the web app results pages and generated reports.

Question: Can I save my data (BLCC project and/or results files)?

Yes, you can save your project and results files to your local machine for future use. You will be able to upload the project files in BLCC as well.

Question: Does BLCC store my data (project or results files) somewhere?

No. BLCC does not store any of your data. You can save your data on your local machine. BLCC is Powered By NIST's Economic Evaluation Engine (E3) web API that is hosted on a NIST maintained AWS instance (AWS is FedRAMPed). The minimum amount of the information in your project file is converted to the E3 request format, but it does not include any location information and is deleted as soon as the calculations are completed and results are returned to BLCC. BLCC does cache your most recent project file in your web browser's temporary files, which helps to pick up where you left off the last time you used the tool. But these are not accessible to anyone but the user.

Question: Can I use existing BLCC 5.3 Project Files in the BLCC web app?

Yes, you can upload existing BLCC 5.3 project files the same way you would upload an existing BLCC web app project file using the Open selection. However, due to the design of BLCC 5.3, there is some required information that is not available in BLCC 5.3 project files. This lead to two important things for which a user should be aware. First, the BLCC web app assumes a BLCC 5.3-2025 project file and will select the 2025 default values for discount rates, inflation rate, and escalation rates. Second, there may be some values that are required in the BLCC web app but not stored in the BLCC 5.3 project file. For example, the BLCC web app requires a ZIP Code for some of the energy related default data selection. It is highly recommended that the user double check imported values before running the results.

Question: What are the new capabilities or features not available in BLCC 5.3?

Key changes/improvements include the following:

- Shift to a web-based tool from a desktop application, avoiding any installation requirements
- Simplified interface design while providing flexibility in collecting user inputs, such as through removing the usage index for some cost types and allowing the user to specify an initial occurrence, rate of recurrence, duration, and value rate of change.
- Better navigation capabilities
- More user-friendly tips and guidance for user inputs
- More flexibility to include a variety of cost types or input values as costs or savings independent of analysis type
- Ability to evaluate a bundled project across multiple locations (e.g., different states)
- Added an "Other" cost option to allow for inclusion of both monetary and non-monetary costs and benefits that may be pertinent to the project analysis
- Reports a single metric for operational energy-related emissions
- Added results pages, including figures, to the user interface that did not previously exist and improved organization of results
- Provide results for energy consumption by fuel type
- Downloadable PDF and CSV results files to replace the text-based results files
- Ability to upload an existing project in the BLCC 5.3 xml file format
- Includes default data for both the current year and previous year release to allow for validation of analysis completed in the previous year, which is not feasible in BLCC 5.3

- Greater ability to change or expand capabilities in the future for improved interface maintenance and updates (e.g., alternative energy price projection and emissions rate scenarios)