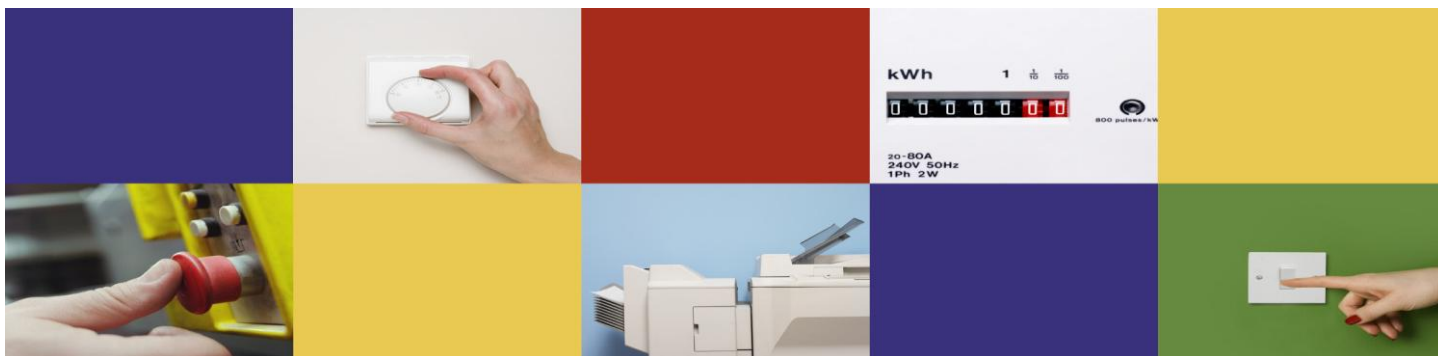




Energy Update

LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

Issue 6 October '22

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Issue 6 of the Energy Newsletter. It's been a while from our last issue, however Energy projects within the Councils buildings have been consistent and lots of new works have been achieved which have brought us lots of both Financial and Carbon savings.

This issue will inform you of the projects Louth County Council have implemented, as well as giving you ideas on how you can save Energy both in the workplace and at home as we all face huge, rising energy costs during the winter months.

So let's keep energy at the forefront of all that we do here in Louth County Council.

Question: So what are we in Louth County Council doing to tackle climate change and save Energy?

Answer: Future Proofing Our Buildings with Green Steps



Photo 1: Newly erected PV panels on Dundalk Town Hall April 2022

New Solar PV panels have been installed at Dundalk Town Hall and the Civil Defence Building. These works have added to the existing renewable energy installations with 2 new solar panel systems now increasing our installed capacity to 30kW. LCC first installed solar panels back in

2014 at the County Museum and then again in 2017 at County Hall. Having monitored these projects, we have seen how well they perform, the clear benefits and how easy they are to install and maintain. The PV panels are great example of how generating our own renewable energy can reduce costs and tackle carbon emissions. In monitoring and recording our data from the solar panels we concluded that they were consistently outperforming their predicted electricity generation. Even with our Irish weather pattern they work well and are providing clean energy that can be utilised in council buildings. This form of **Green Energy** might be something worth exploring in your home

Answer: Transitioning to Sustainable Modes of Transport

Five new electric vans have been acquired by Louth County Council. They have been assigned to Operations for the litter warden in Drogheda, to the dog warden Veterinary Services, to Corporate for the caretaker in County Hall, and to the Housing Section, with more new EVs are currently on order.

Making this an easier way of travelling new EV charging points have been rolled out County wide and more new fast charging points are on the way - Thanks to LCCs leadership role in the EU funded Horizon 2020 **FASTER** Project, - Louth County Council and other associate partners are carrying out preliminary assessments of sites to short list for final selection for the 25 EV Rapid Chargers across the border counties



Photo 2: LCCs new fleet of Electric Vans

Answer: Air Source Heat Pump for County Hall and the Animal Compound

New Air Source Heat Pump has been installed in County Hall, County Archives Building and the Animal Compound.

Air Source Heat Pumps work by transferring heat absorbed from the outside air to an indoor space. This works via the wet central heating systems to heat radiators and provides domestic hot water. Heat pumps work similarly to a refrigerator: they absorb heat and transfer it to another medium. In Co. Hall it is used to keep an ambient heat using the underfloor heating for vast foyer area and the ground floor motor tax area and in the animal compound maintaining the appropriate level of heating for the kennel area

This renewable technology is likely to play an increasing role in heating our homes and buildings.



Photo 3: Air Source New Heat Pump at County Hall

Answer: Data Loggers

Many data loggers have been installed in the County Archives Building, Co. Hall, Town Hall, Dundalk and Drogheda Fire Stations. These loggers allow us to monitor gas and electricity use, as well as giving us up to the minute information on our carbon and electrical savings from our newly installed Solar Photo Voltaic Units

Maintaining Essential Services

In 2022 LCC installed a new power generator in Co. Hall. This is located adjacent to the rear door of the building beside the bicycle shelter. The generator automatically switches on in the event of any power outages, allowing essential services to continue, along with the uninterrupted running the building systems such as lighting, our computer servers and other essential items of equipment.



Photo 4: New Generator at County Hall

TIPS ON HOW TO REDUCE ENERGY AND SAVE MONEY

Appliances and lighting combined account for one fifth of all the energy used in your home but there are ways to reduce the energy consumed and save money.

A good rule of thumb is **if it makes things hot, then it uses a lot of electricity**. For example, electric showers, kettles, tumble dryer and hairdryers

Fridge/freezer

Close the fridge door as quickly as possible. If it's open for even 20 seconds it takes 45 minutes for the fridge to cool down to its original temperature.

Defrost your freezer regularly. The SEAI recommends to do it every six months to help it run efficiently.

Dishwasher

Only turn on the dishwasher when it is fully loaded. Use a low temperature setting and an eco-setting, if it has one.

Washing machine



Use a lower temperature of 30 degrees and wait until you have a full load before turning it on, but don't overload it.

Tumble dryer

Avoid using a tumble dryer if possible. Instead use a clothes horse or, if the weather allows, hang washing outdoors. If the dryer has to be used, turn it on during off-peak hours and keep the filters clean.

Boiler

Get it serviced once a year to run more efficiently. You should ask your plumber to explain the settings and how to use them correctly.

Oven

The oven is one of the most expensive appliances in the home to run. Close the door quickly after opening while cooking or it will have to reheat itself which will require more energy. Batch cooking saves time and energy. It is better to use a microwave for smaller meals instead of your oven.

Kettle

Only boil the kettle for the amount of water you need, there are measurements on it to help you.

Mobile Phones

Don't charge your phone at night time when you're in bed. The device might only need one hour to fully charge, not the seven or eight hours while you sleep.

Standby mode

Plug out appliances when not in use. Even in standby mode they are using 20% of the energy they would consume if they were on. So, if there's any kind of light on, it means there's electricity going through the device.

Electric Ireland says devices on "standby" typically make up about 7% of a home's energy usage. It says laptops should only be plugged in when being charged and should be unplugged when not in use.



Lighting

Turn off lights when you are leaving a room or when you do not need them.

Use low energy LED lights, especially in rooms you use a lot, like the living room and kitchen. An LED light bulb uses around 80-90% less electricity than a standard bulb and will last up to 10 times longer.

Replacing all the light bulbs in your home could easily save you up to €60 a year depending on how many lights you have.

Heating

Turn the thermostat for your living areas down to 20°C.

The temperature in hallways and bedrooms should be cooler, ideally between 15-18°C. A heating bill could be reduced by 10% by simply lowering room temperature by just one degree.

Turn the radiator temperature down or off in rooms that are not used a lot.

Close doors between rooms that are heated and unheated to keep the heat in.

Have a shower instead of a bath as a shower typically uses 20% of the energy compared to a full bath.

Use timers to control when heating and when the immersion comes on.

Shop Around and Make a Switch

Shopping around and comparing energy prices can really make a big difference. Take control of your bills; Compare and Switch

Hot water Savings

According to bonkers.ie, to reduce water heating costs by up to 30% you need to make sure your tank is properly insulated with a three-inch thick lagging jacket.

Home Energy Monitor Kits

If you want to see how much energy an appliance is using, an energy monitor can be used.

Home Energy Saving Kits are available to borrow in our 3 full time Library branches IN Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee. Furthermore, energy kits are also available in more than 120 libraries across Ireland which allow home owners to monitor their energy usage and insulation levels. So spread the word to family and friends far and near.

FOLLOW THESE TIPS AND SAVE MONEY !!!

As you can see lots is happening in the energy section. As always we need your help for any new ideas and **We welcome your suggestions** to continue with our savings. Please email: energy@louthcoco.ie