

**Over 100,000 Irish homes assessed
under the Building Energy Rating scheme-
Sustainable Energy Ireland reveals latest BER figures**

Figures released today (21 February 2010) from Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI) reveal that over 100,000 Irish homes have had Building Energy Ratings (BERs) completed to date, the majority of which were completed since January 2009, the first year for full implementation of the BER scheme. Introduced in 2007 as part of a European Directive to improve the energy performance of homes, the rate of BER publications has steadily increased in 2009, averaging 300 per day, and indicating an increasing awareness of, and compliance with, the legislation.

Initially the scheme only applied to new homes, but since 1 January 2009 all homes being sold or rented are also required to have a BER certificate that shows prospective buyers or tenants the energy performance of the home. Research shows that landlords are the group most aware of the need for a BER certificate, with awareness now at 76%. While awareness is improving in most quarters, tenants looking to rent are the least aware of their entitlement to get a BER cert with awareness only at 38%.

Commenting on the BER programme, Minister for Communications, Energy, and Natural Resources, Eamon Ryan TD said: "The BER Scheme is a practical scheme which helps current and prospective homeowners make informed choices when selecting or upgrading a property. The success of the scheme last year shows that the energy performance and efficiency of a property is becoming increasingly important for Irish homeowners. "

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, John Gormley TD said: "The systems now in place and the increasing consumer awareness will be important factors in the continuous improvement of the energy performance of our building stock. This will help underpin future Building Regulation changes and efforts to upgrade existing buildings. "

Professor Owen Lewis, Chief Executive SEI, said: "Putting aside the difficult economic conditions in 2009, the first year of full operation of the BER scheme has been a successful one. However, there are many homes for sale or rent out there that have not yet been

assessed, and need to be, if they are not to fall foul of the regulations. SEI is calling on people who are looking to buy or rent homes to insist upon receiving a BER certificate as their right, so they are fully informed of the energy performance before finalising any property transactions. ”

Ends

About SEI:

Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI) is the statutory authority charged with promoting and assisting the development of sustainable energy. SEI is funded by the Irish Government under the National Development Plan, with programmes part-financed by the European Union. As the national energy authority, SEI has a lead role in developing and maintaining comprehensive national and sectoral statistics for energy production, transformation and end use. This data is a vital input to meeting international reporting obligations, for advising policy makers and informing investment decisions.

Notes to the Editor:

SEI has been designated as the Issuing Authority with responsibility for the registration of BER assessors, logging of BER assessments and the overall administration of the BER scheme. Local Authority building control officers are the main enforcement body under the BER regulations.

In order to obtain a BER, a homeowner must have an assessment carried out by a certified BER assessor who is trained under the National Framework of Qualifications and registered with SEI. There are 2,045 SEI registered BER assessors across the country. A full list and further details are available at the SEI website: www.sei.ie/ber