



Survey Reveals Concerns Over Climate Change in Ireland
New research released to mark the start of Energy Awareness Week 2005

Monday, 19th September - 80% of Irish people believe that Ireland's climate is changing according to a recent survey conducted by Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI). 65% of those surveyed are worried about the effects of climate change and the impact it will have on future generations, with the majority citing more storms and floods and warmer summers as the most likely effects in the future.

The survey delved into the area of Climate Change and Irish people's perception of the problem. The research was conducted to mark the start of this year's Energy Awareness Week, the theme of which is Combat Climate Change, aiming to encourage Irish consumers to log on to www.combatclimatechange.ie. Climate Change is already affecting Ireland, as evidenced in recent years by the increase in extreme weather events such as floods, storms and droughts. The impact it will have on our country by 2050 will be sizeable, including warmer, wetter winters as temperatures continue to increase.

The majority of people surveyed believe that their actions do affect climate change with 52% citing that although they are aware of the dangers of Climate Change they find it hard to be more energy efficient. 59% of those surveyed cited the Greenhouse Effect as the main cause of Climate change with 32% believing that excess energy usage led to the problem.

Commenting, Tom Halpin, Head of Customer Services SEI said "As this year's Energy Awareness Week theme is "Combat Climate Change" we thought we'd conduct some research into Irish consumers perceptions of this problem. We were really encouraged to find so many of those surveyed are aware of the problem of Climate Change and understand that their actions affect it. Over 50% of those surveyed however find it hard to be energy efficient. We hope that our campaign will highlight to people that there are simple actions we can all take to be more energy efficient and help to combat climate change"

According to those surveyed the worst thing about the Irish Climate is the unpredictable weather 48% of those surveyed claimed that summer was their favourite season with only 12% favouring the winter cold. The majority of those surveyed cited walking (39%) and sunbathing (28%) as their favoured seasonal activities in the Spring/Summer with 42% claiming that their favoured winter activity involved sitting at home in front of an open log fire.

Energy Awareness Week runs throughout W/C 18th of September, and will see numerous initiatives taking place nation-wide. To find out more about Energy Awareness Week and ways that you can help to Combat Climate Change just log on to www.combatclimatechange.ie

Sustainable Energy Ireland was established on May 1st, 2002, as a statutory authority charged with promoting and assisting the development of sustainable energy and is funded by the Irish Government under the National Development Plan 2000-2006 with programmes part financed by the European Union.

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Many Irish celebrities have spoken out about the problem of Climate Change and are supporting this campaign in the hope that Irish consumers will endeavour to be more energy efficient.

Ian Dempsey

"I always thought climate change was some futuristic idea that would never happen. But looking at some of the recent weather events I think this is something we can't ignore any more. I'm no expert but I know that if you listen to the radio you use a lot less valuable energy than watching TV. If you are listening to the radio or watching TV remember that it only takes a second to switch off rather than leave on stand-by which uses up extra energy."

Caroline Morohan

"Energy awareness is something that we should all encourage in each other. A lot of us are so caught up in our busy lives we don't take the time to consider how wasteful we can be. With global warming now accelerating at a frightening pace, energy conservation is vital. It is everyone's responsibility."

Linda Martin

"I'm very concerned with saving energy so much so that my car runs on diesel, the light bulbs in my house are all energy saving and something which I believe is very important, I never ever leave my TV on standby. Think about the hot water tank & insulate, insulate, insulate. I think we can all do something to help save energy and the environment by implementing even small changes, it all makes a difference."

Glenda Gilson

"Our climate is changing. You just need to look at the weather reports to see this. I took the SEI Combat Climate Change challenge and was amazed at how simple it is to change simple habits and be more energy efficient. If we all take the challenge our collective efforts can have a real positive impact."

Eanna NiLamhna, Author

"Most of the energy we use every day in Ireland comes from burning fossil fuels. As well as costing us more and more money it is also causing climate change - a change for the worse in most cases. So it really makes sense at every level to cut down our usage and be more energy efficient. So dig out that bicycle, turn down the heating, never leave anything on standby, recycle aluminium cans, dine by candlelight!!! It all helps."

Here a list of the Top Ten ways to save energy

1. Turn your TV off rather than leave it on stand-by – equipment on stand-by uses up to 20% of the energy it would use when fully on
2. Walk or cycle instead of driving for short journeys– it costs nothing and is good for you

3. Turn your heating down – reducing your thermostat by one degree celsius will knock 10% off your heating bill
4. Buy 'A' rated kitchen appliances – they cost less to run and over time will give you considerable savings on your electricity bill
5. Use energy efficient light bulbs (CFLs) instead of traditional bulbs – they use 1/5th energy and last up to 10 times as long
6. Insulate your attic – attic insulation will keep the heat in your home for longer and pay for itself in 2-3 years
7. Fit a lagging jacket – lagging your hot water cylinder will keep the water hotter for longer and pay for itself in 2-3 months
8. Don't overfill your kettle – only boil as much water as you need
9. Fit thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) to your radiators
10. Support renewable energy initiatives in your community

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