

Media Release**07 December, 2011****Irish Energy Use Falls Slightly in 2010****Energy efficiency gains counteract increased energy use due to cold weather
last winter**

Launching two statistical reports today, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) has announced that energy use in Ireland fell by 0.3% in 2010 when increased energy use, as a result of the particularly cold winter, was offset by improved energy efficiency and economic factors. These findings were published in SEAI's annual report *Energy in Ireland 1990-2010*, while *Electricity and Gas Prices in Ireland (1st Semester 2011)* shows that the majority of households in Ireland enjoyed lower energy prices for the first half of this year.

Energy in Ireland Report for 2010:

Declines recorded in energy use due to reduced economic activity (23% in industry and 18% in transport since 2007) were largely offset in 2010 by increased demand for heat in the built environment due to an unusually cold winter last year. 2010 did however, see a continuation of the appreciation of energy efficiency across all sections of society in Ireland, particularly in the residential sector.

Commenting, Professor J. Owen Lewis, Chief Executive of SEAI said: *"While energy use in the residential sector increased by nearly 6% in response to the sustained cold weather at the end of last year, when this demand is climate corrected, it indicates a 2.9% decrease in energy use which continues the year-on-year downward trend."* Continuing: *"We are now starting to see the positive impact of the Better Energy programme as more and more homes benefit from energy efficiency upgrades."*

Electricity and Gas Prices in Ireland – first half of 2011:

The majority of Ireland's households experienced lower electricity prices in the first half of 2011, with average decreases above 6% for many users. Gas prices also reduced for all

residential users by an average of over 3%. For the majority of households, gas and electricity prices still remain below the EU average.

The report details both positive and negative changes in electricity and gas prices for business consumers depending on their particular consumption band.

“While it is a mixed bag for business energy users, it is important to point out that comparisons with our EU neighbours remain favourable for most business customers. On the whole, the majority of households have paid less for their energy requirements in the first half of 2011 ” concluded Professor Lewis.

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About SEAI:

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) has a mission to play a leading role in the transformation of Ireland to a society based on sustainable energy structures, technologies and practices. The Authority is partly financed by Ireland’s EU Structural Funds Programme co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Union.