

## **Household appliances left on standby are costing Irish economy up to €35 million each year**

***Launch of Energy Awareness Week 2003  
People urged to act to save money and the environment - "See Red Switch Off"***

Leaving domestic appliances on standby, rather than switching them off fully, is costing the Irish economy millions in wasted energy consumption each year – and damaging our environment in the process. That is according to Tom Halpin of Sustainable Energy Ireland, who was speaking in Dublin today at the launch of Energy Awareness Week 2003, which runs from Sept. 21st - 27th.

According to Mr. Halpin, appliances left on standby in an average Irish home result in 30 watts of electricity being wasted each hour. Over one year, that equates to the same amount of energy as 220 loads in the washing machine, or leaving a 60 watt bulb on constantly for 150 days.

Mr. Halpin said, "If we were to consider that all households leave their appliances on standby for all the time they are not in use, then total standby power consumption in the residential sector could be costing as much €35 million each year in wasted energy. This represents 5% of all residential electricity consumption and about 1.6% of Ireland's total electricity consumption, accounting for over a quarter of a million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), the main greenhouse gas. This cost could, however, be eliminated altogether if everyone switched off all their appliances fully when not in use."

The main standby offenders in any Irish home are TVs, Video Recorders, DVDs, Video Games, Satellite Decoders, Hi-Fi's, PCs + Monitors and Microwave Ovens. This list is not exhaustive however, and in the case of TVs, computers, and VCRs, there are often more than one in a home.

Mr. Halpin continued, "A huge proportion of greenhouse gas emissions of which carbon dioxide, (CO<sub>2</sub>) is the main one, are produced as a result of the energy we use in our daily lives. In addition, householders are all too aware of the continuing rise in energy and electricity prices. In time, the proposed carbon tax will also result in price rises designed to stimulate reduced energy use.

So, becoming more energy efficient will save you money as well as benefiting the environment. There are lots of simple actions people can take to reduce their energy use– for example turning off electrical appliances rather than leaving them on stand-by. We want everyone to *See Red and Switch Off*. Also when purchasing household appliances, check the energy label and choose the most efficient one you can. These are just two of the many simple actions we can take to save energy in our daily lives”.

Throughout Energy Awareness Week, a series of initiatives will take place, aimed at increasing public awareness of energy efficiency. Energy Awareness Week, which is organised by Sustainable Energy Ireland, is the single most important platform for promoting energy efficiency in Ireland, emphasising how important it will be for individuals to change their purchase and usage patterns in relation to energy in order to benefit the environment.

Mr. Halpin concluded by saying, “Clearly, there is a challenge for all sectors of this economy to become involved in the drive for greater energy efficiency. We are appealing to all consumers in Ireland to throw their weight behind the Energy Awareness Week campaign and to respond with genuine action”.

Sustainable Energy Ireland was established on May 1st, 2002, as a statutory authority charged with promoting and assisting the development of sustainable energy. Sustainable Energy Ireland 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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