

# €coCert

Membership Newsletter, Autumn 2011

## RECENT ECOCERT AWARDS

### County Waterford

## DUNHILL ECOPARK

### Presented By Minister Hogan

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Phil Hogan TD took the opportunity of presenting an EcoCert certificate during his recent visit to Waterford.

He was attending a national jobs conference hosted by Dunhill EcoPark. Minister Hogan highlighted that there are over 100 people working in enterprises in the EcoPark - showing an excellent example of what can be achieved by local communities working with local authorities and development agencies.

Dunhill now plan to extend their EcoCert project to include their tenant businesses, in order that the whole site can demonstrate their green credentials along with their rural employment and business success.



L to R: Ray O'Dwyer, Waterford County Manager; Anne O'Sullivan, Waterford County Council; Paul Dunne, Dunhill EcoPark; Phil Hogan TD, Minister for Environment, Community & Local Government; Helen Kavanagh, Interreg Action Dunhill; and Willie Moore, Chairperson, Dunhill Rural Enterprises Ltd.



L to R: Gerry Cahalin of Dundrum Town Centre and An Cathaoirleach Cllr John Bailey.

### Dún Laoghaire - Rathdown

## DUNDRUM TOWN CENTRE

### Presented by An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. John Bailey

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. John Bailey presented Dundrum Town Centre Management Company with the County's first ever Ecocert certificate.

With the focus on continuous improvement, new projects to be undertaken at Dundrum Town Centre include a waste minimisation pilot study; a water conservation programme investigating the viability of rainwater harvesting and/or spring water for toilet areas; and reducing energy costs with solar panels.

Gerry Cahalin, Logistics Manager for the Town Centre remarked, "We are delighted and honoured to have received this certification". He also paid tribute to 160 businesses hosted in the Centre whom are committed to the concept of sustainability.

€coCert is a service provided by €concertive supported by The Environmental Protection Agency, Laois County Council, Offaly County Council, Waterford City Council, Waterford County Council and Dún Laoghaire - Rathdown County Council.

## Energy Prices on the Rise



# Focus on Electricity

Ireland's electricity suppliers are in the process of increasing their charges by anything up to 22%. It therefore makes sense to have a close look at your supply contract, and how it might be affected.

Each supplier has a range of tariffs. The one which they apply to you will depend on your metering set-up and your usage levels. This does mean that you need to take a little time to check out your options carefully. We recommend that you should;

- Contact your existing supplier and ask them what you will be paying in future.
- Shop around, and compare this with the alternatives. Your main options are ESB, Bord Gais, Airtricity and Energia.
- Consider your options of choosing a 'fixed rate' contract (which means you will know exactly what you will pay over the term of the contract) or a 'variable rate' contract (which is usually cheaper in the short term, but which can change at any time without notice).

If you are a relatively small user, you will be on a DG5 or DG6 rating (look at the box on the top right corner of your bill), and your supplier will offer 'standard' tariffs.

Larger users will normally be on a DG7 rating, and in this case you can often negotiate your own customised deal.

Whether large or small, you can engage an agent to do the checking and/or negotiating for you. Usually they will get their fee from the electricity supplier, and so will cost you nothing. You do need, of course, to make sure the deal they come up with is to your benefit.

**Our thanks to Chris O'Sullivan of Contract Direct Sales for assisting with this article. To contact Chris, who specializes in assisting SME's with their electricity contracts Mob: 087 2666 842 or 087 7615 911**

**Email: [chris@contractdirectsales.com](mailto:chris@contractdirectsales.com)**

## Reading Your Meter

If you have one of the new electronic 'smart' meters, they aren't too easy to read. The ESB website has a good guidance section to help you there. [www.esb.ie](http://www.esb.ie)



You may also have the option of monitoring electricity on-line. Check with your supplier for this facility.

## Technical Guidance

# What is your Carbon Footprint for Electricity?



For most fuels, it is quite easy to measure the carbon footprint of what you burn. There is a straight-forward multiplier to convert the quantity you use into kilogrammes of carbon.

Electricity is just the same. On your bill, you will see a figure giving kilogrammes of carbon per KWhr (or 'unit' of electricity). Each supplier reports their own performance, and also the grid average for Ireland.

So that seems simple enough. Just take your total units for the year, and multiply them by the performance figure for your supplier. That is your carbon footprint for the electricity you used.

However, another school of thought takes the view that the same electrons flow through your wires, regardless of who you are buying them from. If this is your view, the grid average performance is the better figure to use.

**Both are perfectly valid viewpoints, as long as you apply your choice consistently.**

For what it is worth, we think that grid average performance is the better measure. This is why.

Our electricity supplier is Airtricity, the 'greenest' supplier in Ireland. Their generating power is entirely by wind turbines. They buy extra capacity from the grid when the wind isn't blowing hard enough to meet their demand.

If you look at Airtricity's environmental performance, you will see it has deteriorated.

Airtricity	2007	2008	2009
Kg/KWhr	0.142	0.142	0.203
% Renewables	79%	69%	66%

(Latest available figures).

The wind in Ireland probably hasn't lessened over the years. More likely, Airtricity has just been getting more successful at selling, and so has had to buy more capacity from the grid.

**That's why grid average performance is our preferred measure - it irons out market distortions.**