

Summary

The project aim was to recruit ten small Wexford businesses and support them in the objective of achieving average annual savings of €2,000. They would do this by improving their control of energy, waste and water.

The participants each paid €250 for their project support, and were guaranteed that their annual savings would exceed their fee.

In the event, thirteen businesses took part, achieving average annual savings of €4,407.

The total annual savings achieved was therefore €57,291, or 186% above the project target of €20,000.

In addition, three of the businesses were given assistance to bring them into compliance with environmental law, and six businesses went on to achieve EcoMerit environmental certification.

The project was designed and run by three partner organisations (see below).

Project Savings Achieved

Subject Area	Average Annual Savings
Energy	€3,103
Waste	€1,010
Water	€294
Total Average	€4,407

Energy Example –

Youth Train, Wexford



Youth Train CTC Wexford trains low qualified young people to develop the skills, knowledge and attitude to access and sustain quality employment.

The Issue

Having recently moved to larger premises, energy costs had increased proportionately, but the energy budget had not.

The Solution

A number of opportunities were identified;

- The landlord had accidentally allowed the electricity to go 'out of contract' resulting in unnecessarily high charges.
- The contracted electrical capacity for the building was too high and attracting excessive monthly charges.
- Some areas were over-lit, allowing some lightbulbs to be removed.
- The workshop lighting was inefficient and suitable for upgrading.
- The water boiler was left on for longer than needed.

The Metrics

The new electricity contract saves €975 per year.

Lighting upgrades will cost €600 & save €400 per year.

Removing excess bulbs will save €50 per year.

A water boiler timer cost €10 and saves €70 per year.

Total Cost - €610
Annual Savings - €1,495
Payback Time - 5 months

Waste Example –

Slaney Farms Produce



Slaney Farms are proud growers and producers of quality potatoes for the Irish market.

The Issue

All categories of waste were disposed of via a large compactor, which attracted high landfill waste rates and significant rental charges.

The Solution

Examination of the waste mix indicated that 90% was recyclable – mainly plastics and cardboard. Segregation of waste at source will avoid landfill charges.

The Metrics

This will direct 9 tonnes per year to recycling, saving €1,600 in landfill and compactor hire costs. This is an overall 54% cost saving.

Total Cost - nil.
Annual Savings - €1,600
Payback Time - immediate

Investment in a baler (currently being considered) would allow the cardboard and plastics to be sold rather than paid for, saving a further €650+ per year.

Water Example –

Clifford House



This luxury B&B guesthouse overlooks the sea at Rosslare Harbour.

The Issue

Water use had not previously been examined.

The Solution

Fitting flow restrictors to the showers to avoid excessive water use.

The Metrics

This will save 175 litres of hot water per day.

Total Cost - €36
Annual Savings - €435
Payback Time - 1 month

Recommendations

At present, small businesses remain reluctant to commit to anything non-essential.

This approach offers a proven template for engaging with SME's to achieve real measurable improvements in their sustainability.

This model could readily be developed and extended for wider use across Ireland.

The Cleaner Greener Production Programme (CGPP) of the EPA was funded under the National development plan 2007 - 2013. CGPP is now known as the Green Enterprise Programme (GEP) and was launched in 2012 as a grant scheme to fund Irish organisations to implement cleaner greener practices while achieving significant cost savings. Greener Production is the application of integrated preventive environmental strategies to processes, products and services to increase overall efficiency and reduce risks to humans and the environment.

- Production processes: conserving raw materials and energy, eliminating toxic raw materials, and reducing the quantity and toxicity of all emissions and wastes
- Products: reducing negative impacts along the life cycle of a product, from raw materials extraction to its ultimate disposal.
- Services: incorporating environmental concerns into designing and delivering services.

The programme aims are focussed on avoiding and preventing adverse environmental impact rather than treating or cleaning up afterwards. This approach brings better economic and environmental efficiency. The GEP is funded by the NWPP programme. Additional case studies from companies that participated in CGPP are available on the website www.begreen.ie

More information is available from the EPA:

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