

## Top tips for energy efficiency in hotels

Over the coming years, Ireland must use less energy, move to clean energy, and innovate to create new solutions to meet our energy needs. There is significant potential for hotels to participate in Ireland's sustainable energy future.

Energy efficiency can help save money and make your business more resilient to rising energy costs, as well as reducing the carbon impact of your business. Customers are embracing green business, and it is increasingly important to show what your hotel is doing to address sustainability.

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) is here to help you start on your energy efficiency journey. In deciding what work to do, we recommend that you first focus on energy efficiency and then on maximizing use of renewable energy resources. Generally, approaching energy management and upgrades in this order works best:

1. Implement good energy management practices across the organisation.
2. Consider which appropriate energy efficiency upgrades can be made to reduce energy use.
3. Install renewable sources of energy to help support your own energy demand.

### **Implement good energy management practices**

Estimates say that you can save up to 10% on your energy bills through good energy management practices alone.

- Check your energy bills regularly: Give someone responsibility for looking at the business energy usage and costs; and identifying where the big spend items are.
- Changing how staff use energy is also important, such as switching off equipment when not in use.
- Space heating is a major cost for many hotels. You can save energy without negatively effecting comfort through using heating controls and timers and zoning the hotel, depending on how and when the space is used.

### **Improve energy efficiency to reduce energy use**

Energy efficiency means looking at where you can use less energy. Working with businesses we understand how important it is to ensure that any changes or investments make long-term financial sense. Over a three-year period, if a business has an operating profit of 5%, a saving of €500 per year through energy efficiency makes the same profit as €30,000 in extra sales.

- Insulate! Almost 60% of heat can be lost from the roof, walls and windows in a hotel. Also ensure you insulate all pipework and valves in your heating system.
- If you are replacing windows, ensure you choose glazing with the highest energy efficiency rating possible.
- You can save up to 60% on your lighting bills through upgrading to LEDs. You should also consider lighting controls which can optimise lighting depending on usage and time of day.
- Make sure you check the energy rating of new equipment. Consider the entire lifetime cost of the equipment. Spending more initially may save you over the lifetime of the equipment.

### **Install renewable sources of energy**

Using renewable energy can help buffer against rising energy costs and security of supply issues. Renewable heating technologies that may be appropriate to your business include: heat pumps, biomass/biogas boilers and solar thermal panels for hot water. The installation of Solar Photovoltaic (PV) panels along with appropriately sized battery storage, can help you to meet the electricity demands of your business.

### **Support for biomass and biogas**

A Government-funded tariff is now available through SEAI for businesses that install an eligible heating system in a new build or in place of an existing fossil fuel heating system. It provides either a 30% grant for heat pumps or an ongoing quarterly payment for 15 years based on demand for biomass or biogas heating systems.

Switching to renewable heat is a good decision for both financial and environmental reasons. You can now save money and reduce the carbon footprint of your business.

For example, a hotel of 4,500 square metres might typically expect to use 800 MWh of heat energy per year. This costs approximately €40,000 for gas. If they switched from a gas boiler to a biomass boiler, they could expect to pay a little more for wood pellet fuel –perhaps €53,000. However, they could expect a tariff of €32,000 per year paid quarterly for 15 years, bringing annual fuel costs to €21,000. That's a net saving of €19,000 per year.\*

### **Grants for heat pumps**

In addition, a 30% Government grant is available from SEAI towards the cost of installing a heat pump system. Heat pumps are a renewable technology and an efficient alternative to heating systems that burn fossil fuels. They are electrical devices, which convert energy from the air, ground or water outside of your building into useful heat. This heat can be used for heating buildings, hot water and for use in manufacturing processes. In well-insulated buildings, they are very economical to run and give substantial savings on fuel costs.

### **Learning more**

- If you want to learn more about what SEAI can offer your business, contact our Business Team on [business@seai.ie](mailto:business@seai.ie)
- For more information on the supports available, visit [www.seai.ie](http://www.seai.ie)
- To sign up to our SME newsletter check out <https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/small-and-medium-business/>