



Watt Footprint



Energy Efficiency Insights for Irish SMEs:

How to Protect Margins When Costs Are Rising

Your quick-guide to reducing energy waste, taking action and keeping your business in control.

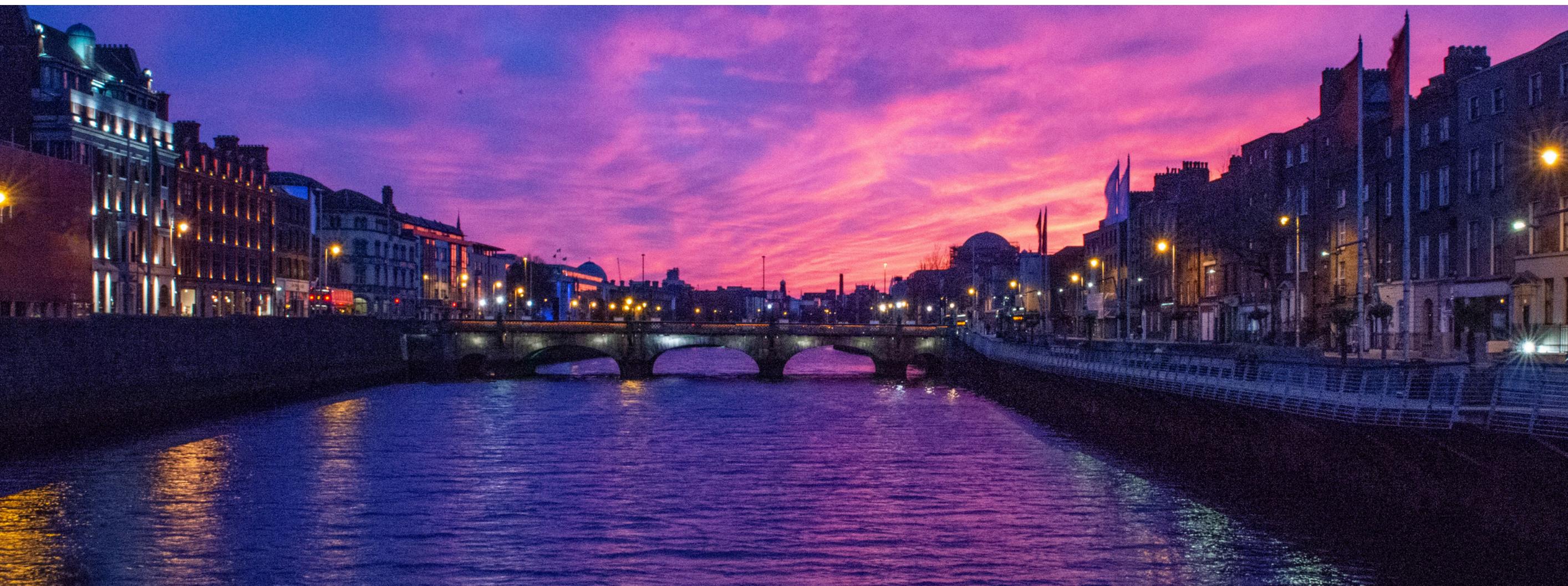


Introduction

Energy costs are climbing, margins are shrinking and many businesses only discover the impact when the bill arrives. For SMEs when profit margins are already tight, the stakes are high and every cent (and kilowatt) counts.

Improving energy efficiency doesn't just reduce bills, it strengthens your business resilience, gives you clarity and protects you from future cost shocks.

Contact the Watt Footprint team for a complimentary (no-strings-attached) call to discuss the options available for your business.





Quick & Easy Wins

These are steps you can take today, with little or no investment.

Stop using what you don't need.

When you close the doors and lock up for the evening or weekend, always minimise what been left turned on. This is called your base-load.

If you can reduce just 1kW of energy, you will
save a staggering **€2,184 per year.**

Why? Because there are 8,736 hours in the year and the average cost of Electricity in Ireland is 25c/kwh ($0.25c \times 8,736\text{hrs} = €2,184$)

Switch off unused lights and appliances

Many businesses are paying for power outside trading hours. Simple timers or behavioural changes can make a big difference.

Even during working hours not everything needs to be on all the time. For instance in kitchens, fans and ovens are often left on longer than needed. A 10% on-time reduction will provide a 10% cost saving.



Consider your fridges.

Refrigeration is another 24/7 energy load. Most fridges are controlled by air temperature settings. Yet it's the food temperature that's important. A low cost item that can save on cooling costs is to replace an air temperature setting with a food temperature thermometer (HACCP approved). Estimated savings of up to 25% particularly for walk-in cold rooms.

Adjust your heating.

Adjust your heating and cooling. A small temperature tweak can yield noticeable savings. Take note of when staff and customers are in your business premises, and time your heating and air conditioning around this. Changing heating settings by even 1degree can deliver up to 7% in energy costs.

Switch up your light source.

Maximising natural day lighting can considerably reduce lighting costs. Even the most efficient 5-watt LED lights left on 24/7 can cost over €100 per year.

Employee involvement.

Assign an “energy champion”, someone who looks out for unnecessary waste, checks when lights/appliances are left on and ensures everyone’s aware of the energy consumption.



Low-Cost, High-Impact Measures

These cost some investment but have relatively short payback periods and significant benefit for SMEs.

Review your energy tariff.

Make sure you're on the appropriate contract for your business size and usage pattern. Contact your supplier or Watt Footprint for support.

Claim your energy audit grant.

Assess how your business currently uses energy and identify how savings can be made. There are grants covering 100% of the cost of this step, contact Watt Footprint to find out more.

Install energy monitoring.

Better visibility = better control. Real-time data lets you spot unusual spikes or non-trading hour consumption. Take control and reduce your energy before the bill arrives, not after.

On avg. **10-15% saving** on your energy bill through energy monitoring and visibility.



Stop draughts and insulate doors and windows.

Draught-proof doors/windows, upgrade to LED lighting: These are classic but effective. Especially in older premises (common for pubs/cafés).

Track, measure and act on data.

Build routines where energy performance is included in your business metrics. Use dashboards or platforms tailored for businesses, like the Watt Footprint Energy Platform.

Ensure your boiler is properly operated and maintained.

Ensure proper equipment maintenance: Well-maintained boilers, fridges and HVAC systems use less energy and avoid hidden cost leaks. There are a number of grants that fund upgrades, contact Watt Footprint to learn more.





Energy Anecdote

Employee behaviour might seem like a small factor, but it can have a major impact on a business's energy use.

One client worked with Watt Footprint to track where and when their energy was being consumed. The data revealed that some staff had arranged for the cleaners to switch on the heating long before opening hours so the building would be warm on arrival.

By using this insight to engage and educate their team, the business quickly reduced unnecessary usage and saw an immediate drop in energy costs.



3. Long-term investments

These measures take more time, budget and planning, but they can transform your energy profile reducing annual costs by thousands.

Replace your boiler with a Heat Pump with the help of a government grant.

Heat pumps use cleaner electricity and are significantly more efficient than traditional boilers so can reduce your business' energy usage. There are multiple grant avenues offering on avg. 30% funding.

Energy efficient upgrades and equipment.

Look for certified energy-efficient appliances, upgrade insulation, install LED-based lighting and ventilation systems. There are multiple grants available to support this for small to industrial businesses. Make sure to check the list before you make a purchase.

Investment in renewable energy generation.





How to make energy an integral part of your business control system

Integrate energy data into your KPIs.

Set energy-per-customer, energy-per-service-hour, or energy-per-square-metre targets.

Train your team.

Make your staff aware of the cost of waste, lights left on, equipment left running, doors open when heating is on.

Use technology to drive insight.

Use tools (such as the Watt Footprint platform) that let you monitor energy use hour-by-hour, spot spikes, and decide what to act on. This enables you to make changes in the moment rather than waiting until the bill arrives to see the damage .

Schedule annual reviews.

Just as you review your supplier contracts annually, schedule an “energy health check” each year to see what has changed and what you can improve.



Conclusion

Energy costs aren't just another line in your expenses, they're a key leverage point for profitability. By seeing your energy usage, building habits around discipline, and making incremental investments, your business can move from reacting to bills to controlling your cost structure.

Would you like help with the next step?

Book a free demo of the Watt Footprint platform and see exactly how your business can take control of your energy, and cut costs.

Contact **Jenny.oreilly@wattfootprint.com** to book a demo or simply find out more information on where to start and what grants you will qualify for.