EDITORIAL

Welcome to our March/April edition of the EnviroCentre Newsletter. In this issue we will examine some of the environmental news stories that have made the headlines this spring.

In our Spotlight section we will examine the upcoming Water Framework Directive and it’s implications for the SME sector.

Details of our upcoming Environmental Seminars as well as other events/seminars are also outlined in this edition.

Please feel free to forward this issue to a colleague and let us know if there are any topics you would like covered in future issues, or any news items or events your company may like included.

NEWS UPDATE

- Businesses across Ireland called on to enter Sustainable Energy Awards 2009
- Emissions fell by one million tonnes - EPA
- Intelligent Energy Europe II Call for Proposals
- Government gives green light to €600 million East-West Interconnector
- EnviroCentre launch new RSS Service

Businesses across Ireland called on to enter Sustainable Energy Awards 2009

Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI) has commenced its annual search for Ireland’s most energy efficient businesses with the launch of the Sustainable Energy Awards 2009.

The Awards, organised by SEI in association with ESB Customer Supply, recognise the achievements of Irish businesses succeeding in their efforts to cut energy costs and improve environmental performance. Entrants to the 2008 Awards demonstrated energy savings of over €17m, with some projects delivering as much as 40% energy cost reductions. The 2009 Awards were launched at a special event in Athlone where attendees heard presentations on a selection of last year’s winning projects.

Professor J. Owen Lewis, Chief Executive, SEI, said; “Once again we are inviting businesses across the island of Ireland to show us how they are leading by example in energy cost reduction. In these times the issue is more important than ever – and our Award winners continue to show that real savings are possible.”
Entries to the Awards, open to all businesses and public sector bodies, span a range of sustainable energy categories from employee awareness programmes to sustainable buildings and renewable energy. Entrants, both large and small, have typically delivered energy savings of 20% or more as a result of their energy management activities. The Sustainable Energy Awards highlight these successes and allow others to replicate their success.

**Read Full Article**

**Emissions fell by one million tonnes - EPA**

The amount of greenhouse gas produced by Ireland’s largest emitters fell by almost one million tonnes last year, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has said. The reduction continues a downward trend in recorded Irish emissions since the European Union-wide Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) started in 2005.

The scheme was introduced to tackle emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to combat climate change. Under the scheme, high emitters are given a quota in the form of tonnes of emissions of CO2 gases each year. Companies covered under ETS include power companies and glass and steel manufacturers. Verified greenhouse gas emissions in Ireland have fallen from 22.43 million tonnes in 2005 to 20.38 million tonnes last year, the EPA said. Some 21.25 million tonnes were emitted in 2007.

EPA director general Dr Mary Kelly welcomed the development and attributed the reduction to the economic downturn and the impact of the scheme. “The results released by the EPA show how the Emissions Trading Scheme has been successful in reducing greenhouse gas emissions,” she said. “While no doubt some of the reduction reflects the economic downturn which began to have significant impact during 2008, nonetheless the overall picture is one of progressive annual emission reductions.”

**Intelligent Energy Europe II Call for Proposals**

The 2009 call for proposals under the Intelligent Energy – Europe programme is open, with a deadline for submission on 25 June, 2009 at 17:00 (Brussels time). With some €65 million available for actions in the area of energy efficiency, renewable energy and energy-efficient transport, this may be the opportunity to have your next European project funded. Grants awarded under this scheme may cover up to 75% of the eligible project costs.

More information is available here -[http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/call_for_proposals/index_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/call_for_proposals/index_en.htm)

Government gives green light to €600 million East-West Interconnector

Energy Minister Eamon Ryan has recently announced that the Government has given official consent to the State transmission-operator EirGrid, for the construction of their East-West interconnector. This consent will allow EirGrid to secure the delivery of the crucial infrastructure in three years time.

The 500MW inter-connector will connect Ireland and Wales linking Woodland in County Meath to Deeside in Wales, through a 260km cable. 180km of this cable will be undersea. It will allow the two-way flow of electricity between both jurisdictions, giving Ireland access to the wider UK market and vice versa.

“This interconnector is about unlocking our wind and ocean resources and selling them to the rest of the world. The competition this will bring and the increased support for renewables will reduce our electricity bills in the long term said Minister Ryan. This project will deliver jobs – in the construction phase and from investment in renewables in the long term.

The €600 million project, construction of which will be subject to relevant planning consents, will be financed by EirGrid and the European Union, with the latter contributing €110 million.

Minister Ryan said, “I wish to thank the European Union for their proposal to assist the financing of this project. In energy terms, we are nothing if we stand alone. The EU’s willingness to assist Ireland in this regard recognises the fundamental links which exist between us and our European counterparts. These links are critical in the area of energy supplies and markets, but are also evident in every aspect of our lives. This project will benefit Ireland not just now, but for the years to come.”

EnviroCentre launch RSS Service

Stay informed with our new RSS service!

RSS solves a problem for people who regularly use the web. It allows you to easily stay informed by retrieving the latest content from the websites

What is RSS?
RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is an XML format designed for sharing web content like news headlines. An RSS service consists of a list of items, each of which contains a headline, description, and a link to a web page

How do I use RSS?
To use RSS, you will need a special RSS news reader or aggregator that will allow you to collect and display RSS service. RSS news readers or channels allow you to view the service you select all together in the same place and, by automatically retrieving updates, stay current with new content soon after it is published.

There are many different news readers available, many for free. Most news readers are applications that you download and install. Some others are web-based service you sign-up for that work inside your browser. After setting up your news reader, you will be ready to use EnviroCentre’s RSS.

More information:
http://www.envirocentre.ie/rss.aspx and follow the instructions for your particular news reader.

We hope this improves the quality of the service we offer to our readers.
**Energia wins slice of business market**

The Belfast-based renewable energy group, Energia is continuing to win a large slice of the Irish business energy market. Since January, when it began supplying gas to small and medium (SME) businesses, it has signed up more than 2,500 of the 18,000 SME companies in Ireland.

Energia is taking the fight to Bord Gáis in that arena and is also going head to head with Airtricity in the renewable wind energy sector, said Alan Mulcahy, business markets manager at Energia. In the gas market "we've gone after the small business users, of which there are about 18,000 and we have had great success", he said. "We are going head to head with Bord Gáis and we continue to grow," he said.

Energia has been taking an integrated approach to the market in Ireland where it is active across the entire island at this stage. It was recently awarded a €2.5 million contract to supply more than 19GWh (gigawatt hours) of electricity to five city council sites in Cork — equivalent to powering more than 4,000 homes. By using the group’s renewable energy capacity, Cork City Council will cut its carbon footprint by 10,400 tonnes of CO2 each year.

Energia also offers customers an energy efficiency programme that can reduce energy consumption by up to 20%, said Mr Mulcahy. The contract offers the council a reduction of up to 10% on its electricity bills.

**Newry company wins new export business**

Newry-based FM Environmental has won new business in Malaysia for its Grease Guardian grease removal systems, following an Invest Northern Ireland trade mission.

The company, which took part in last month’s mission to Singapore and Malaysia, is supplying the systems to a new distributor signed up during the week-long trip.

The new distributor, Environmental Products and Services (EPS), which is based in Ipoh but also has operations in Kuala Lumpur and Penang, will also play a pivotal role in expanding the Northern Ireland engineering company’s sales to neighbouring markets, including Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines.

As well as winning new business in Malaysia, FM has also recently sold its first Grease Guardian units to Mexico and has seen its business in Australia, Malta and North Africa grow strongly over the past year. In addition, FM Grease Guardians are being installed in all McDonald’s fast-food restaurants across Romania.

[Read full article]
Wind farm operator signs €509m Canadian joint venture

Eddie O’Connor’s latest wind farm operator Mainstream Renewable Power has signed a €509 million deal to co-develop 400 megawatts of power in Canada over the next four years. The joint venture is with local wind farm developer, the Alberta Wind Energy Corporation and construction of the turbines should begin later this year. The two companies are aiming to be generating around 46mw by next year, with a further 62mw coming on stream by 2012.

"Our strategy is to think globally and deliver locally and, I believe, this is key to our success. "We identify local partners with great projects and they leverage from our global strength in areas such as project finance, construction and procurement so that together we can deliver projects faster and more cost-effectively," commented Mr O’Connor.

SPOTLIGHT

The Water Framework Directive and its implications for the SME sector

The EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) is designed to protect and improve the quality of all waters throughout the EU. The WFD covers rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuaries and coastal waters. The aim of the WFD is to achieve four key goals by 2015:

- Achieve protected area objectives. (Protected area objectives are specific goals for particular areas within catchments. These areas may require special protection because they contain sensitive habitats or wildlife, or because of their beneficial uses, e.g. drinking water abstraction.)
- Prevent deterioration of current water quality.
- Restore waters currently below good status to at least good status; under the WFD, waters are categorised under five status classes – high, good, moderate, poor and bad. The WFD requires all waters in the EU to have reached good status by 2015.
- Reduce Chemical Pollution.

The WFD calls for the management of waters on a River Basin District (RBD) system. The RBD system reflects the topographic catchment of a given river system and ignores county, provincial and even international boundaries. For this reason three of the eight RBD on the Ireland are International RBDs, as they incorporate river basins in both the Republic and Northern Ireland.

The RBDs are managed jointly by the Local Authorities within the District. Draft River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) have been drawn up and are available for public consultation until June 2009. These RBMP will be the basis for the water quality management within the River Basin Districts for the next six years.

The implementation of the RBMPs has a number of implications for SMEs:

- Tighter limits (both volumes and pollutant concentrations) are likely on effluent discharges. This will particularly be the case if the effluent is discharged to a protected area.
- There may be restrictions on development within protected areas.
- As well as the normal current chemical monitoring of the receiving water, there may be a requirement for biological/ecological monitoring.
- There is to be cost recovery of water usage; i.e. water metering/pricing. This will have implications for large volume users.
There are also some opportunities for specific SMEs. Environmental consultants will be required for ongoing monitoring of water quality under the RBMPs and the tighter effluent controls envisaged under the Directive should lead to an increased market for effluent treatment plants and technologies.

Details of the Draft River Basin Management Plans, River Basin Districts and the Directive itself can be viewed at [www.wfdireland.ie](http://www.wfdireland.ie). SMEs are encouraged to view the relevant RBMP for their area and assess how it is likely to impact on their operations. Companies that use large volumes of process water and/or produce large volumes of effluent (along with companies that are located in protected areas) should familiarise themselves with the relevant RBMP.

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**ENTERPRISE IRELAND REGIONAL SEMINARS**

The Environment and Green Technologies Dept. of Enterprise Ireland will be holding two environmental seminars in May of this year.

- 7th May 2009 Cork
- 20th May 2009 Limerick

Business in Ireland is facing difficult times with high overheads, intense competition, currency fluctuations and global recession. Enterprise Ireland is continuing to help industry through its support mechanisms.

While it might be perceived that environmental matters are of less importance at this time there really has never been a better opportunity to examine the potential for reducing costs and taking any advantage possible in the marketplace. Improved management of key issues such as resource efficiency, energy efficiency, waste reduction and carbon management can lead to real bottom line savings in business costs.

These seminars will contain presentations from a number of Government agencies and private companies and will concentrate on how business can achieve real savings and market opportunities through environmental improvements. They are free of charge.

For more information please contact Declan White declan.white@enterprise-ireland.com

Proceedings/Presentations of previous events are available on our website

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- 29 – 30 April 2009 Energy Show 2009
- 4 June 2009 Water NI 2009 – Meeting the Challenges
- 9 – 11 June 2009 CIWM Focus Exhibition
- 29 June – 3 July 2009 17th European Biomass Conference & Exhibition