

Energy in the Home

How can I cut my energy costs?

There are a number of low cost ways to cut your home energy costs that can be done immediately. These include –

- Fit a good lagging jacket to your hot water cylinder. It will keep water warmer for longer.
- Have a timer fitted to your immersion heater and only set it for the required time to heat the water when you need it.
- Use energy saver CFL light bulbs – they use 80% less electricity than ordinary bulbs and last up to 15 times as long.
- Try turning your thermostat down by 1°C – this can knock up to 10% off your heating bill.
- Switch off appliances when not in use – televisions, computers etc. These use electricity even in standby mode. Also remember to unplug mobile phone chargers when your phone has finished charging.
- Switch off lights when you leave a room or fit timers to lights.
- A smart meter or electricity monitor can help show you how much electricity you are using. Use washing machines etc outside of peak hours as the electricity tariff is lower.
- Wait for your washing machine or dishwasher to be full before you switch it on – a half full one uses the same energy as a full one.
- Have you considered changing your electricity supplier – e.g. Airtricity and Bord Gais both now supply domestic electricity.
- Check the energy efficiency rating on appliances and buy energy efficient appliances – fridges, washers, dryers, ovens, etc. An 'A' rated appliance will use about 55% of the electricity of a similarly sized appliance with a 'D' rating.

I've already done all these things. What else can I do?

Sustainable Energy Ireland currently provides funding for a number of energy efficiency schemes including the Warmer Homes Scheme, Home Energy Saving Scheme and the Greener Homes Scheme. You could apply for funding for energy improvement works through one of these programmes.

The Warmer Homes Scheme provides full funding for attic insulation, draught proofing, lagging jacket and low energy light bulbs (CFLs).

The Home Energy Saving Scheme provides part funding for a BER (Building Energy Rating) assessment, high efficiency gas boiler and heating controls upgrade, roof, cavity wall and external wall insulation and internal wall dry lining.

The Greener Homes Scheme provides part funding for the installation of a number of renewable energy technologies including wood chip / pellet boiler or stove, solar thermal heating and heat pump based heating systems.

I'm on a low income, what scheme am I eligible for?

Sustainable Energy Ireland's Low Income Housing Programme was set up to help establish and implement a national plan of action to systematically address the problem of fuel poverty. This national plan of action is carried out locally through the **Warmer Homes** scheme, where community based organisations identify houses locally in need of energy improvement and carry out energy efficiency improvement works in a number of areas. **More details on the Warmer Homes scheme are below.**

Warmer Homes Scheme

What does the Warmer Homes Scheme provide?

Attic insulation, draught proofing, lagging jacket, 4 x energy efficient light bulbs and energy advice.

Who is eligible to apply?

People in receipt of Fuel Allowance under the National Fuel Scheme – this is the primary eligibility criteria, and also either old age pension, invalidity benefit or disability benefit, including the blind.

Do I have to pay?

No. The scheme is 100% funded for eligible groups. SEI

How do I apply?

A Warmer Homes Application Form is available from Energy Action (tel: 01 4545464) or can be downloaded from the following websites:

Ballymun Regeneration - www.brl.ie

Ballymun Whitehall Area Partnership - www.ballymun.org

Ballymun Neighbourhood Council - www.ballymun-nc.ie

How long is the waiting list?

The waiting list for insulation works to be carried out is currently 3 to 4 months, after your details have been added to the list.

Can I apply if I am a Local Authority tenant?

If you are a Dublin City Council tenant contact Housing Maintenance, Fishambles Street, tel: 01 222 2608 or your local Housing Department who can arrange for the works to be carried out by Energy Action / CHIP or who can discuss the energy efficiency of your dwelling. The focus of the Warmer Homes Scheme is on privately owned and rented homes.

Home Energy Saving Scheme

What does the Home Energy Saving scheme provide?

Grants will be provided to homeowners who invest in energy efficiency improvements in the following area:

- Roof Insulation
- Wall Insulation – this includes either cavity wall, internal dry lining or external insulation
- Installation of a High Efficiency (> 90%) Gas or Oil fired Boilers with Heating Controls Upgrade*
- Heating Controls Upgrade
- Building Energy Rating (BER) – you can get a grant for a BER if one is done *before* and *after* the works are completed

*Minimum requirement of: 2 zones (space and water) with 7 day programmer (time and temperature) control and boiler interlock, time and temperature control of electric immersion heater and either 1 more zone control or 3 TRV's.

Who is eligible to apply?

It is a National scheme and therefore all homeowners of dwellings built before 2006 may apply. Landlords and owners of multiple properties may also apply, however they must submit a separate application form for each property. If you are a landlord or a management company considering an entire building upgrade, please contact SEI before applying online for the grant.

How much are the grants?

Grants are fixed for each type of measure as indicated in the table below. Grant approval must be in place before any purchase of materials or commencement of measures undertaken. Grants are paid after the measures are completed and the contractor has been paid by the homeowner. In the instance where the cost of the work (vat inclusive) is less than the fixed grant amount, the actual cost will be reimbursed.

MEASURE	CATEGORY	GRANT*
Roof	Roof Insulation	€250
Wall	Cavity wall insulation	€400
	Internal Wall Dry-Lining	€2,500
	External wall insulation	€4,000

Heating Controls	High Efficiency Gas or Oil fired Boiler with Heating Controls Upgrade	€700
	Heating Controls Upgrade	€500
BER Assessment	A <i>Before</i> works and an <i>After</i> works BER assessment	€200

* Please note that while you are entitled to apply for each Measure there is a minimum requirement that the grant amount in the first application must be €500 or greater. The BER grant cannot form part of this €500 amount.

How do I apply?

Application forms, a guide for applicants and more FAQs are available on the SEI website – www.sei.ie

When might you NOT qualify for a Home Energy Saving scheme grant?

Depending on the scale or type of works being undertaken, the HES grant may not necessarily be appropriate for all homeowners. Homeowners will not qualify for a grant:

- If your first grant application would be for less than €500. So if you are only intending to do attic insulation (€250) or blown cavity wall insulation (€400) on their own then **you will not qualify for a grant**
- If you are installing a boiler with a typical efficiency <90% then **you will not qualify for a grant**
- If you decide to simply install a boiler but not upgrade the heating controls to the minimum prescribed standard then **you will not qualify for a grant**
- If you decide to simply replace your boiler but not upgrade the heating controls to the minimum prescribed standard then **you will not qualify for a grant**
- If you wish to get a grant for a Building Energy Rating (BER) then **you must** undertake a BER both before and after undertaking the appropriate grant aided measures.

Do I require planning permission for External wall insulation?

External insulation works to your home under the Home Energy Saving scheme may be exempted from the planning code. However, it should be noted that external insulation of a structure would constitute exempted development under Section 4(1) (h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 only if it “constituted works which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or of neighbouring structures”.

If there is any doubt about whether or not the particular external insulation proposed for your home will affect the character of the structure as an SEI grant applicant you are advised to contact the planning authority in your area to clarify the matter.

Please note also that, in the case of protected structures, proposed protected structures, and buildings within Architectural Conservation Areas, the usual exemptions from the requirements of planning permission may not apply and the advice of the planning authority should always be obtained by you before carrying out any works.

[Can I insulate some of my exposed walls and still receive the HES Grant?](#)

To be eligible for the HES grant the optimum solution, which is both physically and economically practicable must be implemented, for example when dealing with walls that this comprises internal insulation of all exposed walls; external insulation of all exposed walls; and in the case of roof insulation that this comprises insulation of the whole surface of the ceiling/ roof-space as appropriate.

Partial works are only accepted in exceptional circumstances, for example where it is not physically possible to provide complete roof insulation coverage due to small inaccessible areas of the roof; the idea of dry-lining all exposed walls in a particular dwelling may become economically unviable where it would require the replacement of kitchen units. There may also be instances where the physical limitations are to such an extent as to make insulation unviable. Any exceptional circumstances must be detailed by the contractor in the Declaration of Works.

[Some of my external walls are already insulated. Can I apply for a grant to insulate the remaining walls?](#)

Yes. If at the end of the insulation work on your home all the exposed walls are insulated you are eligible for a grant under the HES scheme.

[Why is Glazing not covered in the Home Energy Saving scheme?](#)

The Home Energy Saving scheme is focusing initially on the measures that have been proven to offer the best impacts and value for money in energy efficiency terms. For this reason glazing is not included in the HES scheme.

Greener Homes Scheme

[What does the Greener Homes Scheme provide?](#)

The Greener Homes Scheme (the “Scheme”) provides assistance to homeowners who intend to purchase a new renewable energy heating system for existing homes. The scheme is administered by Sustainable Energy

Ireland (“SEI”) and aims to increase the use of renewable energy and sustainable energy technologies in Irish homes.

Who can apply?

Homeowners who occupy an existing dwelling, which was first occupied prior to 30th June 2008

Will a renewable energy heating system save me money?

Where a renewable energy technology uses a “free” energy source like sun shine, you no longer have to worry about fuel prices increasing. On the other hand heat pumps require electricity to operate and biomass equipment requires a wood based fuel – so both of these remain vulnerable to fuel / energy price fluctuations.

The guaranteed way to reduce your energy bills is to only generate as much heat as you require, at the time you want it, and to maximise the value of that heat by preserving it within your home. We strongly advise anyone planning to invest in a renewable heat system to investigate all methods of increasing the overall energy efficiency of their homes. Effective wall and attic insulation, good time and temperature controls of your heating and high performance windows will all reduce the heat required to have a warm and comfortable home. Purchasing household electrical equipment with an 'A' energy rating e.g. fridges, freezers, washing machines and light bulbs* reduces electricity consumption. This approach will have a significant impact on your energy bills and will also protect you from any price variation in your primary fuel source.

Is there a choice on which products that can be used?

Homeowners can choose a renewable heating system (solar, biomass or heat pump based) that meets their particular needs in terms of heat demand, budget and environmental considerations.

How much are the grants for?

Solar Thermal Space and/or Hot water Heating (Evacuated Tube)	€300/m ² (max of 6m ²)
Solar Thermal Space and/or Hot water Heating (Flat Plate)	€250/m ² (max of 6m ²)
Heat Pump - Horizontal ground collector	€2,500
Heat Pump - Vertical ground collector	€3,500
Heat Pump - Water (well) to water	€2,500
Heat Pump - Air source	€2,000

Wood Chip or Pellet Stove	€800
Wood Chip or Pellet Stove with integral boiler	€1,400
Wood Chip or Pellet Boiler	€2,500
Wood Gasification Boiler	€2,000

How much could my chosen technologies cost?

There is a wide range in product prices. The price depends on the size of the home, the size of heating system required and the product quality. The following are indicative prices for the various product categories:

Technology (Full system installation)	Typical Lower Price including VAT	Typical Higher Price including VAT
Solar (per m ²)	€800	€1,300
Biomass Wood Pellet Boiler	€10,000	€16,000
Biomass Stove	€2,000	€5,000
Biomass Stove with integral boiler	€4,000	€8,000
Heat Pump - Air Source	€12,000	€13,000
Heat Pump - Horizontal ground collector	€13,000	€15,000
Heat Pump - Water (well) to water	€12,000	€14,000
Heat Pump - Vertical ground collector	€18,000	€21,000
Wood Gasification Boiler	€10,000	€16,000

When getting a quote for your chosen system, ensure that it fully covers all aspects of design, installation, commissioning and the purchase of all system components and materials. Only in this way can full comparison be made.

Does the grant include the product and the installation or just the product?

The grant is a fixed amount, based upon the particular technology selected, towards the cost of purchase of the chosen system, from SEI's Registered

Products List, and subsequent installation, by an installer on SEI's Registered Installer List.

Are the grants retrospective?

No, unfortunately the grants are not retrospective. One of the key objectives of the grant scheme is to stimulate the market for domestic renewable technologies and to encourage people to purchase and install renewable technologies who might not otherwise have done so, because of associated capital costs. As with any grant scheme, there has to be some reference date and start point and in the case of the Greener Homes Scheme, as with other schemes of this nature, the relevant date is the launch of Phase III of the scheme which was 22nd July 2008. **Grant approval must be received before proceeding with any product purchase (including any payment of deposits) or installation work.** The first date of eligibility for any application under the Phase III of the scheme is therefore 22nd July 2008.

Deposit pre installation – I have paid a deposit can I still get the grant?

Under the scheme, you must be approved for the grant before any money can be spent or work carried out. This means that you should not pay any deposit before applying for grant support and receiving a letter of offer for that grant support. Processing of applications can take up to 21 days after which a letter of offer will be issued.

How do I make a payment claim?

When you are approved for the grant you will receive a letter indicating the details of the grant and giving you a unique grant identification (reference) number. You can then proceed with getting the system installed. Once installed you will need to return to SEI:

- Completed Request for Payment Form,
- Standard Commissioning Report completed by your installer.
- Copy of your invoices and receipts for installation and product purchase.

What is the turnaround on payments?

SEI will endeavour to minimise the period for turnaround of payment. Applicants should allow an 8 to 10 week period for this process to be completed.

When is the grant paid?

Upon satisfactory evidence that the system is installed, commissioned correctly, and the house holder has made full payment. The money will then be transferred directly into your bank account.

Are there any examples of people who have already installed it?

SEI or any of the approved contractors should be able to give examples or help to organise a site visits to previously installed systems.

Where can I find out more information?

More information on all the above schemes including technical guidance, application guides and FAQs can be found on the Sustainable Energy Ireland website – www.sei.ie

More information on other support schemes can be found on – www.wellandwarm.ie

More information on energy efficiency can be found on – www.powerofone.ie

If you have any questions about any of the above information please contact:

Andy Wilson
Environmental Project Officer
Ballymun Regeneration
Tel: 01 222 5757 Email: andy.wilson@dublincity.ie

Manus Bree
Community Development Project Worker
Ballymun Whitehall Area Partnership
Tel: 01 8423612 Email: manus@ballmun.org