

REDUCE YOUR USE



An Roinn Comhshaoil,
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide
Department of the Environment,
Climate and Communications

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Given the significant energy challenges facing Ireland over the winter, the Department was fully committed to take a leading role in the Reduce Your Use initiative, setting a target of a 15% cut in energy use in its buildings. Through the concerted effort of the Corporate Services Unit (CSU) and all staff, by the end of January 2023 the department had already achieved savings of 32% in the first four months of the initiative compared to its pre-COVID 2019 baseline.

CSU analysed each building's energy consumption for 2019 to identify a total kWh use per month (electricity & heating) and an overall kWh use for the six month period Oct-Mar 2019. The analysis identified the savings required in kWh to achieve the target reduction in energy use for the duration of the initiative. Reduce Your Use is focused on taking action in the immediate term and on implementing measures that will help ensure the department continues on a pathway towards achieving the 2030 energy efficiency and decarbonisation targets. Precise planning by the CSU team was needed to develop an action plan for achieving the short term targets.



32% energy savings
in the first 4 months of RYU compared to pre-COVID 2019 baseline



10 buildings



Heating



Heating temperatures were reduced to 19 degrees C on the Building Management System (BMS), and a full review of all radiators and thermostatic valves followed. Weather conditions also helped, allowing a total shutdown of the heating system for large periods of October. Savings were also boosted by closing the HQ building for 10 days over Christmas.

It is imperative to respond quickly to weather conditions while ensuring staff comfort, and daily monitoring of the BMS enables changes to be made to zonal controls as required.

IT measures



Following a review of Server Room cooling temperatures, settings were increased from 20° C to 23° C. All monitors and laptop docking stations are turned off on a daily basis with a particular focus on Fridays to ensure that no out-of-hours use occurs.



Staff engagement

Senior Management were seen to be committed and communicated to all staff the importance of the initiative, and sought their buy-in on making it a success. This was bolstered by the Green Team which promoted the initiative and encouraged people to come on board with the actions in the buildings, and in turn the team sought feedback on implementation issues. A Register of Opportunities for energy savings was set up to develop and log the actions, and the weekly Reduce Your Use information and bulletins were issued to all staff.

