

## Ofgem boost for power company energy savings

Ofgem has ruled that electricity companies installing large-scale CHP, ground source heat pumps and solar thermal will receive a 50% uplift under Defra's Energy Efficiency Commitment (EEC). The watchdog last week released its Decision Document on what qualifies as "innovative action" under the next phase of EEC for 2005-2008. The uplift is designed to be an incentive for power companies to fund microgeneration projects as well as introduce efficiency measures.

The EEC requires British Gas, EDF, npower, Opus Energy, Powergen, Scottish and Southern Electricity, Scottish Power and Telecom Plus to save 130 terawatt-hours from domestic energy bills between 2005 and 2008.

Suppliers do this by funding energy saving measures such as cavity wall and loft insulation, low energy light bulbs and energy efficient boilers.

The uplift means projects count 50% more towards the energy saving targets than those using a qualifying non-innovative technology.

Previously only micro CHP was eligible for the uplift but now CHP larger than 50kWe, ground source heat pumps and solar thermal technologies also qualify.

In the 2002-2005 period, 300,000 energy efficient boilers were installed along with 40 million low energy light bulbs.

In that time suppliers spent £500 million meeting the commitment, then set at 65 TWh, though 84 TWh in energy savings was collectively achieved.

Fiona Kenyon, energy efficiency assistant manager at Ofgem, said: "In EEC2, from April 2005 to March 2011, we will see the level of activity double, leading to investment of £1.425 billion, saving customers £3.4 billion from their bills by 2020."

## Hospital hunt for thermals

The technical services department at Ireland's Health Service Executive is pre-qualifying thermal energy providers for two sites in its North West Area.

It is particularly interested in companies involved in biomass and solar energy programmes.

"The provision of the solution will be on a pilot basis at two of the HSE sites in the region as part of an overall review of

energy provision arrangements," according to a notice in the EU Journal.

The locations are the 236-bed St Johns Hospital residential care unit in Sligo, County Sligo, and the 102-bed St Josephs Hospital residential care unit at Stranorlar, County Donegal.

Requests to participate are due by 4 January and invitations to tender will go out later that month.

## Council calls in the specialists

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council housing department is seeking specialist mechanical and electrical sub-contractors for the construction of 42 dwellings. The houses,

duplex units and flats are designed to incorporate evacuated tube solar water heaters, mechanical ventilation heat recovery, rainwater harvesting and district heating.

# SSE singing from rooftops about 'total solar' solution

Scottish and Southern Energy is launching a new solar thermal product for the newbuild housing market after striking a deal with solarcentury to offer its "total solar roof" technology.

The company is now in negotiations to get its hands on a "cheap and cheerful" product for the retrofit market.

SSE energy services business manager Nigel Ellis said under the agreement the company would shortly be marketing a combination of C21e solar electric and C21t

thermal roof tiles. The power company will promote the technology to major housebuilders as part of its partnership with solarcentury.

Ellis said a different technology is required for the retrofit market. The company has considered both flat-plate collectors and evacuated tubes, with the latter more expensive but more efficient. Sources said a deal here could be forthcoming in 2006.

On the micro wind front, SSE said it has just sent another batch of 30 engineers to be trained in

installation and service. The company has more than 3000 engineers nationwide serving its 6.5 million customers.

Two years ago SSE acquired a stake in Renewable Devices Swift Turbines Ltd to offer micro wind turbines but few details have since emerged of intentions to order up to 2000 devices.

Ellis said: "We are speaking to a lot of big housing companies and retail chains."

A year ago SSE bought a 7.5% stake in solarcentury for £1 million.

## 'Silent runner' in Bristol debut

Bristol will see the first commercial installation of the Quiet Revolution 6kW wind turbine, a vertical access machine claimed to be noise and vibration-free.

Julia Grove, marketing director of London-based manufacturer XCO2, said the unit was designed in response to increasing demand for wind turbines that work well in cities, where wind speeds are lower and the direction changes frequently.

Unlike other vertical access turbines, the XCO2 has a third blade. Each blade is twisted through 120 degrees into an elongated S-shape, providing a consistent amount of airfoil to face the wind whatever its direction.

Assuming an average wind speed of 5.8m/s, the 3m wide by 5m high turbine would provide 10,000 kWh a year and offset 4.2 tonnes of carbon.

"If you had two of them that would satisfy the 10% renewable energy requirement for a 1200 square-metre office building," Grove said.

The Quiet Revolution is



Any which way: XCO2's Quiet Revolution unit

also available with a series of LEDs embedded in the blades. As they rotate the LEDs fire in sequence, painting a video screen that appears to hang in the air. It is visible both

day and night. The installation at the Temple Meads roundabout in Bristol early next year will be of this kind.

Space on the screen will be sold to companies promoting eco-friendly products and services, generating a small revenue stream for the city council.

"Depending on how successful it is, the revenues will be used to subsidise more wind turbines," Grove said.

Council spokesperson Jo Davies said: "Bristol was keen to support this project as it is a way of demonstrating to a mass audience how wind turbines can enhance the urban environment."

## EdF hands out green largesse

EdF Energy's £400,000 Green Energy Fund has awarded the Symes Community Building project in Bristol a £30,000 grant towards a development designed to reduce carbon emissions to almost zero.

The project, which is now seeking match funding, involves ground-

source heat and a roof-mounted wind turbine.

Separately, EdF has granted £24,900 towards a biomass woodchip boiler and solar power installation to provide heating and hot water for a new 40-bed dormitory at the Goblin Combe Environment Centre, in Cleeve, north Somerset.