

DRAWING A LINE UNDER CARBON EMISSIONS

MINISTER LAUNCHES 'CHANGE' CARBON CALCULATOR BOOKLET

Monday, 24th November 2008: On foot of the hugely successful online carbon calculator at Change.ie where nearly 90,000 people have found their carbon number, today the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Mr John Gormley, T.D., launched a carbon calculator booklet for people who cannot access the internet. The Change carbon calculator booklet includes information on the causes and effects of climate change, practical advice for individuals on how to reduce their impact on climate change and a comprehensive questionnaire to help people calculate their carbon number. It is available from public libraries and local authorities nationwide or by lo-calling 1890 242 643.

Each individual's contribution to climate change is measured by calculating how many tonnes of carbon they generate through home heating, transport and air travel and this is called their carbon number. In Ireland the average carbon number per person is 12 for direct emissions from an individual's energy and fuel use; in the rest of the EU the average carbon number is 8. The Government is committed to reducing overall carbon emissions by 20% through personal actions as well as initiatives by the public and private sectors and through the National Climate Change Strategy. We each impact on climate change. Many of our greenhouse gas emissions are produced by using energy created by burning fossil fuels for personal transport and in lighting and heating our homes.

"Much of what we do involves the use of energy generated through burning coal, oil, gas and peat so the way we live, work and travel has a huge bearing on climate change," says the Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Mr John Gormley, T.D. "No matter how low or high our carbon number is we can each take some action to reduce that number and help tackle climate change."

"Everyone is very conscious of financial cost these days and tries to live to a certain financial budget but we want to help people to realise the environmental cost of their activities too. Through the Change campaign we are encouraging people to reduce their carbon number by being aware of their 'carbon budget' and trying to minimise activities which have a high carbon cost. The first step is for everybody to know their number, their individual contribution to climate change, and this calculator booklet is the way to work it out."

/...

“We can each choose lower carbon activities, such as walking, cycling or using public transport sometimes instead of driving, avoid wasting water, switch off lights and appliances when not in use and change to low energy light bulbs in our homes and workplaces.”

The Change carbon calculator was developed using AMEE, the World’s Energy Meter, which was adapted to include relevant data for Ireland, including from Bord Gais Eireann and the ESB. This first phase of the Carbon Calculator takes account of energy and heating in an individual’s home and travel patterns. Ongoing development of the calculator will be advised by experts from the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, the EPA, Met Eireann, Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI), The Department of Transport and The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

It’s all part of Change, the Government’s awareness campaign to tackle climate change in Ireland. For more information visit www.change.ie or lo-call 1890-242 643.

ENDS.