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**oaklee**   
housing

Save Energy,  
Money  
and the  
Environment

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Delivering Homes  
Creating Communities  
Changing lives

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*“We recognise the impact that energy costs have upon our tenants and we are committed to providing energy efficient homes and high levels of customer service. With support from partner organisations we have developed this resource to help our customers to manage their energy costs, save money and reduce their impact on the environment.”*

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## Foreword

Oaklee Housing has invested in energy efficiency and energy management in recent years and to support that work we recognise the importance of providing information and advice to educate, encourage and empower our customers to save energy.

The purpose of this energy saving guide is to provide our customers with relevant information and advice and to highlight other organisations that may be able to provide further help.

Oaklee has a small team of staff responsible for energy management, whose purpose includes:

- Supporting the development of some of the most sustainable homes in the country
- Advising on improvements to our existing homes
- Procuring our landlord energy effectively in order to secure low energy prices
- Reducing the amount of energy we use in order to reduce our energy costs
- Promoting energy efficiency to our staff and customers
- Working alongside partner organisations

We would encourage you to give consideration to the recommendations in this guide, which we hope will help you to save energy, save money and manage your impact on the environment.

If you have any comments or feedback you would like to provide to our energy management team, please contact us at [enquiries@oakleehousing.ie](mailto:enquiries@oakleehousing.ie)

**Sharon Cosgrove,**  
Chief Executive Officer

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## Why you should save energy

We constantly hear about saving energy and reducing our impact on the environment, and it's assumed we all feel this is important. But have you ever thought about why it is important to save energy?

### Reduced Energy Costs

One of the main reasons for reducing the amount of energy you use is that you pay for that energy, whether it is electricity, natural gas, home heating oil or LPG. The less you use the more money you will save.

### Reduced reliance on imported fuels

Ireland relies on imported fossil fuels to meet over 80% of our energy costs. By reducing the amount of energy we use, Ireland will become less reliant on these imported fuels like oil, coal, and gas. Changes in global supply and demand, along with political and social events in other countries can have an impact on our energy prices and so by becoming more energy independent we can have more control over long term energy prices.

### Reduced Impact on the Environment

This is sometimes the first reason people may give for considering energy efficiency. A large proportion of our energy comes from fossil fuels, which are burned in power stations to produce electricity and used to heat our homes and run our cars. They emit carbon dioxide, a major contributor to climate change. Fossil fuels also tend to take a long time to form, cannot be quickly replenished and are finite resources.

### Reduced Energy Poverty

Levels of energy poverty in Ireland are unacceptably high. By reducing the amount of energy we use, ensuring we are paying the lowest available price for our energy, and by considering our household income, we can help to alleviate energy poverty (more information on Energy Poverty can be found on [page 24.](#))

### Improved Health and Comfort

Investing in energy efficiency can help improve comfort levels by making homes easier to heat and more affordable. This can have a positive impact on physical and mental health, helping to reduce cold related illnesses and excess winter deaths. International research has estimated that the bulk of the identified benefits in addressing energy poverty actually relate to improved health outcomes and greater comfort levels.

### Investment in the Economy

By investing in energy efficiency we are also investing in our economy by providing employment and contributing to a growing global industry.

**Investing in energy efficiency can help improve comfort levels by making homes easier to heat and more affordable.**



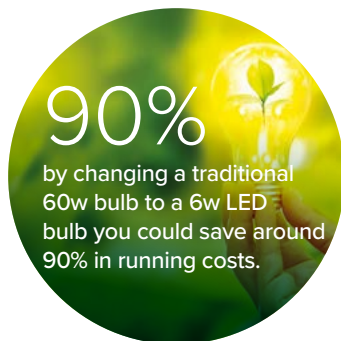
## How to save energy

Oaklee Housing is developing some of the most energy efficient new homes in Ireland. We are also continually investing in energy efficiency within our homes through measures such as improved insulation, new windows and doors, replacement heating systems and modern low energy communal lighting.

Aside from our investment in energy efficiency measures within our homes, there are also ways in which you can save energy in your home and reduce your energy costs. Some examples of how to do this are provided below.

### Understand how to use your heating system

Most homes will be heated by natural gas, home heating oil, LPG or electricity. You may have your own central heating boiler or use heat from a communal boiler, or you may have electric storage heaters. By familiarising yourself with your heating and hot water system, and any associated controls, you may be able to use your heating and hot water more efficiently. Oaklee Housing has produced a number of leaflets which may be able to help you, which are available on our website.



### Consider buying low energy light bulbs

Low energy light bulbs are available in a variety of shapes, sizes and fittings and can be CFLs (Compact Fluorescent Lamps) or LEDs.

By changing a traditional 60w bulb to a 6w LED bulb you could save around 90% in running costs. Whilst they may cost more initially, LED bulbs not only save money, but typically last much longer before needing to be replaced.

### Always turn off the lights when you leave a room

Even if you do decide to invest in low energy bulbs, it is also best to switch off lights when you don't need them, as this is a quick and simple way to avoid wasting electricity.

### Purchase energy efficient appliances

Energy efficient appliances use less energy, have a reduced impact on the environment and are cheaper to run. Many appliances will now have an energy efficiency label displayed on them, making it easier to identify energy efficient appliances at a glance and compare products. 'A' rated appliances (or higher) are the most energy efficient, with 'G' rated being the least efficient.

So remember to think about energy efficiency and running costs, alongside the up front cost of any electrical appliances, such as washings machines, dishwashers, fridges, freezers and televisions.

### Use your appliances wisely and switch off equipment when not in use

A typical home may save around €40 a year just by remembering to turn your appliances off standby mode. You may want to consider investing in a standby saver which enables you to switch off a number of pieces of equipment at once (convenient when plugs are hard to reach).

You can also consider how you could use appliances more efficiently, such as washing machines and dishwashers by using them with full loads or using energy efficient settings if these are available.

### Close curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping

One area where heat can escape is through windows and so closing curtains at dusk can help to reduce the amount of heat you lose and also help you to stay comfortable.

### Only boil as much water as you need

Boiling more water than you need will take longer and cost you more. Many kettles are now designed to let you see the amount of water you are boiling, making it easier to only boil the water you need.

Always remember to cover the heating element within your kettle!

### Ensure windows and doors aren't left open unnecessarily

In most cases homes will benefit from having windows opened at times to provide adequate ventilation. This is

important to ensure occupants have fresh air and to help remove moisture from a home. By failing to properly ventilate a home, problems such as condensation and mould can occur.

However, leaving windows open constantly or for very long periods of time, can mean the fabric of your home (your walls, ceiling and floor) can cool down. This could mean that your home becomes harder to heat and you will have to run your heating system for longer periods of time than is necessary.

Radiators are often positioned under windows, so opening windows unnecessarily for long periods while your heating is on could mean a lot of your heat will escape and you will be paying to heat the air outside your home.

Similarly, leaving external doors open for longer than necessary can cool your home and increase your heating costs.

### Avoid blocking the heat from your radiators

If you have radiators in your home then you should avoid insulating them with clothing or furniture, which will reduce the heat coming in to your room.

Drying clothes over radiators can also increase the moisture in your home which can lead to issues such as condensation and mould.





Change all lights to energy saving LED bulbs.



Turn your thermostat down by 1°C to save 10%. Time your heating for when you need it and don't block radiators.



Ensure you have a full load when using the washing machine or dish washer.



If you have a hot water tank, set the cylinder to 60°C.



Turn all lights off when not in use.



Wash your clothes at 30°C where practical.



Only boil what you need when using a kettle.



Turn taps off properly. In a single week, a dripping hot tap can waste enough hot water to fill half a bath.



Don't leave your mobile phone charging all night – most only need a couple of hours.



Keep curtains open in the day to let sun energy into your home and close your curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping.



Dry clothes outside when possible.

**€40.00**

A typical home may save around €40 a year just by remembering to turn your appliances off standby mode.

Further information and advice is available from our website and from other relevant organisations such as the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).

**Please see pages 26 to 27 for contact details.**

## Save Energy

### How to heat your home

All of our homes have a heating system installed to supply heat and hot water. Your heating system may use natural gas, home heating oil, electricity, LPG or it may even be a renewable technology such as a heat pump.

You may have your own individual central heating boiler or you may be connected to a communal boiler which provides your heating and hot water, with heating typically supplied through radiators or under floor heating. Alternatively you may have storage heaters in your home which use a "Night Saver" electricity tariff.

With all of these variations, and different heating and hot water controls in many homes, it is impossible to provide one set of simple instructions to suit all situations.

Further guidance on using different types of heating and hot water systems is available from our website via downloadable heating guides.

By understanding your heating and hot water system, and your associated controls, you may be able to control when your heat is available, where you would like heat within your home, and how much heat you would like. This can enable you to avoid using your heating and hot water system unnecessarily which will save energy and help to reduce your heating costs.



## New technologies

Many of our new homes have been designed to include technologies which help to reduce energy costs.

A number of our existing homes have also had additional technologies installed, although we recognise that not all technologies are suitable for every home and more traditional improvements to our existing homes (such as improved insulation) are likely to be more cost effective in delivering savings and increased comfort for our customers.

### Solar PV Panels

These systems convert sunlight to electricity for use within a home to help reduce electricity costs for the occupants. Our website has a simple Solar PV guide which can be downloaded to provide you with more information.

### Ventilation Systems

These systems have been installed in some of our more recently completed new homes which have been built to be very air tight. They are designed to provide ventilation in an efficient manner, reducing the need to open windows. If you have one of these systems in your home, please ensure it is not switched off and vents are not closed or blocked. Further information on operating your ventilation systems is available by contacting our Property Services Department.

### Solar Thermal Systems

Some of our more recent new homes may have this type of system installed, with flat panels or a series of tubes mounted onto a roof to generate heat from sunlight. This heat is used to provide some of the hot water needed within a home. An alternative means of providing hot water e.g. an immersion heater, is still installed within each home where a solar thermal system is installed. Occupants should ensure that hot water is adequately heated within your home or you may be at risk from health concerns such as Legionnaires disease.

### Heat Pumps

These heating systems typically extract heat from outside air, or a heat source such as extracted air from wet rooms in a home. If you have a heat pump installed in your home and you require further advice on operating this system then please contact our Property Services Department.

### Modern SMART Storage Heaters

In Ireland, storage heaters normally use 'Night Saver' electricity tariffs, using cheaper night time electricity to charge, with this heat then released during the day.

New "SMART" storage heaters are now available which have improved digital controls and retain heat more efficiently. These can be a suitable option to replace older storage heaters, particularly where an alternative option such as a natural gas central heating system is not available or practical. If you have "SMART" storage heaters fitted in your home and require support in using these then please visit our website to download a user guide, or contact our Sustainability and Energy Management Team.





### Understanding your energy costs

All homes will pay for energy such as electricity, natural gas, heating oil, LPG or heat. Depending on your home, you may be required to either pay energy costs directly to an energy supplier or in some cases to Oaklee Housing, who may also recharge the cost of landlord or communal electricity and heating. More information on landlord energy costs is provided on **page 19**.

#### What you are charged for?

If you pay an energy supplier directly then the amount they charge will typically be based on the amount of energy you use, multiplied by the cost of each unit of energy. Your energy supplier may also have other specific charges, such as a standing charge, and may be able to offer discounts e.g. where payment is via direct debit. Your energy bill will also include VAT, which is currently set at 13.5% for domestic energy consumption in Ireland.

If you use home heating oil then you may need to pay for larger deliveries, which could amount to a lot of money, and so budgeting can become particularly important. Where possible, the use of “oil drums”, to purchase smaller amounts of home heating oil, should be avoided, as this is an expensive way of purchasing heating oil and you may be more likely to run out of home heating oil more frequently. More information on home heating oil can be found on **page 18**.

#### Credit Meter vs Pre-Payment / Keypad Meter

For some types of energy, including electricity and natural gas, you will have a meter for your property to measure how much energy you have used. You may be able to choose between a Credit meter or a pre-payment meter (commonly known as a keypad meter).

A Credit meter displays how much energy you have used, with readings from this meter used by your energy supplier to calculate your energy bill.

With a pre-payment / keypad meter you pay for energy before you use it, which can often help with budgeting. With this type of meter you can purchase energy at a PayPoint, Payzone or online, and your unique energy card, voucher or code is used to top up your meter.

A pre-payment / keypad meter normally displays the amount of credit or “money” left in the meter, and you can also use the buttons on these meters to access emergency credit and to see how much energy you have used. Your energy supplier will be able to provide further guidance on using your meter, with contact details for energy suppliers provided on **pages 16 & 17**.



If you use a pre-payment/keypad meter you should check with your supplier that it is in your name and that it is registered to your property, as these meters can also be used to recover debt and you need to be sure you are not paying the debt of a previous occupant.

In many cases you will be able to choose which type of meter you would prefer and when moving into a home you should be able to change the meter type, although charges may be applied by your

energy supplier. When choosing between meters you should consider factors such as budgeting of energy costs, the potential for debt to build up, the potential for larger energy bills to be charged at times, and whether there are convenient local places where you could purchase credit for a pre-payment / keypad meter.

## Save Money

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### Understanding and checking your energy bill

If you receive a bill from your energy provider (by post or by email) then there are certain checks you can carry out to ensure you are paying the right amount.

#### 1. Check your unit price

Make sure your unit price is what you expect based on your contract or communication from your supplier. You can use the unit price to compare against other suppliers to see if switching energy providers would save you money. For more information see **pages 16 & 17**.

#### 2. Check your meter reading

If moving home then you should contact your energy suppliers and provide them with the date you will be moving and your new address so they can send a final bill if applicable. You should also provide a final reading when you leave your home to ensure you do not get charged for energy you haven't used. If you are an Oaklee Housing tenant then you should also advise Oaklee Housing of who your energy suppliers are before your tenancy ends, along with any arrangements you have in place.

Similarly, when you move into a new home you should contact your new energy supplier(s) and provide them with your details, the date you moved into your new home and the relevant meter readings. You should also check your first energy bills to ensure that meter readings match those you have provided. If you do not contact your new energy supplier(s) then you could

end up paying for the energy costs or debt of the previous occupant.

You should also check that the meter readings on your bill are accurate, as estimated readings can be used by suppliers when your meter has not been officially read. In particular, if you receive a number of consecutive bills based on estimated meter readings then you could either owe your energy supplier money, or your energy supplier may owe you money. You can normally submit your own meter readings which can help ensure your bill is accurate, and some suppliers may send you reminders to submit an accurate meter reading.

#### Electricity and Natural Gas bills may include some of the following information:

- Your account number and a reference number – You will need these when contacting your supplier.
- Your details – This will include your name and address. You should ensure these details are correct.
- The supply address – You should ensure this is correct on your energy bills.
- A reference number for your home, such as an 11 digit MPRN (Meter Point Reference Number). This number identifies the property being supplied.
- The meter serial number, which can be found on the front of your meter e.g YH 01234 - You should check that this number matches the serial number quoted on your bill to ensure you are paying for the energy used at the correct address.



## Different ways to pay for energy

Your energy suppliers will be able to provide you with information and advice on the different methods of payment they have available. If you have a credit meter then you may have a number of payment options including paying upon receipt of each bill, paying bills by direct debit, or setting up a regular standing order (your energy supplier will normally review standing charges on an annual basis).

In some cases you may have fewer options available to pay your energy supplier, e.g. if your energy provider is attempting to recover energy debt that you have accrued.

Your type of meter and method of payment is a decision which is agreed between you and your energy supplier and you should speak with them to ensure your selected payment option best suits your needs and circumstances.

**Oaklee Housing does not promote any particular type of meter or payment method for our customers.**



# Save Money

## Switch and Save - Electricity

You may be able to choose between a number of different electricity suppliers, with contact details for each provided below.

A quick way to identify potential savings on the price you pay for energy would be to compare the prices offered by each electricity supplier through comparison websites, such as [www.bonkers.ie](http://www.bonkers.ie), [www.switcher.ie](http://www.switcher.ie), or [www.moneyguideireland.com](http://www.moneyguideireland.com).

We would also always recommend that you check any prices directly with suppliers, just in case there have been any recent changes.

If you've changed supplier in the last year or two then it would be best to check your existing contract terms in case you are tied in for a period of time, but normally if that's not the case

and you don't have outstanding debt then switching is easy. Just contact your chosen energy supplier and provide them with your details and a meter reading from your home and your new energy supplier will look after the rest.

You could also consider changing the way in which you pay for electricity by changing your type of electricity meter or opting for a different payment method (**see page 15**).

A number of electricity suppliers will also offer a 'green' electricity tariff, where electricity is sourced from renewable technologies, most commonly from wind farms in Ireland. Further information is available from each energy provider and different costs may apply.

### Electricity Suppliers

Arden Energy	01 517 5793	<a href="mailto:sales@ardenenergy.ie">sales@ardenenergy.ie</a>
Bord Gáis Energy	01 611 0151	<a href="mailto:info@bordgais.ie">info@bordgais.ie</a>
Bright Energy	01 588 1777	<a href="mailto:hello@brightenergy.com">hello@brightenergy.com</a>
Electric Ireland	1800 305 090	<a href="mailto:sales@electricireland.ie">sales@electricireland.ie</a>
Energia	0818 300 701	<a href="http://energia.ie">energia.ie</a>
Flogas	041 214 9555	<a href="mailto:info@flogas.ie">info@flogas.ie</a>
Glow Power	01 960 9690	<a href="mailto:info@glowpower.ie">info@glowpower.ie</a>
Panda Power	01 829 8960	<a href="mailto:customercare@pandapower.ie">customercare@pandapower.ie</a>
Pinergy	0818 363 749	<a href="mailto:customerservices@pinergy.ie">customerservices@pinergy.ie</a>
Prepay Power	1800 844 800	<a href="mailto:sales@prepaypower.ie">sales@prepaypower.ie</a>
SSE Airtricity	0818 81 81 10	<a href="mailto:customerservice@sseairtricity.com">customerservice@sseairtricity.com</a>

Correct at time of publication. Please contact the Commission for Regulation of Utilities for any updates.



## Switch and Save - Natural Gas

If your home is heated with natural gas then you may be able to choose between different suppliers, with contact details for each provided below.

We would advise that all of our customers regularly compare prices

and comparison websites such as [www.bonkers.ie](http://www.bonkers.ie), [www.switcher.ie](http://www.switcher.ie), or [www.moneyguideireland.com](http://www.moneyguideireland.com).

We would again recommend that you check any prices directly with suppliers, just in case there have been any recent changes.

### Natural Gas Suppliers

Bord Gáis Energy	01 611 0151	<a href="mailto:info@bordgais.ie">info@bordgais.ie</a>
Electric Ireland	1800 305 090	<a href="mailto:sales@electricireland.ie">sales@electricireland.ie</a>
Energia	0818 300 701	<a href="http://energia.ie">energia.ie</a>
Flogas	041 214 9555	<a href="mailto:info@flogas.ie">info@flogas.ie</a>
Panda Power	01 829 8960	<a href="mailto:customercare@pandapower.ie">customercare@pandapower.ie</a>
Prepay Power	1800 844 800	<a href="mailto:sales@prepaypower.ie">sales@prepaypower.ie</a>
SSE Airtricity	0818 81 81 10	<a href="mailto:customerservice@sseairtricity.com">customerservice@sseairtricity.com</a>

Correct at time of publication. Please contact the Commission for Regulation of Utilities for any updates.

## Electricity and Natural Gas Offers

Some energy providers will be able to supply both electricity and natural gas and may offer additional discounts for customers who switch both energy supplies.

More information is available on most comparison websites and on each energy providers' website.

## Switch and Save - Home Heating Oil

### Compare suppliers

If you use home heating oil for heating and hot water, then you will usually be able to choose between a number of suppliers. Prices vary and so we would advise all of our customers to obtain a number of price quotations before ordering home heating oil.

You can compare prices in your area at [www.cheapestoil.ie](http://www.cheapestoil.ie) or by contacting oil suppliers in your area directly.

### Avoid using oil drums

It may be tempting to purchase heating oil in small quantities, in oil drums or at garage forecourts, but this is the most expensive way to purchase home heating oil and can lead to other problems such as the risk of spilling oil and the increased likelihood of running out of oil, which can also cause damage to your boiler.

### Fuel Savings Schemes and Oil Buying Clubs

Fuel savings schemes, may be available in some areas, allowing you to save towards the cost of heating oil deliveries. This can help with budgeting and allows the cost of a delivery of heating oil to be spread over a period of time.

There may also be a local oil buying club in your area, where a number of customers come together to group their oil deliveries to achieve savings. If there isn't a scheme in your area then you could consider grouping with friends or neighbours to see if you can reduce your costs

Contact your local authority to see if they operate these types of scheme in your area or are aware of any similar initiatives.

Contact details for local authorities can be found on **page 26**.



## Landlord Energy Costs

A number of our housing schemes may have communal or landlord energy costs, which relate to energy use such as heating in corridors and external lighting. The cost of this energy may be passed on to tenants at those housing schemes as part of a service charge, with the amount charged being based on the actual cost of energy.

Some of our homes may have communal heating systems where central boilers provide heat and hot water to a number of properties. In these instances Oaklee Housing is responsible for purchasing natural gas or heating oil for these housing schemes and each home is charged a proportion of the overall heating cost.

Each year our energy management team review our communal or landlord energy contracts to ensure we are buying energy in a cost effective way. Oaklee Housing also have targets in place to reduce the amount of landlord energy used, as this helps to ensure energy costs are managed and the impact on our tenants is reduced.



## Climate change and the environment

In recent decades concerns have grown around our impact on the environment. Climate change has been recognised as one of the greatest global threats that we face, with legislation in place in countries across the world aiming to drive down harmful emissions and reduce our environmental impact.

Climate change is generally understood to be a large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns or average temperatures and the evidence includes changing rainfall, changes in nature, sea level rises, higher temperatures, and melting glaciers and ice sheets.

There are lots of ways in which we can reduce our impact on the environment, which include reducing how much energy we use in our homes, managing pollution, reducing waste, recycling where possible, reducing the amount of water we use, choosing more environmentally forms of transport and considering the products we buy.



## Reducing waste and recycling

One way to reduce our impact on the environment is to reduce the amount of household waste which ends up in landfill sites. You could consider what you purchase, and seek to reduce the amount of disposable products whilst also choosing products with reduced packaging, and food with longer shelf life to avoid waste.

You can also reuse products where possible, with a good example being carrier bags. Ireland was one of the first countries to impose a plastic bag levy in 2002, which led to a 90% drop in the use of plastic bags. Plastic bags are typically made using fossil fuels, and they do not easily decompose, and so the plastic bag levy has delivered significant environmental benefits. Environmental projects have also been funded with support from this levy.

Waste charges and methods of payment can vary considerably so you should check with your waste collection operator and those in your area for details of their charges.

You may also be able to switch waste collection operators in your area.

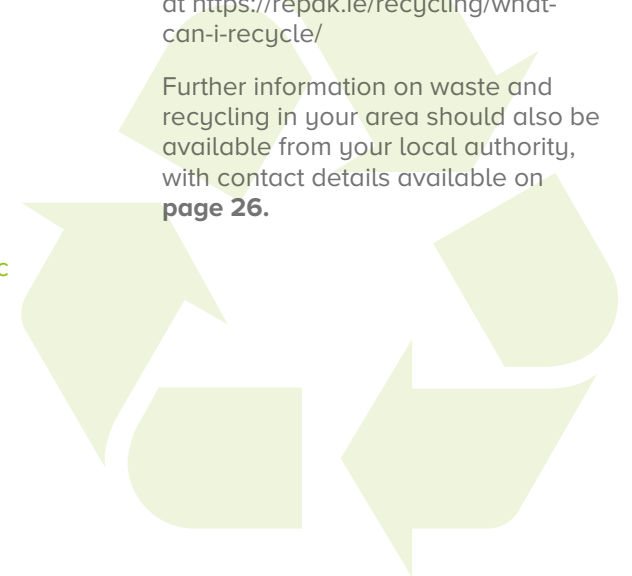
A lot of household waste can be recycled, with local authorities responsible for ensuring there are adequate facilities available in your area. Most waste collection operators will collect recyclables in designated bins.

Further information on waste and recycling is available from Citizens Information, with contact details provided on **page 27**. Guidance on what can be recycled can be found at <https://repak.ie/recycling/what-can-i-recycle/>

Further information on waste and recycling in your area should also be available from your local authority, with contact details available on **page 26**.

# 90%

Ireland was one of the first countries to impose a plastic bag levy in 2002, which led to a 90% drop in the use of plastic bags.





## Water conservation

In recent years there has been significant interest in domestic water use, with domestic water charges introduced in 2015 and subsequently repealed. In the future there may be further changes in relation to the cost of water and so examining ways to reduce current or potential future water costs is beneficial.

It is important to recognise that there is an environmental impact of having water purified and pumped to your home. This means that we can also reduce our impact on the environment by making simple changes to the way in which we use water in our homes, such as:

- Remembering to turn off the tap while brushing your teeth
- Leaving a jug of water in the fridge rather than running a tap for a long time to get a cold drink
- Washing fruit and vegetables in a bowl rather than under a running tap
- Reusing suitable water to feed houseplants
- Using a watering can rather than a hose
- Using a bucket and sponge to wash your car, rather than a hose

Further information on water charges is available from Citizens Information. Information on water supply and conservation is also available from Irish Water. Contact details are available on [page 27](#).



## Transport

According to a report in December 2020, transport was responsible for the largest share of energy-related CO2 emissions in 2018 at 40%, up from 33% in 2005. CO2 emissions from transport increased by 24% between 2012 and 2018.

At the same time levels of air pollution in towns and cities and around busy roads are likely to increase. One of the most effective ways to reduce emissions is to limit your journeys in a vehicle and try to walk or cycle instead where possible, which also offers health benefits. Some schemes are available to promote cycling such as 'Dublin Bikes' and 'Bleeper Bike', with more information available at [www.dublinbikes.ie](#) and [www.bleeperactive.com](#). Contact your local authority to see if there are any schemes in your area to promote sustainable transport.

However, it is not always possible to walk or cycle and so, as an alternative, you could consider sharing lifts and using public transport where this is available.

An alternative to owning a car would be to consider a car sharing scheme where you can rent a car for each journey, with one example of this being 'Go Car', with further information available at [www.gocar.ie](#)

If you need to use your car then taking time to plan your route carefully will not only reduce emissions, but also save you money! You can also reduce your emissions by driving at an appropriate speed, anticipating road conditions to avoid unnecessary acceleration and braking, checking your tyre pressure regularly, using air conditioning sparingly, and reducing excess weight and drag e.g. roof racks.

When buying a new or second-hand car you should consider fuel efficiency as more fuel efficient cars are likely to create less pollution and will save you money on fuel and tax. In coming years it is anticipated that electric vehicles will become more popular, which can be charged at home or at charging stations across the country.



### What is energy poverty

If a household is unable to attain an acceptable standard of warmth and energy services at an affordable cost it is considered energy poor. There are three main factors that contribute to energy poverty, which are:

- Household Income
- Energy Costs
- Energy Efficiency

A household is considered energy poor if it spends more than 10% of its disposable income on energy costs. In 2016 the Government produced Research undertaken by the Economic and Social Research Institute shows that the proportion of households in or at risk of energy poverty has reduced from 28% in 2015 to 17.5% in 2020. Whilst this is good news, there is still much more to be done.

### Ways to reduce energy poverty

If you believe that your home is suffering from energy poverty then you could consider each of the factors noted in the section above.

One potential way to increase your household income would be to check that you are receiving all of the benefits which you may be entitled to. More information on this is provided in the following section.

You could also consider ways to reduce the price you pay for your energy, such as switching your energy suppliers or considering alternative ways to pay for your fuel, with more information on [page 15](#).

Improving the energy efficiency of homes has been one of the most common approaches to alleviating energy poverty, as energy efficiency improvements should deliver savings over a long period of time.

Oaklee Housing have been active in improving the energy efficiency of our existing homes in recent years, to include improvements to insulation levels, energy efficient windows and doors, and new heating systems with modern heating controls. Our new homes are also being developed to high standards to ensure that occupants are able to have reduced energy costs.

A number of our homes in Ireland will have a Building Energy Rating (BER) and at the end of 2020/21 Oaklee Housing properties had an average BER rating of C1 (159), which compares favourably to the national average of around D1, and is an improvement on the average of C3 (189) at the end of 2017/18. Oaklee Housing use our BERs to identify areas for improvement in the future and we have worked alongside the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to use this information to inform our future investment.

Lifestyle is also very important and one way to reduce your heating costs is by checking that your home isn't overheated. You should aim to heat your living room to around 21c and your bedrooms to around 18c, and so if you have a room thermostat you could set this to around 20-21c.

You could also use temperature cards or thermometers in your home to check the temperature of individual rooms. It is important to recognise the

needs of the occupants of your home, bearing in mind that some occupants, for example older people and the very young, may require warmer room temperatures due to factors such as health requirements.

You should also check that radiators aren't concealed or covered, and windows aren't opened unnecessarily, with more information and advice on [page 8](#).

### Benefit entitlement

There are many different types of benefits available as part of the social welfare system in Ireland. Entitlement to these benefits is generally based on satisfying specific personal circumstances.

We would advise all of our customers to regularly check for updates in this area and to advise the relevant

bodies, such as the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, about any changes to personal circumstances.

Further information is available from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection or by contacting Citizens Information, with further contact details provided on [page 27](#).

### Debt advice

If you're struggling to pay your rent we would advise you to contact your Housing Officer at Oaklee Housing as soon as possible on 01 400 2650.

If you are struggling with day-to-day bills, or to keep up with loan repayments and other financial commitments then there are a number of options open to you.

You don't need to pay for debt advice and the best time to seek help is as soon as you start to struggle, or begin to worry that you will have difficulty meeting your payments or outgoings.

For more support you can contact Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS), with contact details available on [page 27](#).

## Local Authorities

### Contact Details

Council	Phone Number	Website	Email
Donegal County Council	074 91 53900	www.donegalcoco.ie	info@donegalcoco.ie
Leitrim County Council	071 962 0005	www.leitrimcoco.ie	customerservices@leitrimcoco.ie
Cavan County Council	049 43 78300	www.cavancoco.ie	info@cavancoco.ie
Monaghan County Council	00353 47 30500	www.monaghan.ie	info@monaghancoco.ie
Louth County Council	042 93 35457	www.louthcoco.ie	info@louthcoco.ie
Meath County Council	046 909 7000	www.meath.ie/council/	customerservice@meathcoco.ie
Westmeath County Council	044 93 32000	www.westmeathcoco.ie	customer-care@westmeathcoco.ie
Longford County Council	043 33 43300	www.longfordcoco.ie	customerservices@longfordcoco.ie
Roscommon County Council	090 66 37100	www.roscommoncoco.ie	info@roscommoncoco.ie
Sligo County Council	071 91 11111	www.sligococo.ie	info@sligococo.ie
Mayo County Council	+353 94 906 4000	www.mayo.ie	www.mayo.ie/en-ie/contact-us
Galway County Council	091 50 9000	www.galway.ie	customerservices@galwaycoco.ie
Galway City Council	091 53 6400	www.galwaycity.ie	customerservice@galwaycity.ie
Offaly County Council	057 93 46800	www.offaly.ie	customerservices@offalycoco.ie
Kildare County Council	045 98 0200	www.kildare.ie/countycouncil/	customerservice@kildarecoco.ie
Fingal County Council	01 890 5000	www.fingal.ie	customer-care@fingal.ie
Dublin City Council	01 222 2222	www.dublincity.ie	customerservices@dublincity.ie
South Dublin County Council	01 414 9000	www.sdcc.ie	info@sdblincoco.ie
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council	01 205 4700	www.dlrcoco.ie	info@dlrcoco.ie
Wicklow County Council	0404 20100	www.wicklow.ie	customerservice@wicklowcoco.ie
Laois County Council	057 86 64000	www.laois.ie	www.laois.ie/contact-us/email-addresses/
Tipperary County Council	+353 8180 65000	www.tipperarycoco.ie	customerservices@tipperarycoco.ie
Clare County Council	065 68 21616	www.clarecoco.ie	info@clarecoco.ie
Limerick City and County Council	+353 61 556000	www.limerick.ie/council	customerservices@limerick.ie
Kerry County Council	066 71 83500	www.kerrycoco.ie	info@kerrycoco.ie
Cork County Council	021 42 76891	www.corkcoco.ie	housing@corkcoco.ie
Cork City Council	021 49 24000	www.corkcity.ie	housing@corkcity.ie
Waterford City and County Council	0761 10 20 20	www.waterfordcouncil.ie	contact@waterfordcouncil.ie
Kilkenny County Council	056 77 94900	www.kilkennycoco.ie	housing@kilkennycoco.ie
Wexford County Council	053 919 6000	www.wexfordcoco.ie	customerservice@wexfordcoco.ie
Carlow County Council	059 91 70300	www.carlow.ie	secretar@carlowcoco.ie

## Support and Advice

Organisation	Contact
Citizens Information	0818 07 4000 www.citizensinformation.ie
Commission for Regulation of Utilities	1800 404 404 www.cru.ie
Irish Water	1850 278 278 www.water.ie
Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)	0818 07 2000 www.mabs.ie
SEAI	+353-1-8082100 www.seai.ie
<b>Various Governmental Departments *</b> Contact - <a href="https://www.gov.ie/en/help/departments/">https://www.gov.ie/en/help/departments/</a>	
<b>For any electrical interruptions or emergencies you should contact ESB Networks immediately.</b> ESB Networks	1800 372 757
<b>If you smell gas you should contact Gas Networks Ireland immediately.</b> Gas Networks Ireland	1800 464 464

\*See website for applicable office/department phone number



**CONTACT THE  
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

Should you require any further advice or support, you can email a member of our Sustainability and Energy Team on: [enquiries@oakleehousing.ie](mailto:enquiries@oakleehousing.ie) or contact us on: **01 400 2650**.

Any general enquiries can also be made to [enquiries@oakleehousing.ie](mailto:enquiries@oakleehousing.ie) or by contacting our Services Centre on: **01 400 2650**.



**Oaklee Housing**  
132 James's Street  
Dublin D08 PK25  
[enquiries@oakleehousing.ie](mailto:enquiries@oakleehousing.ie)

**T: 01 400 2650**  
**[oaklee.ie](http://oaklee.ie)**

**in**

**[oaklee.ie](http://oaklee.ie)**