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Green guide shows retailers how small changes can make big savings

by Ryan Kavanagh

Medium-sized retailers can save up to €60,000 a year via better lighting, water and waste management, according to guidelines issued by Green Business, a new initiative launched in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency.

Green Business's 'Resource Efficiency for the Retail Sector' guide says the Supervalu store in Hacketstown, Co Dublin, reduced its electricity costs for lighting by 43% and saved €27,500 per annum by switching to LED lighting.

Stillorgan Village Centre has cut its water consump-

tion by 40% and saved €24,000 a year through leak repair and the installation of more efficient bathroom fittings.

The guide notes that a hot water tap left running for ten minutes every hour of a working day will cost €6,000 per annum. And a tonne of food waste costs about €3,000 to buy.

James Hogan, programme manager with Green Business, said: "All retailers should complete the quick checklists included in the guide, which will allow them identify where savings can be achieved. Many of these can be achieved with no cost to the retailer."

The guide outlines how retailers can reduce their electricity and gas bills by getting the most competitive price, avoiding penalties on bills and in some cases by changing to a more cost-effective fuel source. The guide provides tips on how to reduce energy consumed in lighting, refrigeration, heating and ventilation.

"Now more than ever, retailers should be aware of how their level of resources and wastage is effecting, not just the environment but their bottom line," Mr Hogan said. "No one can afford to literally see money go down the drain and the Resource Efficiency Guide

shows how significant savings can be achieved merely by making small changes."

The launch of the guide was also attended by Dr Mary Purcell, Green Business co-ordinator at the Clean Technology Centre at CIT, fashion designer Louis Copeland and Senator Feargal Quinn.

Senator Quinn said: "It's a win-win situation for retailers to stay competitive by reducing their costs while reducing their environmental footprint. As a former retailer I know the extent and the cost of unnecessary wastage which is why I fully support this campaign."

Stephen Lynam, director



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Louis Copeland with Dr Mary Purcell and Senator Feargal Quinn at the launch of the Green Business's 'Resource Efficiency Guide'.

Picture: Robbie Reynolds

of Retail Ireland, also welcomed the guide which he said gave retailers the opportunity to make a valuable contribution to Ireland's environmental sustainability.

"As Irish retail continues to struggle against the effects of declining sales, stagnant consumer demand and ris-

ing business costs, dedicated guidelines demonstrating how the retail industry can achieve significant savings by maximising the efficiency and sustainability of resources have never been so timely," he said.

■ www.greenbusiness.ie