

News Bulletin December 2009

The Switch It Off (SIO) campaign does it again. The switch It off campaign which is run across Coventry, Warwickshire and Worcestershire asked all across the three areas to switch off non essential electrical appliances during the big Switch Off which ran from 4:30 – 6:30pm on Friday the 13th November. Electricity supplier Central Networks recorded a 26.9 megawatt drop in the amount of energy normally used during this time. This is equivalent to 154,598 households turning off a 32" LCD television for two hours.

According to the early findings of a major new annual household survey called Understanding Society, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council recycling is a favourite activity among the British.

Preliminary results from the 1500 respondents show that those who own their own home are more likely to separate their rubbish (83%) than those in rented accommodation (59%), whilst less than one in a hundred households have solar water heating (0.5%) or solar panels (0.5%). Initial findings also show that switching off the lights in unused rooms (82%) and not leaving television on standby(67%) are significantly more popular than taking fewer flights (16%), car sharing (15%) and not buying items because they have too much packaging (8%). A fuller picture of environmental and other behaviours and attitudes based on the first annual survey of 100,000 individuals from 40,000 households for Understanding Society will be published at a latter date. For the full article go to www.wired-gov.net

DECC invites applicants for £1.5 million bio energy infrastructure grants. Farmers, foresters and local authorities can from the 24/11/09 apply for £1.5 million grants to help develop the supply of biomass, such as wood chips or energy crops like miscathus, in England through round three of the Bio energy infrastructure scheme. The scheme provides grants to help the development of the supply chain required to harvest, process, store and supply biomass to heat, combines heat and power, and electricity end users. The scheme is restricted to projects based in England and is open to businesses, local authorities and charities. Grants will only be available for projects which complete by 31st March 2011. the deadline for receipt of applications is 26th February 2010, although applicant projects will be assessed on a rolling basis as they are received. For application forms, guidance and all information regarding the scheme, please contact the Bio energy Infrastructure Scheme Helpline Tel:01355 593800

The natural Christmas tree has lower impacts on the environment than the artificial tree according, to an independent Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) conducted by ellipsos inc, a firm of experts in sustainable development. Results show that a natural tree will generate 3.1kg of greenhouse gases whereas the artificial tree will produce 8.1kg per year. ellipsos chose the Life Cycle Assessment method to perform this study. It follows the recognized ISO14040 and 14044 standards and it was reviewed by an independent third party of peers. This approach takes into account the tree environmental impacts, from the extraction of raw materials to the end of life. While natural trees also have environmental impacts, the LCA shows that an artificial tree would need to be kept for at least 20 years to be equivalent, currently people keep it for six years on average. In order to compensate for the impacts of a Christmas tree, either natural or artificial, you can offset the carbon emissions by carpooling or biking to work only one to three weeks per year, according to ellipsos. To get a copy of the study go to www.ellipsos.ca

The Natural assets grant scheme by Natural England aims to tap into the natural potential of the West Midlands to benefit everyone who lives and work there. Natural England expects to award a minimum of 15 grants worth up to £2 million , over four years. Grant awards will range between £35,000 and £250,000 depending on how closely the project meets the aims of the scheme. Grants can represent a maximum of 90% of the total project costs. There are two closing dates for application during 2010 noon 15th February and noon 21st May. For more information please visit www.naturalengland.org

The Environment and Energy awards 2010 - Call for Entries. The 2010 award categories are:



- The ESTA Energy Manager of the year
- The SME Award for Energy Efficiency
- Sustainable Business of the year
- Best Sustainability Communication Campaign
- NEMEX Renewables Innovation Award
- NQA Environmental Leadership Award for Cultural Change
- Environmental Manager of the Year
- Innovation Award for Environmental Technology
- Innovation Award for Remediation Technology
- The Environment Product / Service Award
- The Energy Product / Service Award

Visit www.sustainabilitylive.com/energyawards for further information, including judging criteria and to submit your entry. Please note deadline of January 10th 2010.

Responsibletravel.com, has announced that it will offer travellers a flight search which compares not only prices, but carbon emissions of different airlines for requested routes. Following on from responsibletravel.com's carbon reduction campaign launched last month it is a move that adds a tangible dimension to the "when you fly make it count" advice set out on the carbon caution page of the site: www.responsibletravel.com/carboncaution. For more information go to www.responsibletravel.com/carboncaution.

Each household in Warwickshire is currently throwing away an average of £420 a year in wasted food. Warwickshire County Council and the waste partnership are supporting WRAP's Love Food Hate Waste campaign in an attempt to get local people to think about the food they are throwing in the bin. If you would like resources (leaflets and recipe cards) to help promote this campaign please contact Caroline Faulkner on 01926 412458 or email carolinefaulkner@warwickshire.gov.uk

Warwickshire in Copenhagen - 5,500 Chartered Environmentalists, a professional recognition awarded by the Society for the Environment (SocEnv) under their Royal Charter, will be represented in Copenhagen in December by SocEnv's Chief Executive Officer to help push for a strong climate deal. It is unclear at this point in time what results will emerge from the climate conference in Copenhagen. A clear commitment and binding targets will enable environmental professionals to translate these commitments into their daily contribution towards a sustainable future. There are worrying signs that a weak, non binding deal is all that years of negotiation will be able to produce. This will only increase the demand for environmental professionals who, with their environmental skills and knowledge, will be able to balance economic, social and environmental issues without clear legal and political guidance.

A new report commissioned by the Forestry Commission 'Combating Climate Change - a role for UK forests' is a wide-ranging look at the role of forests in addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation issues. For adaptation, the report suggests that to maintain forests under a changing climate, forest planners may need to reconsider the current preference for using native tree species under all circumstances, as new species, including those from continental Europe, may be needed to ensure resilience. The report also says that trees, particularly in towns and cities, have an important role in helping society to adapt to climate change by providing shelter, cooling, shade and controlling rainwater runoff. <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7y4gn9>

Companies and their investors are not taking the impacts of a changing climate properly into account in their investment decisions, according to 'Managing the Unavoidable: investment implications of a changing climate'. The report, by Henderson Global Investors, Insight Investment, Railpen and the Universities Superannuation Scheme, with input from Acclimatise, highlights that most attention has been paid to extreme weather effects (e.g. flood risk), with much less attention on changes to weather patterns, such as the effects of incremental temperature rise on building performance and energy efficiency. The report calls on investors to ensure that companies have strategies for responding to climate change and



urges investors to play a more proactive role in public policy debates on adaptation. The reports are available from www.acclimatise.uk.com/resources/investors

A new report by the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), 'Antarctic Climate Change and the Environment', suggests that the continent has been, for the most part, shielded from global warming thanks to the effects of the hole in the ozone layer on Antarctic weather patterns. As the ozone layer recovers, the effects of warming will start to show, with rising temperatures. The report also suggests that the loss of ice from the Western Antarctic could contribute to a sea level rise of 1.4m by the end of this century.

<http://www.scar.org/publications/occasional/acce.html>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/8387137.stm>

<http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn16988-why-antarctic-ice-is-growing-despite-global-warming.html>

