

## Council Offices to embrace Earth Hour 2009

North Tipperary County Council has been implementing a series of energy saving measures in its head quarters at the Civic Offices on the Limerick Road in Nenagh. Examples of such measures include the optimization of heating controls, raising awareness amongst staff through energy awareness campaigns and training, and optimization of lighting levels and controls throughout the building. Between 2007 and 2008 there was a reduction in energy used by 9%, this equates to emission savings of 88 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, or the equivalent of removing 30 cars off the roads of North Tipperary. The Civic Offices tries to achieve the goal of switching off of all unnecessary lights every hour the building is unoccupied.

This year the County Council is embracing Earth Hour for the first time. Earth Hour is an international environmental initiative and at 8.30 p.m on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March people around the world will turn their lights off for one hour in a universal effort to show that it is possible to take action on global warming.

The initiative began in Sydney two years ago by the World Wildlife Fund, 2 million people turned off their lights. Last year 50 million people across 35 countries switched off for one hour. Supported in Ireland by Friends of the Irish Environment, Dublin's Custom House went dark and Eirgrid reported reductions of 50 megawatts - enough electricity to power 32,500 homes. This year Earth Hour is set to become one of the world's biggest climate change initiatives - with a goal of 1000 cities and 1,000,000,000 people.

Last year Ireland was alone in the EU in supporting the effort while this year, 74 countries have signed up to date - including, for the first time, Belfast, London, and Paris - which has announced that the Eiffel tower will join the world's landmarks in going dark for Earth Hour.

Earth Hour is now one of the world's biggest climate change initiatives and nationally Government buildings and some national monuments will switch off their lights for earth hour including the Civic Offices in North Tipperary .Further information on Earth Hour can be on [www.earthhour.org](http://www.earthhour.org)