

Energy Days

Guidelines for Organisers

Take a day to change tomorrow



Introduction

Decision makers from industry, business and research have been central in ensuring that Europe is now a world leader in sustainable energy projects and technologies. Our task is now to ensure that European citizens grasp the opportunities offered through these technologies and common sense practices in such a way that the potential for intelligent use of energy is fully exploited.

The **Sustainable Energy Europe 2005-2008** Campaign is committed to ensuring that we, as Europe's citizens, make more intelligent use of energy in all aspects of our daily lives – in our homes, schools, offices and modes of transportation.

With this objective in mind the European Commission supports, within the framework of the Campaign, the organisation of **sustainable energy days across Europe**.

The following guidelines are also intended for anyone wishing to set up an energy day initiative in their area, drawing upon the experience of a range of successful events across Europe.

Energy Days

Guidelines for Organisers

Congratulations on joining the Campaign to change the landscape of energy!

The **Sustainable Energy Europe 2005-2008** Campaign team is committed to supporting all energy day initiatives with technical advice, communication tools and media promotion.

The following information has therefore been provided to help you successfully plan and implement an energy day initiative in your area.

Here you will find answers to the following frequently asked questions:

- 1. What is an "energy day"?**
- 2. Who are energy days targeting?**
- 3. What types of activities constitutes an energy day?**
- 4. Can an energy day be linked to an existing event?**
- 5. What are the key elements for successful planning of an energy day?**
- 6. How should I choose the right event for my initiative?**
- 7. How can the European Commission support my initiative?**
- 8. How can I ensure Media coverage of my initiative?**
- 9. Do I need to hold a Press conference?**
- 10. How can I receive further information?**

1. What is an “energy day”?

Energy days mobilize consumers, businesses and decisions-makers to take a day to think about the future of European energy production and use. They are public events, demonstrating to a wide audience that sustainable energy technologies and patterns of behaviour are viable, cost effective and better for the environment.

2. Who are energy days targeting?

Typically, energy days may engage a range of stakeholders, including private companies and public authorities/organisations. However, the main objective of an energy day is to raise awareness of the general public, both adults and children.

3. What types of activities constitutes an energy day?

Usually organised at the local, regional or national level for a specified period, the types of activities you plan can vary, but normally would include one or more of the following:

- **Guided visits and tours** for the general public to companies, public administrations, private homes or other organizations that use renewable energy sources or implement energy efficient technologies. (Note: The quality of guides is essential for the success of an event and should suit the attending audience)
- **Educational activities and programmes** assisting children to discover and learn about energy efficiency techniques and renewable energy
- **Open door days**, during which the general public visits organisations to learn more about energy efficient and renewable energy measures on the premises
- **Exhibitions and fairs**, where public and private organisations demonstrate and explain their energy technologies to the wider public
- **Opening ceremonies, Inaugurations, Exhibition shows** aimed at the wider public and showcasing innovative renewable energy technologies, energy efficiency or alternative modes of transport

4. Can an energy day be linked to an existing event?

Yes, Energy days can be planned as new initiatives or as a part of an existing project or programme.

5. What are the key elements for successful planning of an energy day?

The organisation of an energy day is **straightforward** once a few significant factors have been tackled.

Main success factors

- Conception of the event
- Internal organisation (support-team, partners)
- Logistics (location, organisation, equipment)
- Promotion of the event (contacts, press relations)
- Evaluation of the event
- Dissemination of the outcomes
- Planning for future energy days

General recommendations

- Involve your local/regional authority as the leading support for the event; explain clearly the political benefits of such an initiative
- Find companies and industry actors willing to open their doors to the general public and present their concept of energy use and savings
- Find other public authorities and schools interested in supporting your initiative
- From the outset, make VIPs part of your project - justify their attendance as an opportunity to take part in a crucial awareness-raising effort.
- Visit the Sustainable Energy Days online catalogue to get an overview of all existing activities
- Contact, directly or via the Campaign team, other Energy Days organisers to get advice

Practical details

- Conceive an itinerary for your initiative with attractive sites for the general public
- Organise information display in different locations
- Your chosen venue should be flexible to fit your requirements; be accessible for disabled people; and provide adequate technical support

Things to avoid

- Absence of a strategic plan
- Approximate scheduling
- Bad targeting
- Using an under-qualified team

6. How should I choose the right event for my initiative?

Whilst there are a range of successful 'models' that have proven effective in mobilizing large public audiences, it is important that the channel of communication is suitable for the message, target audience and particular setting.

The following sample 'models' describe a variety of energy day initiatives that have been successfully managed in the past and have been credited with high replication potential.

Exhibitions

Model 1

- Trade fair and congress for renewable energy
- Communication, networking and contact opportunities for manufacturers of renewable energy technologies, services, government representatives, professionals and end-consumers
- Workshops, seminars and forums relating to a wide variety of renewable energy and energy efficiency themes
- Media contacts with press release, press conference and interviews

Model 2

- Seminars on various energy topics with keynote speeches and discussions
- Specialised exhibition in which companies are given the opportunity to exhibit and present innovative energy efficiency products and services
- Media contacts with press release, press conference and interviews

Model 3

- Exhibition with companies and organisations specialised in sustainable construction, environmentally friendly building materials, renewable energy systems and other highly efficient products for homes and buildings of all kinds
- Public seminars covering subjects related to energy, demonstrations and special attractions
- Guided tours for visitors, highlighting the many possibilities on display in the exhibition
- Media contacts with press release, press conference and interviews

Model 4

- Climate exhibition open to the public and the schools highlighting in an interactive way the earth's fragile ecosystem
- Workshops on climate change, renewable energy sources and energy saving issues
- Media contacts with press release, press conference and interviews

Educational events

Model 5

- Fair with interactive stands in which exhibitors will engage the audience, providing a breadth of products, from lightbulbs to solar energy systems
- Children's activities, such as storytelling, with the aim to promote ecological awareness
- Seminars with specialised speakers in the field of energy/environment
- Media contacts with press release, press conference and interviews

Model 6

- Conference dedicated to secondary school pupils from across and outside Europe
- Workshops on energy related-issues (such as small hydro electric power stations, hydrogen and fuel cells, bioenergy, wind energy, solar energy, energy saving, greenhouse gases, passive houses etc.) introduced by representatives from various associations, institutions and companies
- Student presentation and discussion of research projects and case studies
- Media contacts with press release, press conference and interviews

Model 7

- Awareness-raising event about the availability of renewable energy sources to the inhabitants of a region
 - to the general public, via movies about renewable energy, press release and seminars on renewable energy sources and their technical and economical availability
 - to experts, via a seminar on local usage and perspectives on biomass, biogas, solar energy, heat pumps, wind energy, and hydro power
 - to children, via movies (broadcasting of movies about renewable energy to school pupils) and a drawing competition (exhibition of the best children's paintings and award ceremony)
- Media contacts with press release, press conference and interviews

Model 8

- Evening meetings in the administrative districts of a city
- Theatre plays on the energy-related themes for pupils of primary and secondary schools
- Comic strip contest on "Energy & the environment"
- International Conference involving several experts on energy and environment addressing concrete applications of these issues to tourism, buildings and schools
- Media contacts with press release, press conference and interviews

*On-site visits***Model 9**

- Presentation of a local Energy and Environmental Plan
- Conference taking place in a poly-functional room enabling the access to the wider public (from stakeholders, to citizens, public authorities, pupils and teachers) with the attendance of prominent speakers
- Inauguration of a relevant site, followed by a guided visit
- Concluding forum
- Media contacts with press release, press conference and interviews

Model 10

- Symposium on passive houses with technical and scientific information for concerned actors (builders, construction companies, governmental institutions, etc.), intermediaries (architects, engineering offices, consultants, scientific institutions, etc.), companies (builders, installers, etc.)
- Forum on technology with ongoing comments by different speakers on passive house related-issues

- Interactive visits to passive houses and low energy houses with participants learning how these houses work and how they are built
- Media contacts with press release, press conference and interviews

Model 11

- Open door days and guided visits to private homes, public buildings and companies making use of solar power, reuse of heat, biomass, wind energy, use of rainwater, etc.
- Practical approach for visitors learning firsthand about the feasibility, applicability and benefits of renewable energy and energy efficiency
- Media contacts with press release, press conference and interviews

7. How can the European Commission support my initiative?

Within the context of the Sustainable Energy Europe 2005-2008 Campaign, energy days are given European-wide **visibility** and **credibility**.

All official energy day organisers are provided with:

- exclusive rights to use the Campaign logo (usage is compulsory)
- a CD-Rom of resources, including adjustable poster templates
- a range of advertising material and leaflets
- opportunities to promote their event on the Campaign website and calendar of EU events
- increased Media coverage by the Campaign media desk

8. How can I ensure Media coverage of my initiative?

Ensuring the appropriate level of Media coverage for your initiative can seem a daunting task. Below is a summary of key points to remember when planning this aspect of your project.

Keys to success

- Identify local, regional or national journalists interested in the fields of environment or energy
- Use an updated database with local, regional or national journalists from the printed and audiovisual press
- Emphasise personalised contacts with the press
- Contact journalists with a concise press file, highlighting the essential elements of your event
- Follow up via telephone and email two weeks before, until one day before the event
- Propose a first-rate story
- Provide attention-grabbing photogenic displays of windmills, solar test installations or innovative low energy buildings
- Ensure the attendance of VIPs, including representatives from politics, business, and education
- Set up opportunities for 'grassroots' interviews and/or the possibility to interview VIPs
- Provide clear information about the impact of your initiative on the wider debate concerning sustainable energy, climate change and the earth's natural resources

Things to avoid

- Proposing financial reward to journalists as a primary motivation for covering the event
- Having insufficient prior contact with a journalist
- Targeting journalists unfamiliar with the field of environment or energy
- Bad timing of the energy day and its activities – i.e., because of conflicts with other events, breaking news, etc.
- Using an outdated contact database of journalists and media representatives

9. Do I need to hold a Press conference?

Energy days are usually launched by a Press conference and frequently include the participation of local, regional and national journalists. Good media coverage is central to the promotional nature of these activities, which are proving highly popular with the general public and attract an increasing number of committed energy actors every year.

In partnership with the Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign 2005-2008, the Campaign media desk aims to augment the impact of Energy Days activities action through adequate media coverage and press releases in other countries.

For more information on media coverage, please contact:
mr@sustenenergy.org

10. How can I receive further information?

For more information, please visit the Campaign website:

www.sustenergy.org

Or contact the Energy Days desk:

energydays@sustenergy.org

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