

Press Release

20 May 2009

Wind Energy Direct Ltd. launches pioneering on-site wind autoproduction project supported by Sustainable Energy Ireland

4 MW wind turbines commence generating electricity for Munster Joinery plant in Ballydesmond

Wind Energy Direct Ltd (WED), a wholly Irish owned renewable energy company, has today, the 20th May, 2009, launched Ireland's first large scale "behind the meter" wind turbine project with the installation of 2 x 2 MW wind turbines that will deliver power directly to the Munster Joinery plant close to the Cork – Kerry border.

Munster Joinery is Ireland's leading manufacturer of high performance energy saving windows and doors and this investment in wind turbines will make it the industry leader in reducing carbon emissions. The installation will also reduce the cost of electricity at the plant dramatically, thereby improving competitiveness.

This €6 million investment is the first large scale wind autoproducer project on a commercial site in Ireland. Excess capacity can also be sold onto the national grid. "This amounts to a significant breakthrough for industry in its efforts to enhance competitiveness in Ireland by helping to reduce energy costs from the start and hedging against future energy price increases. Critically also, our projects enable industry to significantly reduce carbon emissions so it is an absolute win-win situation for them," said Dominic Costello, WED's Managing Director.

A significant proportion of Munster Joinery's total energy requirement will now be provided by this green, carbon free on-site energy source, amounting to an estimated energy cost saving in excess of €1 million over the next 5 years. The 4 MW-installation at Munster joinery will provide enough energy to power the equivalent of 2,262 houses and will displace over 9,000 tonnes of carbon per annum.

Recognising the project's importance as a technology demonstrator for all Irish industries, Sustainable Energy Ireland working on behalf of the Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources is providing €1 million grant support towards the project.

Energy Minister Eamon Ryan TD, voiced his support and said: "I want to congratulate Wind Energy Direct and Munster Joinery on the launch of this, their first project. Wind autoproduction, on which my Department is currently working, allows industry to access one of our best renewable energy resources, benefit directly from cheaper electricity and reduced greenhouse gas emissions in the long term. With support from SEI, this project is a great example of how companies can create jobs and save money. It is the green economy in action."

WED plans to install fifteen behind-the-meter projects over the next four years in a total capital investment of €60m. WED, founded in 2006, currently employs 10 staff directly as well as hiring specialised contractors during each installation. It anticipates it will grow employment levels to 30 within the next four years.

"Today is a very significant day for us in Wind Energy Direct Ltd. with the launch of this project at Munster Joinery, the first of its kind in Ireland," said Mr Costello. "This shows other large energy users that on-site wind auto-production, through our 'Build, Own and Operate' turnkey model, allows them to benefit from low cost renewable energy from year one, break the link with energy inflation and reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

“We have embarked on a very exciting enterprise at WED. Our projects can save a large scale industry up to €3 million in energy costs over a ten year period and that significantly enhances their competitiveness at a time when competitiveness is a real problem for Ireland. In addition every 1 MW of installed wind energy capacity displaces 2,260 tonnes of carbon per annum, which helps protect our environment.

“We envisage installing 15 WED projects over the next four years and a number of these projects are already well advanced. We are delighted that a company as progressive as Munster Joinery with a significant energy requirement had the foresight to recognise the value of the proposition, both in terms of economic and environmental return, that Wind Energy Direct Ltd presents.

“Sustainable Energy Ireland has been tremendous in its support and guidance through its Renewable Energy Research Development & Demonstration (RD&D) programme. This was a significant help to WED in bringing this pioneering project to fruition. SEI’s support for WED is a major vote of confidence in our proposition generally and its RD&D Programme Manager Graham Brennan, has worked to ensure the success of this project from the start and we thank him and SEI for their support.”

Professor Owen Lewis, Chief Executive, Sustainable Energy Ireland said: “There are a number of barriers to the use of wind for on-site generation which this demonstration project will help to address. SEI was delighted to provide its support for such an important project and hopes to utilise the results and experience from the Munster Joinery Plant in Ballydesmond for the advancement of guidelines for industrial auto-generation. With industry in Ireland accounting for 22% of our overall energy requirement, the move towards renewable energy sources is essential for our future sustainability and Wind Energy Direct is to be commended on its initiative and innovation.”

Purchasing Manager at Munster Joinery Mr. Seán Michael Murphy, F.C.C.A., said that the project has been embraced by Munster Joinery's management team. “It is consistent with our position as market leader in innovation and our goal to reduce our own carbon footprint, which is very important to us. We have developed our high performance energy saving window and door ranges to enable our customers to reduce their carbon footprint and achieve higher energy ratings in their homes, many years ahead of target compliance dates.

“The installation of the two wind turbines on our site represents the future of energy for Irish industry and we are proud to be associated with them and with Wind Energy Direct Ltd. WED’s turnkey service made it possible for Munster Joinery to achieve the benefits of this project, without any impact on our normal business. As energy costs represent a significant overhead, this project has enabled Munster Joinery to take control of a large portion of our energy costs, thereby reducing them immediately and clearly breaking the link with future energy price inflation.”

Ends

Note to Editors

Wind Energy Direct (WED)

Wind Energy Direct Ltd (WED) is a wholly Irish owned renewable energy company. WED’s normal business model sees WED finance, build, own and operate the wind turbines via a turnkey solution. WED then sells the energy to our on-site clients at a significant discount to the retail rate. There is no capital outlay for the client. Suitable operations for WED installations include large manufacturing operations, data centres, hospitals and companies with large heat or refrigeration requirements. Surplus power may also be exported to the national electricity grid, utilising connections already in place to a customer’s premises and underpinning savings arising from the project. WED Board members include University of Limerick President Emeritus Ed Walsh and Lawrence Staudt, who heads the Centre for Renewable Energy at Dundalk Institute of Technology and pioneered the installation of the world’s very first large commercial wind turbine on a college campus at Dundalk Institute of Technology.

Munster Joinery

Munster Joinery was established in 1973 in Ballydesmond Co. Cork where its headquarters still remain. For the past 36 years it has been the market leader in innovation, manufacturing and installation of windows and doors. It has undergone continued expansion over the years, using the most up to date window and door materials and technology. Munster Joinery is a fully Irish owned business and is totally focused on personal attention to quality, delivery and services for its customers.

SEI

Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI) is the statutory authority charged with promoting and assisting the development of sustainable energy. SEI is funded by the Irish Government under the National Development Plan, with programmes part-financed by the European Union.

Enquiries:

Issued on behalf of Wind Energy Direct by Financial Dynamics:

Eugene Hogan

Tel: +353 (0)61 372 643

Mob: + 353 (0)87 249 7290

Nuala Nic Ghearailt

Wind Energy Direct

Tel: +353 (0)61 503 092