

**O'Neill, Lynne**

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**From:** O'Neill, Lynne  
**Sent:** 30 January 2017 16:27  
**To:** McKendry, Martin; Ellis, Cathal  
**Subject:** FW: DARD PA141-A-15 Heat from Biomass – RHI Update  
**Attachments:** PA141-A-15.docx; PA142-A-15 Photo.JPG

Martin/ Cathal,

Our conversation and my previous email refers – it's a press article not release, my apologies.

Lynne

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**From:** Press-office, DARD  
**Sent:** 07 October 2015 14:53  
**Subject:** DARD PA141-A-15 Heat from Biomass – RHI Update

**7 October 2015**

**141/A/15**

**Heat from Biomass – RHI Update**  
**By Cathal Ellis, Renewable Energy Technologist, CAFRE**

The Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) is a scheme run by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) that provides financial support to non-domestic renewable heat generators and producers of biomethane who are based in Northern Ireland.

The RHI provides financial support for renewable heat technologies for the lifetime of the installation (to a maximum of 20 years). Payments will be made on a quarterly basis and determined by the actual heat output of the system therefore heat meters will be required for each installation.

From the 4 November 2015, the tariff structure for heat generated by biomass boilers will change to a tiered system as follows:

Size range	NI RHI tariff (pence per kWh	Length of tariff
Less than 20kWth	6.7p for 1314 full load hours, then 1.5 up to 400,000kWh, then no further payment, for that year	20 years
20kWth and above, up to but not including 200kWth	6.4p for 1314 full load hours, then 1.5 up to 400,000kWh, then no further payment, for that year	20 years
200kWth and above, up to not including 1000kWth	1.5	20 years

For a site requiring 199kW of usable heat, a 199kW boiler would generate:

$199 \text{ (kW)} \times 1314 \text{ (full load hours)} = 261,486\text{kWh} @ 6.4\text{p} = \text{£}16,735.10.$

Any further usable heat required would be paid at 1.5p per kWh up to the cap of 400,000 running hours.

The changes to the RHI and progress with accreditation will be discussed during the Practical On-farm Renewable Energy Event being held at Greenmount Campus on Thursday 29 October from 11am to 8pm. As in previous years, the event includes a trade show with over 60 stands, plus seminars on Renewable Energy Technologies and Issues with Renewable Energy Installations.

Attendance is free and to speed up your entry into the event you can pre register on – line at:

<http://www.cafre.ac.uk/practical-farm-renewable-energy-event/>

For further information, please contact Cathal Ellis on 028 9442 6793 or by e-mail:

[cathal.ellis@dardni.gov.uk](mailto:cathal.ellis@dardni.gov.uk).

#### Notes to Editors:

1. Photo Caption: Peter Simpson Senior Lecturer at CAFRE's Loughry Campus and CAFRE's Cathal Ellis with the Heat Meters in the Loughry Campus Food Technology Centre, Energy Cabin.

2. All media enquiries to DARD Press Office, [pressoffice.group@dardni.gov.uk](mailto:pressoffice.group@dardni.gov.uk) or tel: 028 9052 4619.

# Press Article



Department of

**Agriculture and  
Rural Development**

www.dardni.gov.uk

AN RÓINN

**Talmhaíochta agus  
Forbartha Tuaithe**

MANNYSIRE D

**Fairnis an  
Kintra Fòrdèin**
**7 October 2015**
**141/A/15**

## Heat from Biomass – RHI Update

By Cathal Ellis, Renewable Energy Technologist, CAFRE

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## Answers to Press enquiry – Nolan Show 30 January 2017

When did the Department of Agriculture open its workshops to advise farmers and others about the RHI scheme?

**The RHI was first mentioned in an Introduction to Renewable Energy Workshop which took place on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2013.**

When and why did these workshops cease?

**The final workshop/seminar relating to RHI was by DETI on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2015 at the final Practical On-Farm Renewable Energy (POFRE) event. Workshops ceased due to the drop in interest in Heat from Biomass.**

How many attended these workshops?

**A total number of 340 attended Introduction to Renewable Energy workshops**

**A total number of 250 attended Heat from Biomass workshops**

**A total number of 16 attended Heat Pump seminars**

**A total number of 443 attended Knowledge and Technology Workshops.**

**A total number of 391 attended seminars at POFRE events**

**Comment [GM1]:** Also consider separating out the RHI workshops at POFRE from the general biomass heat workshops i.e. 2 categories not 5.

Where and when were these workshops held?

**Workshops were held throughout Northern Ireland between 19<sup>th</sup> September 2013 and 29<sup>th</sup> October 2015.**

Did any companies or other organisations outside the departmental officials attend these workshops to promote the scheme?

**No companies or other organisations attended any of the workshops or KTT events including POFRE events to promote the scheme outside of Department officials from both DARD and DETI.**

What publicity was there to promote the workshops?

**Workshops were publicised through the local press and DARD Offices**

What figures does the Department have for the success or otherwise of the workshops in driving uptake for the non-domestic RHI scheme?

**CAFRE provided advice to 88 businesses installing biomass heating systems between June 2013 and June 2015.**

At this time, was the Department of Agriculture aware that recipients of the scheme could make larger profits from RHI the more fuel they burned?

**Department officials provided financial details of the scheme through their payback calculator based income from RHI on the energy used from oil or gas heating systems used by the business.**

**Comment [GM2]:** In the period 2013 – 2015 the cost of biomass wood chips or pellets fell thereby making RHI more attractive. How much of this was known and communicated at the time?

Did the Department promote the scheme on this basis? Or was it aware of any other organisations doing this during the workshops?

**The Department always promoted renewable energy technologies on the basis of energy efficiency and carbon reduction. Other organisations were at the POFRE events but the Department was not aware of these organisations promoting biomass heating to make profits through RHI.**

Comment [GM3]: GM added this bit

When was the Department first informed by about concerns about the costs of the non-domestic RHI scheme, and by whom?

**The then DETI Minister Jonathan Bell wrote to all Ministerial colleagues on the 9th November 2015 to inform them he was making changes to the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) primarily to provide for new tariffs for the combined heat and power installations and to introduce cost control measures for the biomass including a two tier structure and an annual cap on heat payments. On the 5th February 2016 Mr Bell wrote to First and deputy First Minister, copied to all his Ministerial colleagues, seeking agreement to take an urgent decision on the closure of the RHI scheme. In this correspondence, Mr Bell mentions affordability and budgetary pressures.**

Did the then Agriculture Minister Michelle O'Neill sign off on these workshops?

**Minister Michelle O'Neill signed off on the Renewable Energy Action Plan in 2010 which included running a range of Renewable Energy workshops including those related to biomass heat.**