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Local Authorities wasting £65m a year on energy costs by breaking the law

PEPA study shows majority of Local Authorities are in breach of EPBD regulations and waste energy needlessly.

The Property and Energy Professionals Association (PEPA) has found that over 50% of Local Authorities are failing in their obligation to procure up to date Display Energy Certificates (DECs) and as a result missing out on the opportunity to use them as effective tools to reduce energy costs. The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) requires that all public buildings greater than 500 square metres should display a current DEC.

PEPA conducted a Freedom of Information exercise with all Local Authorities in England and Wales and found that only 47% of Authorities claimed to be compliant with the DEC requirements. A study by the Chartered Institute of Building Service Engineers (CIBSE) conducted in 2011 showed that where DECs had been used in Government buildings as a proactive means of managing energy usage, savings of nearly 14% were achieved. If applied to the estimated £750 million per annum of energy costs incurred by Local Authorities would achieve energy savings of £65 million for those breaking the law, which is a significant sum at a time when local authorities are cutting public services.

Each year the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) allocates £1.9million of funding to Local Trading Standards officers to ensure compliance with the EPBD regulations, but as this is not ring fenced it is never used for that purpose. There seems to be no political will within DCLG to address non-compliance with the EPBD regulations and anecdotally is believed to regard the Directive as unnecessary European bureaucracy, something which is likely to end up with a fine from Brussels.

Stephen O'Hara the Chairman of PEPA said 'The whole situation regarding DECs defies logic and common sense. The proactive use of valuable energy information has been proved to reduce costs to the taxpayer, but Government both central and local are either ignorant of this fact or do not seem to care. It is irresponsible of DCLG to show disdain for the regulations which they themselves have laid down as the law of the land, and potentially to incur swingeing financial penalties from Europe as a result.'



He added 'Regardless of your views on climate change and reducing carbon emissions, saving money and reducing pressure on hard pressed energy supplies must surely make sense even to those who want to cock a snook at Europe'.

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Notes to Editors

About the Property & Energy Professionals Association (PEPA)

The Property & Energy Professionals Association (PEPA) is a trade body which represents business that is engaged in the provision of Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) and Display Energy Certificates (DECs). Members of the Association include companies that undertake and distribute EPCs and DECs, the accreditation schemes that oversee the products and the energy assessors that produce them and the technology companies that support the industry.

www.ppassociation.org

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