

Watt Busters: a programme for energy diagnosis in the domestic sector - Municipality of Cascais (Portugal)	
<b>Keywords</b>	Information / education, rational energy consumption, intervention in the domestic sector
<b>Main photos</b>	
<b>Objectives of the action</b>	<p>The city of Cascais found out that 50% of its energy is consumed by households. In order to decrease this number, the city decided to hire the “Watt Busters” – enthusiastic employees of the local energy agency, whose main objective is to “chase” watts through direct communication with citizens. The main objective of the “Caça Watts” project is to reduce the energy consumption in households by 10%.</p>
<b>Description of the action</b>	<p>Caça Watts Brigade technicians are available to perform home audits for the residents who request to have one. Using high-end software, each “Watt Buster” prints out a report with the final diagnosis and recommendations regarding the use of energy. Since Caça Watts is a public initiative, the cost of audit is only symbolical and varies according to house type (from €25 upwards). Audits conducted in private sector buildings are more expensive.</p> <p>At first, citizens are being asked to provide their energy bills (appliances, hot water, heating, lighting, etc.). Then, a technician visiting the household identifies the so-called “energy waste hot spots”, where the energy is being consumed in the excessive manner.</p> <p>He simulates what effect could possibly bring the adoption of different saving measures. One of the methods to communicate the need to reduce the energy consumption is the use of thermal photography. Recommendations provided to citizens include the information about home energy use patterns, energy comparison between home appliances and electrical equipment and the way of reducing the energy waste. To promote the use of renewable energy sources, a solar thermal panel simulation is being carried out during the audit, with technical recommendations regarding the type of equipment that could possibly be installed.</p>
<b>Results / Achievements</b>	<p>The “Caça Watts” project turned out to be very successful. On average, 15% of energy savings per household are being reached every year, which in turn reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 275 kg per household. The formula of the programme is also very appealing to citizens. Comparison with “Ghost Busters” helps to make people aware of how “annoying” watts might be and how important it is to get rid of them.</p>
<b>Friendly advice for replication</b>	<p>Apart from technical aspects, it is also necessary to ensure the high visibility of the programme, for example in the media. In order to do so, “Watt Busters” are often accompanied by journalists from local newspapers, who write articles about their endeavors and victories. This motivates more and more people to call the free “Watt Busters” number and to start doing savings in their own household.</p>
<b>Online information</b>	<p><a href="http://www.cascaisenergia.org">www.cascaisenergia.org</a> (website available in English; downloadable documents, etc.)</p>
<b>Further information</b>	<p>Fernando PAIS                  Junior Expert                  AMECASCAIS – Cascais Energy Agency                  E-mail: <a href="mailto:geral@cascaisenergia.org">geral@cascaisenergia.org</a>                  Tel.: +351 21 099 53 54</p>