Cit'ergie European Energy Award®

City of Vire

A town that controls its energy spending and reduces its environmental footprint

Profile

Type of local authority: **Municipality**
Population : **11,999**
Region : **Basse-Normandie**
Qualified for label: **2013**
Current label status: **Cit'ergie®**
Expiration of current Cit'ergie® certification: **2017**

The advantages of Cit'ergie®

In 2008 the City of Vire decided to create a sustainable development commission. Local political forces wanted to proceed methodically, and several options emerged, namely TECP, Agenda 21 and Cit'ergie®. This last approach was deemed to be the best approach, the most intelligible and most adequate, the closest match to the situation of the town, with a solid base that leaves room for other commitments and processes. The score has gradually risen since 2010, from 30% to 41%, bolstering the motivation of the team as a whole, technicians and elected officials alike. The team was reinforced with the arrival of a staff member for buildings and climate engineering in May 2013. Cit'ergie® has structured the town's work to achieve sustainable development action and energy savings, and has built synergy between municipal departments.

Verbatim...

"With Cit'ergie® we are taking steps to protect residents from energy poverty: social housing landlords have incentives to insulate multi-family buildings, and subsidy schemes are in place for the rehabilitation of existing dwellings. As a reminder, if energy costs continue to rise at an average rate of 5% per year, household energy bills will double in 15 years, in constant euros."

Pierre Helbert,
vice-president of
the environment commission

The Cit'ergie® label in brief

Cit'ergie® is the French name for the European Energy Award® (eea®). This label is currently implemented in several European countries (Austria, Germany, Switzerland, among others) and has been awarded to over 1,100 local authorities in Europe. In France the label is promoted and disseminated through the regional offices of ADEME, the French Environment and Energy Management Agency.

In addition to highlighting the ambitious sustainable energy policies of local governments, Cit'ergie® is an operational tool for structuring and executing a Territorial Energy & Climate Plan, taking action under Agenda 21, complying with commitments made under the Covenant of Mayors, and for implementing energy and climate policy.

For further information

Cit'ergie® project leader:
Camille Lemaitre
+33 (0)2 31 66 28 30
CLemaitre@ville-vire.fr

Cit'ergie® website:
www.citergie.ademe.fr

Forum eea® website:
www.european-energy-award.org

Cit'ergie® advisor:
Elodie Houguet

ADEME
Agence de l'Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l'Energie

Cit'ergie® in practice

The Cit'ergie® scheme enables local authorities to build and consolidate their energy policy through a process of continuous improvement, furnishing a methodological guide for reinforcing energy policy at the local government level. The label certification process is carried out in four phases, with support from a Cit'ergie® advisor:

1. initial survey based on a standard compilation of 79 types of action in six domains;

2. multi-year programme drawn up for energy-climate policy;

3. assessment by an auditor and qualification for the label, if the local authority implements at least 50% of possible steps for action and progress;

4. ongoing implementation and re-certification every four years after a fresh audit

1 - Power meters available from the city

2 - Electric bicycles are rented to residents

City of Vire

Action taken by Vire in the six Cit'ergie® domains

Territorial development

The action programme has been drawn up and validated, with an annual work calendar.
The town ensures in-house and external communication on Cit'ergie®.

Local public buildings and property

Equipment has been installed to boost the use of renewable energy resources, including geothermal facilities, 3 microgeneration boilers, condensation boilers, solar thermal panels. Low-power Cosmowatt lightbulbs (40 W) and LED projector streetlights have been installed to improve street lighting.

Energy supply, water resources and sanitation services

Power meters to measure electricity consumption have been made available to the general public (photo 1).
Water meters have been changed and data emitters have been installed. Waste from school lunchrooms is composted.

Mobility

A carpooling agreement has been signed with the not-for-profit group L'Etape. An overpass spanning the Vire river has been built to connect two greenways. A "walking bus" has been initiated for one school. A total of 65 electric bicycles have been rented to residents of Vire (photo 2).

Internal organisation

A climate engineering task force has been created.
Municipal employees who travel a lot by car have received training in eco-driving techniques.
Energy savings certificates have been entered in the accounts.

Communication and cooperation

Display posters have been created for public buildings.
Guided tours are given of exemplary sites, such as the wood-fired boiler plant.
Awareness activities are conducted with schoolchildren, e.g. using cloth napkins instead of paper products.

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