

GEOHERMAL INTERNATIONAL WELCOMES LEAP FORWARD IN GOVERNMENT THINKING ON ENERGY SAVING

Plans for all UK homes to have nearly zero carbon emissions by 2050 have been welcomed by the UK's leading force in the Ground Source Heating and Cooling market (GSHP).

Geothermal International described the Government's Heat and Energy Saving Strategy as a "great leap forward" in promoting green solutions.

One of the low-carbon technologies being championed by Energy and Climate Change Secretary Ed Miliband is the ground source heat pump, which extracts natural heat from the earth and uses it to heat and cool buildings.

Mr Miliband announced that seven million homes would have whole house energy makeovers by 2020, and that financial assistance would be given to householders installing energy-saving and low-carbon measures.

Brian Davidson, Chief Executive of Geothermal International, the UK's market leader in the design, installation and commissioning of ground source energy efficient heating and cooling systems, welcomed the strategy, which was also supported by Communities Secretary Hazel Blears and Housing Minister Margaret Beckett.

Brian Davidson said: "This is a great leap forward, and a welcome recognition of the contribution which ground source heat pumps can make to both cutting energy costs and reducing carbon emissions.

“They can reduce the annual running costs of a building by up to 70 per cent and carbon emissions by up to 50 per cent, and can be used to cool a building in summer months as well as heat it in cold weather.

“While in the past the cost of installing a ground source heat pump may have been a barrier to householders, the pay-back times can now be as low as five to seven years, as the technology is constantly improving.

“Giving householders financial incentives is a welcome move.”

Launching the strategy, which is going out to consultation for 12 weeks, Energy and Climate Change Secretary Ed Miliband said: “We cannot afford not to act. Every home must be able to access the help and technology it needs, whether it be the installation of a ground or air source heat pump, solar heating, solid wall insulation, or access to a district heating scheme.

“Most importantly, I want to ensure that help to meet the costs is available to people house by house, street by street, and that lower-income families don’t miss out.”

Interest in ground source heat pumps has dramatically increased in recent years. Headquartered in Coventry, GI has built a unique position within the GSHP sector, designing and installing 80% of all UK GSHP systems within the commercial buildings market. Its status was further recognised last year when Scottish and Southern Energy Plc took a 20% stake in the business.

Flagship projects where Geothermal International has installed ground source heating and cooling systems include the Kings Mill Hospital in Mansfield (which is the largest geothermal lake loop in the world), Gloucestershire Police HQ, the iconic Gherkin building in London and the UK’s first carbon neutral church, The Annunciation Church in Little Walsingham, Norfolk.

Ground source heat pumps consist of a network of pipes buried underground connected to an indoor heat pump unit. Liquid pumped through the loop extracts heat in the ground which is then fed to the pump where it is compressed to raise its temperature and circulated to heat the building. It can also be used to supply hot water. Cooling is achieved by reversing the process.

Editor's Note: For further information contact Century Public Relations (Tel: 024 7622 8881).