

Every year RFU's 1,200 largest Rugby Clubs spend over £10m on Electricity....

The average club spends £10,000 on electricity per annum of which approximately 10% is related to the chilling of drinks.

For rugby clubs, the largest electricity users are typically:

- Pitch lighting and club lighting
- Electric hot water heating
- Electric space heating
- Cellar chilling (via air conditioning units), and
- Drink chilling

By implementing best practice measures clubs can save around £1,000 per year on their electricity bills.



How can clubs get started? RFU decided to target drinks chilling as an area for immediate cost and carbon savings. A simple 'plug and play' device was identified on the market which could achieve substantial cost savings.

RFU conducted a trial of a device called InnEnergy® which has the potential to save 40% of the energy use from drink chillers, where operation levels are high.

Four test clubs took part in the trial, achieving an average saving of 17% on chiller electricity consumption. Three out of the four participating clubs trialled the device on two of their chillers. For this level of use, and with a device cost of £59.95 the investment will pay back in 9.5 months and over its lifetime will provide a significant cost and carbon saving to the clubs. Clubs with higher levels of bar activity will achieve even greater savings.

How does it work? This is a very simple device which works by self-optimising the times that chiller(s) are on and off in-line with bar operating hours. It is easy to use and programmable to exact club opening times, 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The device also ensures that cold drinks are ready to serve at opening time and refreshes pythons regularly to maintain quality. It is currently used by major pub chains including Punch Taverns and Whitbread.

The Trial. An independent trial of the device was conducted in spring 2011. Data was collected from the four Rugby Clubs via an Efergy Energy Monitor, and electricity meter readings were recorded. The savings calculated ranged from 11-30% (depending on the level of activity at each club). Cost savings of £150/yr were identified, with annual CO₂ savings of approximately 3/4 tonne per club per year. Across the 1,200 largest RFU clubs this amounts to savings of £135,900 and over 840 tonnes CO₂ /yr. Assuming a conservative ten year lifetime for the device, this would result in a total saving of **8,400 tCO₂**.



The Efergy energy monitor also helped to identify good practice housekeeping measures such as the optimisation of hot water night storage heating at one club. At another club it helped to demonstrate an annual cost saving of £839 achieved by installing LED lighting.

Where can I get one? Clubs can purchase this type of device online. It is installed simply by plugging an existing chiller into the device and then into the plug socket previously used. After one week of 'learning' about existing consumption, the device starts to optimise chiller use, turning off the chiller when it is unused. The device can also be pre-programmed with exact club opening times.