

R/90

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UNIQUE RESOURCE FOR A FUTURE GENERATION OF SWITCHERS

- **19 million energy customers have switched to save – millions more could**
- **Ofgem pilot schools project proved how quick and easy it is to identify savings on energy bills**
- **Ofgem has for the first time produced a unique resource for the future generation of switchers**

Energy regulator, Ofgem, has today (Thursday) launched a unique educational resource for the next generation of gas and electricity switchers.

This follows a successful pilot project carried out last year when a group of 14-15 year old Surrey schoolchildren identified more than £2000 potential savings on their parents' fuel bills within minutes.

The **'Switched On'** resource – developed by Ofgem and supported by consumer body, energywatch – uses multi-media technology that will help equip students with the skills and knowledge to enable them to make informed decisions about getting the best deal from energy suppliers.

Ofgem's Chief Executive, Callum McCarthy, said: "Millions of gas and electricity customers have switched their suppliers – but there are millions more people who could do the same.

"We have demonstrated that identifying savings is child's play, but customers need a range of skills and knowledge to enable them to make informed decisions about getting the best deals from energy suppliers. Where better to start than with the education of future customers?"

"**'Switched On'** provides real activities in a relevant context and we are confident that it will contribute to building financial and consumer skills of the students who use the resource."

Chair of energywatch, Ann Robinson, said: "We warmly welcome this schools project and are delighted to be associated with it. The schoolchildren of today are the consumers of tomorrow and **'Switched On'** provides an extremely useful introduction to life as an energy consumer. Parents can benefit too if they take advice from their kids and shop around for a cheaper supplier!"

Ends

Notes to editors:

1. A photograph is available from the Ofgem Press Office, please contact Paul Reynolds 020 7901 7225

2. Teachers who have reviewed 'Switched On' said:

'As a whole the resource is professionally presented and operates with great ease. The subject matter is relevant and the activities will engage most pupils. Teachers are given appropriate and sufficient guidance and support material. The activities requiring use of actual relevant websites are excellent.' – advisor for PSE (Personal and Social Education), Wales.

An extremely impressive and user-friendly resource which I believe most pupils would find enjoyable and informative. Pupils should have little difficulty using the CD-Rom.' – teacher, London.

3. School children who have seen 'Switched On' said:

'I liked the balance of power activity. I learnt how much I'm costing my Mum and Dad!' – student, Lincolnshire.

'I learnt how much I am costing my family and I will cut down!' – student, London.

'I've learnt where to find information and how much money you can save if you switch.' - student, Leeds.

'I've learnt about money and bills which will help me in later life.' – student, Leeds.

4. **Ofgem** is the Office of the Gas and Electricity Markets, regulating the gas and electricity industries in Great Britain. Ofgem's aim is to bring choice and value to all gas and electricity customers by promoting competition and regulating monopolies. Ofgem is governed by the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority. Its powers are provided for under the Gas Act 1986, the Electricity Act 1989 and the Utilities Act 2000.

5. **energywatch** is the independent gas and electricity consumer watchdog. We provide free, impartial information and advice to energy consumers who are experiencing difficulty in resolving complaints directly with their energy supply companies.

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