

Éasca member profile:

GREENTEC ECO HOMES & FILTREX

Sustainable builder Greentec Eco Homes and renewable heating company Filtrex have become the latest approved members of Éasca – the green building association’s membership now totals 40 of Ireland’s leading sustainable suppliers, contractors and designers. **Construct Ireland** spoke to Greentec MD Niall Dolan and Filtrex MD Brendan Lynch to find out more.



Construct Ireland: Is there much demand for a sustainable contractor in the current market?

Niall Dolan: Yes, I am seeing a high demand for green building work at the moment. Obviously we are currently in recessionary times and this seems to have affected all building work regardless of building methods, but thankfully my company receives a great amount of queries regarding green building on a regular basis. I think that people are now more aware of the effect that construction has on the environment and the advantages of building low carbon homes.

CI: What motivates your clients to go green?

ND: One main reason in my opinion is that our lifestyles in general have changed over the past few years to that of an organic nature – for instance with foods and health products. This has also been reflected in the way in which we want our homes built – free from toxins with as many natural products as possible being used. This in turn leads to a healthy living environment.

Also energy savings definitely play a pivotal role in motivating my clients. I think they’re extremely content with the fact that there will be little or no energy bills in the lifecycle of the house.

CI: What’s your greenest project to date?

ND: At the moment I have a number of green

projects in the pipeline but the greenest one to date is a residential dwelling in Barna, Co Galway. All aspects of the house have been discussed with the clients and construction is due to commence within a fortnight. The agreed products for the build include an insulated foundation system with low carbon concrete, structure from Advanced Timber Frame using cellulose and wood fibre insulation, Pro Clima Intello airtight membrane, air-filled Struder C floor insulation and Fermacell plaster board finished with natural paints.

CI: Do you see any potential problems with a rapid national energy efficiency drive?

ND: Yes, I can see some dangers arising. The correct building materials need to be installed for a healthy living environment and contractors need to take proper training.



CI: Why is Filtrex a green company?

Brendan Lynch : For almost ten years we have been committed to promoting the use of sustainable technology to our customers in order to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. In the first instance this was in the wood processing sector where we installed the first biomass boilers, eliminating fuel and landfill costs. We also introduced advanced filter technology utilising inverter driven fans reducing power consump-

tion of extraction plants by 60%

CI: What motivated you to go this direction?

BL: I have been travelling to trade fairs in Germany since 1991, when I visited the Ligna show in Hannover, and I was amazed at how other countries utilised their waste or by-products. This was my first introduction to biomass boilers and briquette presses. After talking to several manufacturers, I realised that what we in Ireland were calling waste and sending to landfill, the Germans and Danes called fuel and were using to heat their factories and homes. This trip sparked my interest in renewable energy and recycling, and I went on to visit district heating models in Denmark and Austria fuelled by waste wood and briquettes from the wood processing sector.

CI: Where do you see most growth opportunities?

BL: We see most of our growth coming from biomass boilers in the commercial and public sector and also biomass fuel shredding and preparation systems for biomass power plants and briquetting plants.

CI: Can you describe a recent project where you've put sustainable principles into practice?

BL: We recently commissioned a 1MW district heating system fuelled by locally produced wood-chip for Tralee Town Council in Kerry.

The district heating scheme consisted of five apartment blocks – each individually zoned in the plantroom, with a total of 50 one and two bedroom units, each individually metered and charged per kWh – along with a day care centre and library.

Filtrex were responsible for design, installation and commissioning and maintenance. The final installation consisted of two 500kW Herz wood chip biomass boilers, two 5000l hot water buffers, a wood chip fuel storage bunker fit-out, boiler house M&E, cyclonic fly ash separation and a stainless steel flue system.

(above left) Greentec MD Niall Dolan; (above centre) Filtrex MD Brendan Lynch pictured with environment minister John Gormley