

SIM cards help save energy in the UAE

THE NEW PROGRAMME HAS SAVED MILLIONS OF DIRHAMS AND HAS ALREADY ACHIEVED 95% OF ITS TARGET BEFORE ITS 2015 TIME LIMIT

ABU DHABI

By **BINSAL ABDUL KADER**
Staff Reporter

SIM cards like the ones in our mobile phones are playing a major role in a national programme which cuts energy use in buildings — so far the plan has saved 10,741 tonnes of CO2 emissions, which is the equivalent of planting 2,306 trees.

Some 72 buildings, from government buildings to apartments and schools, have to date signed up for the Emirates Energy Star (EES) programme. Reports suggest that energy used to power buildings is responsible for 60 per cent of total world electricity consumption. Etisalat and Pacific Controls, a Dubai-based information and communications technology company, introduced the programme. Through etisalat SIM cards, a Global Command Control Centre (GCCC), assesses the electricity consumption of chillers and electronic devices used at those buildings.

A round-the-clock monitoring unit makes sure the savings are achieved.

Carbon footprint

EES is one the government's largest initiatives to battle the global concern of increasing carbon emissions and pollution. It has achieved 95 per cent of its target well before its 2015 time limit, a senior executive of the programme told *Gulf News*.

The programme, which originally aimed to reduce 20 per cent of energy consumed

EMIRATES ENERGY STAR PROGRAMME

Numerous benefits

Emirates Energy Star (EES) has numerous benefits, a senior executive of the programme told *Gulf News*.

Apart from lower bills it helps cut pollution, water consumption and waste, Abdullah Hashim, senior vice-president, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), etisalat, said.

Participating organisations can also meet their KPI (key performance indicators) by participating in the government's green initiatives. Participants will be able to recover their investment in the programme from the savings that they make, Hashim said.

"The monthly subscription for facilities is customised according to specific needs and this is decided after careful monitoring of the buildings. Customers realise the value of our services as soon as they get reduced electricity bills," he said. "Besides the star rating, they also win a plaque from us."

Companies can gain recognition for green initiatives with awards such as the first Emirates Green Building Council Awards launched this month. "We aim to enlist the maximum number of companies to join the programme to enable the maximum reduction of carbon footprint in UAE," Hashim said.

"Achieving the lowest carbon emissions per capita will eventually result in the UAE becoming one of the Smartest Countries in the World by 2021," he said.

The EES programme is aligned with the UAE Vision 2021 of becoming one of the best countries of the world in terms of the lowest carbon emissions per capita, Hashim said.

— B.A.K.



Courtesy: Etisalat

Abdullah Hashim

and the carbon footprint of all buildings under its scope by 2015, achieved a 19 per cent target by April this year, Abdullah Hashim, senior Vice-President, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Etisalat, said.

It has resulted in a cash saving of Dh7.2 million for the UAE since its launch in December

2011 until April this year, he added.

"If the monitoring team see an unexpected hike in energy consumption from any device on any client they identify the cause, check any existing technical problems and alert the maintenance team," Hashim said.

The programme is being im-

RATING SYSTEM

Participants can reap the benefits in 18-24 months

ABU DHABI

By **BINSAL ABDUL KADER**
Staff Reporter

Participants of the Emirates Energy Star (EES) programme should reap the benefits in 18 to 24 months depending on their "star rating", a senior executive of the programme told *Gulf News*.

The rating system, Star Award, comprises five levels based on the energy savings achieved through the programme, Abdullah Hashim, senior vice-president, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), etisalat, said.

A building gets the first star level when it achieves ten per cent of energy savings, a second star when it achieves 15 per cent and the third when it reaches 20 per cent. To reach the fourth and fifth star levels, a building needs to have 25 per cent and 30 per cent energy savings, he said.

Most participating facilities have so far received one star. The Ministry of Social Affairs, Dubai Municipality, the Department of Eco-

nomie Development, Silicon Oasis, First Gulf Bank, ADCB and DP World are among the participants.

Reducing the carbon footprint is part of etisalat's Corporate Social Responsibility objectives, Hashim said.

"Through this programme we are directly contributing to this objective. At a later stage we will integrate the programme into etisalat's buildings."

Currently etisalat has several green initiatives, including the eBilling initiative and other projects such as Smart Home Buildings and Facilities Management (to monitor electricity consumption), he said.

"Retrofitting existing buildings is our largest market right now and research is continuing on the best ways to reach our main objective," Hashim said.

The EES portal can be connected to the websites of all participating ministries. This will enable students, teachers, employees and government officials to understand the impact of this programme on the environment.



If the monitoring team see an unexpected hike in energy consumption from any device on any client they identify the cause and alert the maintenance team."

Abdullah Hashim | Senior Vice-President, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Etisalat.

plemented under the patronage of the Ministry of Environment and Water and Unep (United Nations Environment Programme).

EES also aims to enable the UAE government to be the first in the world to not only reduce carbon footprint but also monitor and report on its carbon footprint in real time, he said.