

Energy Efficiency Is The World's Most Important "Fuel," IEA Says In New Report

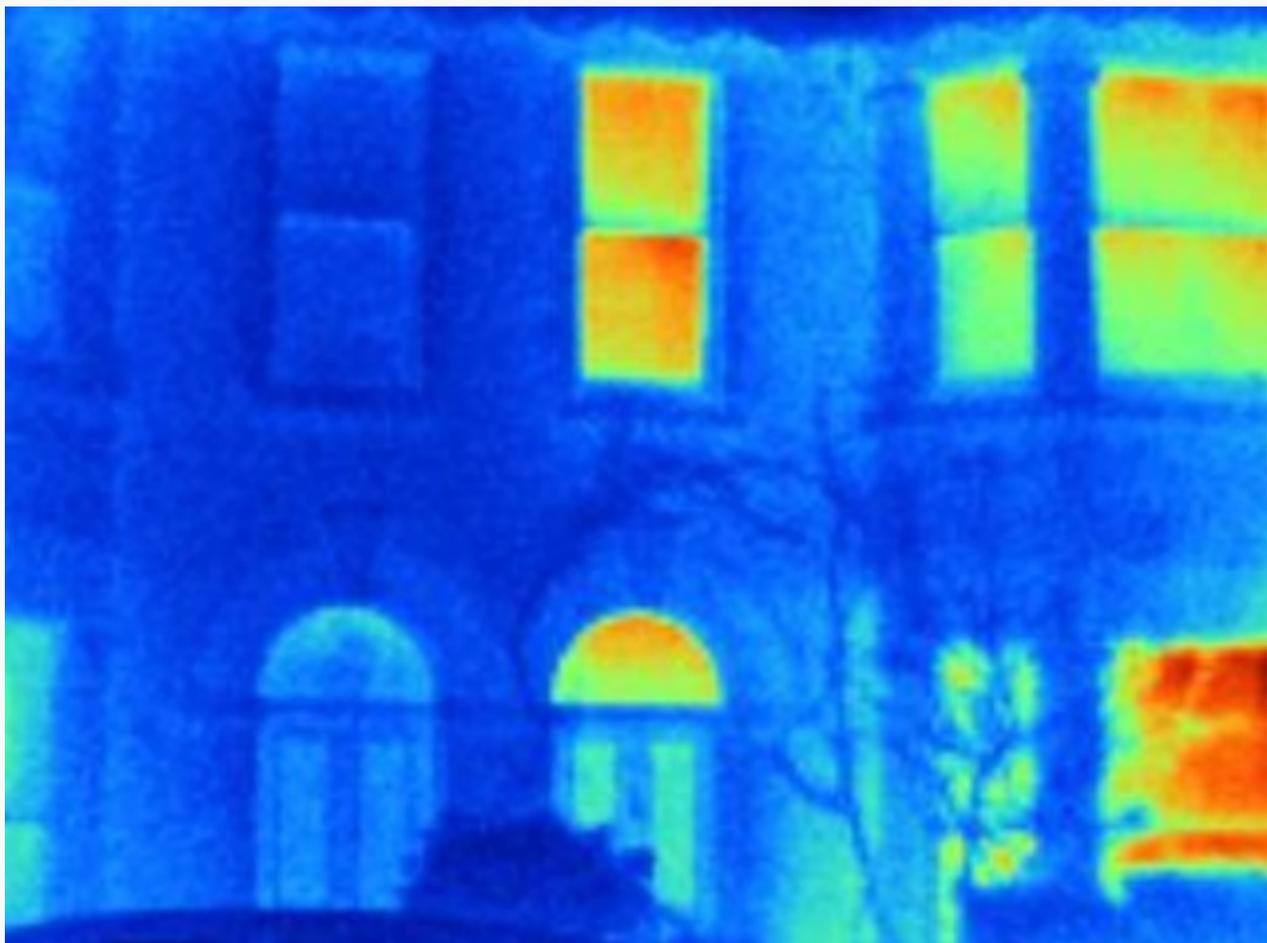
Nathan

Energy efficiency is the world's most important "fuel," according to a new report from the International Energy Agency (IEA). Investments in energy efficiency provide such massive savings that the energy saved actually completely eclipses the energy generated by most forms of generation. This "first fuel" is incredibly important to the world's efforts to reduce fossil fuel use and carbon emissions and should be focused on even more, the new report argues.

The *Energy Efficiency Market Report*, as its known, states that "the scale of recent investment in energy efficiency worldwide makes it as significant in its contribution to energy demand as investment in renewable energy or fossil fuel generation."



“Energy



Thermal heat-loss in residential building.
Image Credit: Cambridge Carbon Institute

efficiency has been called a ‘hidden fuel’, yet it is hiding in plain sight,” stated IEA executive director Maria van der Hoeven. “Indeed, the degree of global investment in energy efficiency and the resulting energy savings are so massive that they beg the following question: is energy efficiency not just a hidden fuel but rather the world’s first fuel?”

The report notes that, worldwide, in 2011, energy efficiency schemes attracted about \$300 billion in investment funds — which puts it on about the same level as global investments in fossil-fuel power generation or renewable energy.

[PV-Tech](#) provides more:

Between 2005 and 2010, the IEA calculated that energy efficiency measures across 11 of its member countries (Australia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States) saved the energy equivalent of US\$420 billion worth of oil.

In these same countries, the IEA said that were it not for energy efficiency measures implemented in the past three years, consumers would be using and paying for two-thirds more energy than is the case. Overall, in 2010 energy savings from efficiency measures exceeded the output from any other single fuel source in these same countries, with the 11 IEA countries avoiding burning 1.5 billion tonnes of oil equivalent thanks to efficiency improvements developed since 1974.

The report notes that the driving force behind this huge increase in energy efficiency investment and adoption is, simultaneously, the implementation of effective policies and the rising price of energy, especially oil. With the price of fossil fuels rising, there really isn't much choice for many governments/businesses/individuals but to be more energy efficient.

Brian Smithers, the strategic director for Northern Europe at the UK-based renewable energy products and services distributor Rexel, states:

It's about time the role of energy efficiency was recognized on a global scale, so it's great to see the IEA placing it alongside traditional as well as renewable fuels. However, if we are to shift the perception of energy efficiency from a 'hidden fuel' to the world's 'first fuel' we need to invest in education.

In the UK, for example, there is a huge lack of awareness around energy efficiency, which is seriously hampering our progress against carbon reduction targets. To put it simply, to meet the UK's carbon reduction targets by 2050, we need to improve one home every minute, equating to 26 million refurbished energy-efficient homes by 2050.

Tags: [Energy efficiency first fuel](#), [Energy efficiency IEA](#), [energy efficiency investment](#), [Energy Efficiency Market Report](#), [first fuel](#), [IEA](#), [International Energy Agency](#), [Rexel](#), [Rexel renewable energy](#)



About the Author

For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts; for all is vanity. - Ecclesiastes 3:19



Related Posts

[IEA: Renewables Will Exceed Natural Gas And Nuclear By 2016](#) →

[Redesigning The Electricity Market For Wind And Solar](#) →

[Global Carbon Emissions Reached Record High In 2012](#) →

[I May Have Overreacted To the IEA Germany Report](#) →

