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### **THREE QUARTERS OF BRITISH WORKERS SUFFER 'AIR CON RAGE'**

- **Air con rage: almost three quarters of British workers (74%) argue with work colleagues over the office air conditioning - more than a quarter (28%) have regular run-ins<sup>[1]</sup>**
- **North West workers are worst for 'air con rage'; South West workers are the most laid back<sup>[1]</sup>**
- **Frosty females: 86% of people admit to moaning about the office air conditioning<sup>[2]</sup> but 57% say that women are the biggest culprits for complaining<sup>[3]</sup>**
- **Shivering this summer: 56% of workers have shivered through this summer at work – almost a quarter (24%) have had to wear a jumper because their office is too cold<sup>[4]</sup>**
- **72% of British workers feel their office can never quite get the temperature right - one in ten (12%) say the temperature makes them less productive while almost half (47%) believe that air conditioning spreads illness<sup>[4]</sup>.**

British workers are suffering from 'air con rage' with three quarters (74%) admitting to arguing with colleagues over the temperature control<sup>[1]</sup>, according to new research from [uSwitchforbusiness.com](http://uSwitchforbusiness.com), the independent business energy broker.

The findings suggest that 'air con wars' are raging in offices up and down the country with over a quarter of workers (28%) regularly getting caught up in run-ins or skirmishes with colleagues over the temperature dial<sup>[1]</sup>. As well as frosty words and icy glares 86% of people also confess to moaning about the temperature at work<sup>[2]</sup>, potentially creating an unpleasant atmosphere for their colleagues. Women are seen to be the worst culprits with 57% of people saying that they complain the most about the air conditioning being too cold<sup>[3]</sup>.

Incredibly, even as temperatures outside have soared this summer (on occasion), almost six in ten workers (56%) have been left shivering at work. Almost a quarter (24%) have even been forced to take jumpers into work at the height of summer to avoid feeling the freeze and catching a cold<sup>[4]</sup>.

And it's no wonder that feelings run so high, almost three quarters of workers (72%) say that the temperature where they work is never quite right, while just over one in ten (12%) say that shivering away in the office actually makes them less productive<sup>[4]</sup>. More worryingly, almost half (47%) believe that air conditioning spreads illness in their workplace<sup>[4]</sup>.

In their attempts to keep workers cool, many companies are actually blasting their workforce with cold air – 65% of people complain that the air conditioning in their workplace is excessive<sup>[5]</sup>. As a result, air conditioning gets a huge thumbs down with almost seven in ten people (68%) saying that they would prefer fresh air instead of air con in their office<sup>[6]</sup>. However, air con does have some advantages – 61% of people agree that being too hot at work is worse than being too cold<sup>[7]</sup>.

**James Constant, Director of [uSwitchforbusiness.com](http://uSwitchforbusiness.com), says:** “Instead of cooling things down, gripes and grumbles over air conditioning are actually sending temperatures soaring in workplaces up and down the country. And we aren't just talking about icy glares and the odd cold shoulder – three quarters of us (74%) are suffering 'air con rage', arguing with colleagues over the temperature control at work.

“These findings should prompt businesses to look into their own use of air conditioning and consider whether they are throwing away money on wasted energy when in fact many workers are too cold. Interestingly, almost seven in ten people (68%) say that they would prefer fresh air to air conditioning so, depending on the premises, opening up the windows may sometimes be a better option. Ensuring that the air conditioning isn't too cold, or that central heating in the winter isn't too high, are just some of the steps that businesses can take to cut down on their energy costs as well as keeping staff happy.”

#### **Regional 'air con rage':**

	<b>Region</b>	<b>Workers arguing over air con</b>
<b>1</b>	North West	78%
<b>2</b>	Wales	77%
<b>3</b>	Midlands	77%
<b>4</b>	South East	77%
<b>5</b>	North East	74%
<b>6</b>	Scotland	70%
<b>7</b>	London	64%
<b>8</b>	South West	61%

Source: uSwitchforBusiness.com

For more information visit [www.uswitchforbusiness.com](http://www.uswitchforbusiness.com) or call 0800 051 5343

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**Notes to editors:**

Research carried out online with the uSwitch.com Consumer Opinion Panel on behalf of uSwitchforBusiness.com in July 2011, among 1,230 British adults.

1. In response to: 'Does the use of air conditioning in your workplace cause any arguments between your colleagues?' 6.2% said 'Yes – all the time'; 21.3% said 'Yes – frequently'; and 46% said 'Yes – every now and then'. These add up to 73.5% saying 'yes'.
2. In response to 'Do you ever moan about the temperature in your office?' 7.8% said 'Always'; 23.4% said 'Often'; and 54.3% said 'Occasionally'. These add up to 85.5% moaning.
3. In response to: 'Who complains the most about air conditioning being too cold at work?' 57.4% said 'Women'.
4. In response to: 'Thinking about the temperature at your work, which of the following do you agree with?' 72.2% said 'It's never quite right', 11.7% said 'It makes us less productive', 46.5% said 'It spreads illness'. Shivering through the summer is based on the 32% who said 'It's too cold in the summer because of air conditioning' and 23.9% who said 'I have to wear a jumper in the summer because the office is too cold' – these add up to 55.9%.
5. In response to: 'Do you feel that the air conditioning in your workplace is excessive (i.e. too cold?)' 15.7% said 'Yes – it makes the office too cold most of the time', 8.7% said 'Yes – it makes the office too cold all of the time' and 40.9% said 'Yes – it makes the office too cold some of the time'. These add up to 65.3%.
6. In response to: 'Which of the following would you prefer in your office?' – 32.3% said 'air conditioning' and 67.7% said 'Fresh air'.
7. In response to: 'What is worse when you're at work?' 61.2% said 'Being too hot' while 38.8% said 'Being too cold'.

**About us**

uSwitchforBusiness.com is a free, independent energy brokerage service focused on helping business customers get the best gas and electricity contracts. It also provides a range of additional products and services, including insurance and communications, which are tailored specifically for customers who own, run or hold responsibility for procurement in a business.

uSwitchforBusiness.com is the sister site of uSwitch.com, the free, impartial, online and telephone-based comparison and switching service which has been helping consumers to save money for over 10 years. uSwitchforBusiness.com was launched in November 2008 in response to requests from business customers wishing to benefit from the same impartial and independent support when buying energy.

uSwitchforBusiness.com offers a dedicated contact-centre manned by a team of business energy specialists, as well as a freepost 'Send us your bill' service, whereby businesses can post their latest energy bills with their telephone number to FREEPOST USWITCHFORBUSINESS, to get a free call back from a dedicated business specialist. Customers can also call 0800 051 5343 or email [brokerteam@uswitchforbusiness.com](mailto:brokerteam@uswitchforbusiness.com).

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