



**An Roinn Tithíochta,
Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil**
Department of Housing,
Planning and Local Government

Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme 2019-2021

Domestic waste water treatment systems

Frequently asked questions

02 July 2020

NOTE: As with all documentation, the wording of the Terms and Conditions for the various schemes should be read in their entirety and not in isolation. In all cases, the appeals mechanism can be used by an applicant who is not satisfied with the decision of the local authority, as per the Terms and Conditions.

1. Applications

Previous scheme

- 1.1 *What is the process if an application had been received under the previous scheme, prior to the publication of the new Regulations and the issue of the new Circular?*

An applicant who has been approved for a grant under the previous scheme but works have not commenced (the authorities must be fully satisfied that this condition is met), may withdraw the application under the previous scheme and submit an application under the revised scheme, if the terms of the new scheme are more financially advantageous to the applicant.

Previous grants paid

- 1.2 *Are the revised grant amounts payable retrospectively to applicants who received grants paid under previous scheme?*

No. The effective date for the new terms and conditions is the date of the relevant Circular. Any grants paid under the previous scheme's terms and conditions will not be revisited.

Application and claim documentation

- 1.3 *Can local authorities make any changes to the documentation?*

No. However, local authorities may insert their contact details and logos. No other changes are permitted.

- 1.4 *On the application form there is space for two contractors' details, what details are inputted into the second contractor's boxes?*

The applicant enters the details of the applicant's preferred contractor(s) only. It is possible that, depending on the specifics of the work being undertaken,

more than one contractor is required to complete the works. The second box provides for this situation. Details of quotations should be attached to the application.

Duplicate applications

- 1.5 *How do the local authorities ensure that a grant is not paid in respect of the same DWWTS, under more than one scheme?*

A grant cannot be paid in respect of the same DWWTS under more than one of the three available schemes. It is expected that the local authorities would manage this criteria by cross-checking applications/claims under all schemes, using unique search parameters e.g. the Eircode. See also Section 1.8 below.

Selection of preferred contractor

- 1.6 *With regards to contractor selection, is cost the sole criterion that applies or can the applicant decide which contractor to use?*

The applicant can select their preferred contractor (it may not necessarily be the lowest quote) provided that all other criteria have been met e.g. tax clearance certification (see Section 2 below). The maximum grant levels will apply in all cases.

Prescribed date

- 1.7 *Why is the registration date requirement a criterion under the new scheme?*

Consideration was given to amending the “prescribed date” as per S.I. No. 220 of 2012 (amended by S.I. No. 180 of 2013) however legal advice informed that this would require an amendment to the primary legislation, which can be a lengthy process. According to data from the EPA, the registration rate nationally is over 95% and potentially higher in some counties, which accounts for the majority of DWWTS in the country. Therefore, it was considered preferable, at this point, to introduce the new Regulations covering the majority of DWWTS. The need for an amendment to the “prescribed date” will be kept under review.

Recording systems

- 1.8 *Is there a specific system for local authorities to record all the new applications?*

There is no specific recording system and this is a matter for each local authority. It is important to note the requirements under the section on *Monitoring and oversight* in the various Circulars when setting up a recording system. In addition, the template in the Circular, the new application forms and the declarations, may provide a base when creating a new recording system.

Eircode

- 1.9 *What happens in cases where a house does not have an Eircode?*

The provision of an Eircode is required in order to process an application under the new scheme. According to www.eircode.ie, Eircodes have been assigned to existing postal addresses. The need for an Eircode is an important feature of the new scheme – it enables the local authority to easily check on previous grant status and it is essential for the local authority to ensure that they are included in the grant application. Separately they facilitate the local authority in locating the property – avoiding the cost that incurred under the previous scheme of providing a map.

Eircodes can be checked by inserting the address into the Eircode Finder <https://finder.eircode.ie/#/>. In the unlikely event that a house was not allocated an Eircode, this is a matter for the occupier of the property to resolve <https://www.eircode.ie/contact>

Electronic receipts

- 1.10 *Is it acceptable to accept receipts electronically i.e. receipts from contractors engaged by the applicant to carry out approved works?*

Yes, once the local authority is satisfied that all is in order.

2. Tax clearance certification and VAT registration

Tax clearance paper certificates or Revenue system

- 2.1 *Why does the application form request Tax Clearance Certificate rather than Revenue login details?*

The wording used in the Terms and Conditions is consistent with that used by Revenue. The documentation was worded accordingly. This does not impact on the tax clearance requirements.

<https://www.revenue.ie/en/starting-a-business/tax-clearance/index.aspx>

Verifying tax clearance status

2.2 *At what stage of the application process is the tax clearance status verified?*

The tax clearance status must be verified by the local authority during the application approval process, and should be checked again when the related claim is being processed.

VAT registration

2.3 *Does the contractor(s) engaged to carry out the works need to be registered for VAT?*

Yes. All approved works must be carried out by a contractor(s) who is registered for VAT, and meets all tax clearance certification requirements.

3. General

Advice on treatment systems

3.1 *Should local authorities give advice on domestic waste water treatment systems e.g. if they spot ponding or other such issues where a quick fix could prevent surface water entering the tank?*

The role of local authorities is to promote the interests of their local community, including the social, economic, environmental, recreational, cultural, community or general development of their area. Local authorities have powers and responsibility under various legislation to do this.

It is a reasonable expectation from the role above that local authorities would provide advice, and it would also be helpful if local authority personnel would direct potential applicants to for example to official sources of relevant information e.g. <https://www.epa.ie/water/wastewater/guidance/>, where an applicant would find such advice on their treatment system.



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