

# epaNews

The newsletter of the Environmental Protection Agency

## 2020 Vision

### Protecting and Improving Ireland's Environment

In April this year, the Environmental Protection Agency published its new organisational strategy, *2020 Vision – Protecting and Improving Ireland's Environment*.

*2020 Vision* differs from our previous organisational strategies in that it is outcome based, with a strong focus on the external environment, moving the EPA beyond the identification of environmental issues towards the resolution of the root causes of environmental problems. Along with its intrinsic value, the environment is a key resource for Ireland, and must continue to be protected and improved to ensure that it remains a basis for a healthy society and a thriving economy.

In this context, the strategy identifies a long-term vision and goals for the environment to the year 2020 and has identified clearly what must happen to make this vision a reality.

The six environmental goals set out in *2020 Vision* reflect the critical issues for environmental protection in Ireland. Protected water resources, clean air and protected soil and biodiversity are

fundamental rights for all Irish citizens. In addition, the goals of limiting and adapting to climate change, sustainable use of resources and integration and enforcement are key areas that need to be pursued vigorously to ensure a sustainable society.

In developing the environmental goals we consulted with a range of stakeholders, including the public. The vast majority of the responses we received endorsed the six environmental goals, and it is clear from the submissions that the people of Ireland continue to view the environment as one of their top priorities.

*2020 Vision* will shape and guide the work of the EPA and everything we do will be moving towards meeting its environmental goals. In this regard, the strategy also identifies specific activities that the EPA must undertake in the shorter term, between now and 2010, to ensure the longer-term vision is achieved. We have developed an implementation plan for the strategy, with clear measurable outcomes. A further set of four organisational goals has been set out to ensure that the EPA

## Inside epaNews

<a href="#">2020 Vision <i>continued</i></a>	<a href="#">Page 2</a>
<a href="#">GMO Licenses</a>	<a href="#">Page 2</a>
<a href="#">Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions</a>	<a href="#">Page 3</a>
<a href="#">EPA Regional Inspectorate</a>	<a href="#">Page 4</a>
<a href="#">Waste Licenses</a>	<a href="#">Page 5</a>
<a href="#">IPPC Licenses</a>	<a href="#">Page 5</a>
<a href="#">Dangerous Substances in Water</a>	<a href="#">Page 5</a>
<a href="#">Drinking Water Quality in Ireland</a>	<a href="#">Page 6</a>
<a href="#">EPA Code of Practice</a>	<a href="#">Page 7</a>
<a href="#">Urban Waste Report 2004/2005</a>	<a href="#">Page 8</a>
<a href="#">See Something? Say Something!</a>	<a href="#">Page 9</a>
<a href="#">Prosecutions</a>	<a href="#">Page 10</a>
<a href="#">Prosecutions <i>continued</i></a>	<a href="#">Page 11</a>
<a href="#">EPA Website Makeover</a>	<a href="#">Page 12</a>

will deliver on its environmental goals. We have already begun the implementation process and have made some changes internally to take account of new statutory responsibilities and powers recently provided to the EPA. This will ensure that the organisation is correctly aligned to meet its goals. The main changes that have been made are as follows:

A programme area for climate change has been established, incorporating the EPA's existing Emissions Trading Unit, the emissions inventory and projection work area and a climate change research project team. This programme will discharge the responsibilities assigned to the EPA under the recently published National Climate Change Strategy. To reflect the priority afforded to the climate change area, the EPA's Office of Licensing and Guidance has been renamed the Office of Climate, Licensing and Resource Use.

The EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement will establish three regional programmes which will strengthen its regional-based enforcement of all licensing and public authority enforcement activities. This will allow it to take on new responsibilities in the enforcement area in a more effective manner.



*Pictured at the launch of 2020 Vision are the EPA Board of Directors: Dara Lynott (Office of Environmental Enforcement), Padraic Larkin (Office of Climate, Licensing and Resource Use), Mary Kelly (Director General), Larry Stapleton (Office of Environmental Assessment) and Laura Burke (Office of Communications and Corporate Services).*

## 2020 Vision... continued

A soils and biodiversity unit will be established within the Research and Assessment Programme area, of the EPA's Office of Environmental Assessment.

The remit of the Planning and Guidance programme area has been extended to incorporate the area of sustainable use of resources and will be situated within the new EPA Office of Climate, Licensing and Resource Use.

A unit to centrally manage and respond to information requests and queries from the public is to be established within the EPA's Office of Communications and Corporate Services.

These changes reflect the need for ongoing adaptability and flexibility to face new statutory responsibilities and new priorities.

*2020 Vision* is an ambitious strategy and we are committed to it as an organisation. We will continue to build on our scientific expertise by being a proactive, forceful environmental champion, focusing on environmental management and stating clearly what needs to be done for the environment. We want to ensure that environmental considerations are at the heart of policy and decision making in Ireland and we

intend to continue to influence environmental policy proactively, at national and international levels, to achieve the long-term environmental goals.

Finally, in developing this strategy we recognise that the EPA is not the only organisation with environmental responsibilities in Ireland. Therefore, achieving the environmental goals will not be possible without the involvement of a range of other public and private bodies with environmental responsibilities, as well as other stakeholders. Part of our work over the coming years will be to engage with all stakeholders to achieve consensus on our *2020 Vision* and to build a cooperative approach towards addressing the environmental challenges facing Ireland.

*2020 Vision: Protecting and Improving Ireland's Environment* can be downloaded from the EPA website at:

<http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/other/corporate/>

Mary Kelly

Dr. Mary Kelly  
Director General  
Environmental Protection Agency



## GMO Contained Use activities licensed since January 2007.

### Dr Maria Tuohy

*Molecular Biotechnology Group,  
Department of Biochemistry, NUIG.*

### Dr Mary Murphy

*Regenerative Medicine Institute,  
National Centre for Biomedical  
Engineering Science,  
Orbsen Building,  
National University of Ireland,  
Galway.*

### Dr Anne Parle-McDermott

*Nutritional Genomics Group,  
School of Biotechnology,  
Dublin City University,  
Glasnevin,  
Dublin 9.*

### Dr. Sinead Miggin

*Institute of Immunology,  
Department of Biology,  
NUI Maynooth,  
Maynooth,  
Co. Kildare.*

### Dr Caroline Herron

*School of Biomolecular  
and Biomedical Science,  
Conway Institute,  
UCD, Belfield, Dublin 4.*

### Dr. Mark Heffernan

*Opsona Therapeutics,  
Room 2.13, First Floor,  
Inst. For Molecular Medicines,  
Trinity Centre for Health Sciences,  
St. James's Hospital,  
Dublin 8.*

### Dr. Frank Wellmer

*Smurfit Institute of Genetics,  
Trinity College Dublin,  
Dublin 22.*

# Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Increase in 2005

Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions increased by almost 2 per cent in 2005, according to provisional estimates compiled by the EPA. These estimates take account of the latest energy balance data published by SEI and the detailed returns for 2005 to the EPA from participants involved in emissions trading.

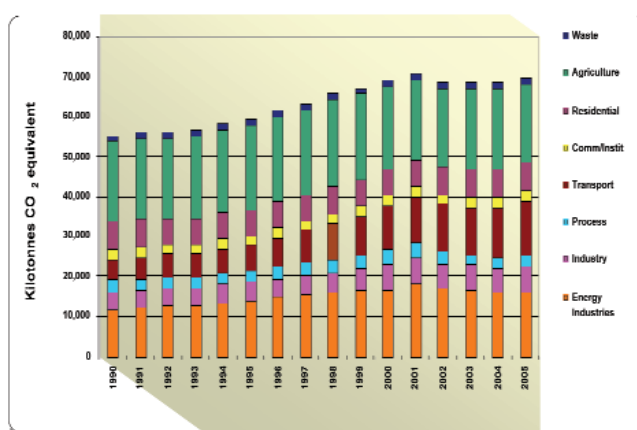
- Total emissions in 2005 were 69.96 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq), up 1.9 per cent from their 2004 level.
- Emissions were 25.4 per cent higher than the base year estimate of 55.78 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq, which determines Ireland's allowable emissions of 315 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq for the Kyoto Protocol commitment period 2008-2012, as officially notified to the European Commission in 2006.
- The provisional estimate for 2005 is approximately equal to the 70.2 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq projected as the reference annual total for the years 2008-2012 that underlies Ireland's National Allocation Plan.
- Agriculture remains the single largest contributor at 27.6 per cent of the total; followed by energy industries (electricity generation and oil refining) at 23.3 per cent and transport at 19.2 per cent.
- Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil fuel combustion accounted for 66 per cent of total greenhouse gas emissions in 2005 compared to 55 per cent in 1990. The contribution from agriculture, where methane and nitrous oxide are the relevant greenhouse gases, has fallen from 35.7 per cent in 1990 to 27.6 per cent in 2005.

Notable changes in 2005 in the sectors adopted for use in the National Climate Change Strategy were:

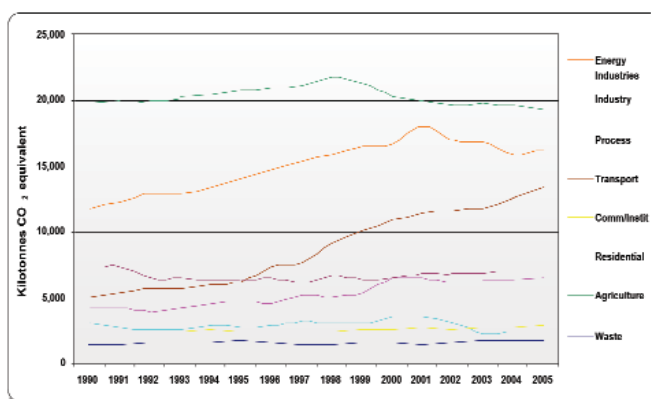
- Emissions from energy industries, principally electricity generation, increased by 2.4 per cent (from 15.94 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2004 to 16.32 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2005). Increased peat use at the expense of natural gas, which reverses the trend on the previous year, was the major contributing factor.

- Transport emissions increased by 6.9 per cent (from 12.59 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2004 to 13.46 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2005). Road transport accounts for 96 per cent of these emissions and is clearly the main cause of the increase in the national total.
- An increase of 1.2 per cent in the emissions from industry was due to increased losses of minor but highly potent fluorinated greenhouse gases associated with refrigeration and air conditioning, rather than to fuel combustion.
- Emissions from agriculture decreased by 1.8 per cent (from 19.67 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2004 to 19.32 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2005). The decrease reflects lower methane emissions from cattle and sheep as their populations continue to decline and lower nitrous oxide emissions from reduced fertiliser use.
- Emissions from processes increased by 2 per cent (from 2.50 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2004 to 2.55 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2005), reflecting slight increases in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions associated with cement production.
- Emissions from the waste sector, primarily methane gas released from landfills, amounted to 1.79 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq and showed little change on the 2004 level. For this source, increased landfill gas utilisation and on-site flaring are offsetting increases in methane production.

Between 1990 and 2005, transport shows the greatest increase at 160 per cent. Other sectors showing substantial increase are energy industries at 40 per cent and industry at 52 per cent. The 2005 emissions in the agriculture and residential sectors were very similar to their respective levels in 1990.



GHG Emissions by National Climate Change Strategy Sector 1990-2005



Trends in GHG Emissions by National Climate Change Strategy Sector 1990-2005



## EPA Regional Inspectorate, Kilkenny

The EPA Regional Inspectorate in Kilkenny recently moved from Butts Green to new premises at Seville Lodge, Callan Road. The new Inspectorate was officially opened in February by Mr. Dick Roche, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local Government.

The main work carried out at the EPA Inspectorate and laboratory in Kilkenny is water pollution control in the southeast of Ireland. The laboratory serves the needs of the EPA in terms of compliance monitoring and provides services relating to water pollution control to eight local authorities - Carlow, Kilkenny, Laois, Tipperary North & South, Waterford County & City and Wexford.

The Kilkenny inspectorate carries out monitoring and prepares reports on drinking water quality and water quality in rivers, lakes, groundwaters and estuaries. It also carries out monitoring on waste and industrial sites licensed by the EPA, including landfill sites. A river biologist is located in the premises, as are a hydrometric team involved in water quantity measurement.

The new building comprises six laboratories:

- Main laboratory - for general analysis of waters and effluents, including nutrients such as nitrate and phosphate;
- Trace organics laboratory - for traces of solvents & pesticides;
- Biology laboratory - to assess the long-term quality of river water based on the presence or absence of various aquatic species in a river;
- Trace metals laboratory - used, for example, for analysing samples from various mining operations in the region, including dust blown from tailings ponds;
- Microbiology laboratory - microbiological testing of drinking waters, groundwaters and estuarine waters.
- One laboratory is presently used by the South East River Basin District Project - in assisting the local authorities to implement the EU Water Framework Directive.

EPA reports on water quality and on the overall state of the environment are underpinned by the information provided by its laboratories. These new facilities now ensure that the EPA has access to the best technologies to assist in this area of work.

### Green Issues - Energy Efficient Aspects of the Design

In broad terms the geometry of the Kilkenny building - comprising three shallow wings around a courtyard with substantial amounts of glazing - takes advantage of passive solar gain, allows for good natural lighting and allows for the building to be naturally ventilated as far as possible.

The use of brise-soleil, solar control glass, large openable panels and external deciduous planting allow for the control of solar gain, maintains comfortable internal conditions and eliminates the need for air-conditioning. Solar panels on the roof will provide the entire requirement for domestic hot water in the summer and also in the later spring and early autumn.

The generous amount of glazing, coupled with the shallow plan of each wing, allow daylight to penetrate throughout the building, thereby reducing the requirement for artificial lighting. In order to further reduce energy consumption, this is supplemented by low energy lighting systems with "daylight linking" i.e. lights turn off when there is a sufficient natural light level available and are also fitted with movement detectors.

The building has been designed as far as possible to be naturally ventilated. The use of air conditioning has been minimised and it has only been used in specific laboratory areas where it was absolutely necessary.

The building is also fitted with an Energy Monitoring System, which constantly monitors both electrical and heating fuel consumption. The system logs consumption every 15 minutes and every night transfers the collected data onto a central database. The data can then be accessed over the Internet and the energy performance benchmarked against other EPA laboratories on the system.



*Kilkenny Inspectorate staff pictured at the official opening of their new premises.*

## Waste Licenses issued since January 2007

### Waste Transfer Station

*Advanced Environmental Solutions (Ireland) Ltd.* **W0194-02**  
Kyletalesha & Kyleclonhobert,  
Portlaoise, County Laois.

*Greenclean Waste Management Ltd* **W0222-01**  
Coldwinters,  
Blakescross,  
Lusk, Co. Dublin

*Goff Recycling Limited* **W0229-01**  
Ballygillane Big/Ballyknockan,  
St. Helens, Kilrane,  
Rosslare Harbour,  
Co. Wexford

### Compost Facility

*Organic Gold (Marketing) Ltd.* **W0219-01**  
Wilkinstown,  
Navan, Co. Meath

### Integrated Waste Management Facility

*Kerry County Council* **W0224-01**  
Listowel Civic Amenity Centre,  
Tanavalla Industrial Estate,  
Garryantanvally,  
Tralee Road,  
Listowel, Co. Kerry

### Materials Recovery Facility

*TechRec Ireland Limited* **W0233-01**  
Unit 51,  
Park West Industrial Estate,  
Nangor Road, Dublin 12

## IPPC Licenses issued since January 2007

### Surface Coatings

*Punch Industries* **P0127-02**  
Wallingstown,  
Little Island, Cork

### Chemicals

*Millipore Ireland B.V.* **P0571-02**  
Tullagreen,  
Carrigtwohill,  
Co. Cork

## Dangerous Substances in Water

The EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement recently published its first report on the implementation of the Water Quality (Dangerous Substances) Regulations, 2001.

Overall, the results tell us that Ireland does not have a significant problem with dangerous substances in water compared to other industrialised nations. There is, however, a need to be vigilant in relation to the protection of waters from contamination with dangerous substances and where these substances are detected further investigations are required to identify why they are there and steps need to be taken to eliminate them.

The Water Quality (Dangerous Substances) Regulations, 2001 set water quality targets for 14 dangerous substances in rivers, lakes and tidal waters to be met by 2010.

The substances are:

- pesticides (atrazine, simazine, tributyltin);
- solvents (dichloromethane, toluene, xylene);
- metals (arsenic, chromium, copper, lead, nickel, zinc) and
- other substances (cyanide, fluoride).

These substances were selected primarily on the basis of their likely use or presence in Ireland and their potential impacts on waters by virtue of toxicity, persistence and bioaccumulation.

The report has been compiled primarily from historical information and water quality data submitted to the EPA by local authorities and from additional data collected by the EPA and the Marine Institute. It provides an overview of the broad range of measures being implemented by local authorities in relation to the prevention of contamination of waters with dangerous substances.

Through the implementation of the recently published national Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme, the EPA and the Marine Institute are now responsible for the monitoring of these and other substances in Irish waters. The monitoring to be conducted under this programme will provide more comprehensive information about the relative presence of such

substances in Irish waters - which will, where necessary, allow remedial actions to be targeted where most needed.

Mining activity has contributed to elevated levels of heavy metals in certain areas. The recent Government decision to remediate the Silvermines area is welcome and further consideration should also be given to addressing mining impacts in other areas.

The EPA recommends that all local authorities continue to identify and assess those activities that may be potential sources of dangerous substances and to put in place appropriate implementation programmes to deal with breaches of the standards. Monitoring should be focussed at high-risk surface waters potentially impacted on by point discharges e.g. waste water treatment plants, landfills, mining operations and relevant industries.

The full report entitled **Dangerous Substances Regulations - National Implementation Report 2005** is available on the EPA web site at <http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water/phosphorus/> or from the EPA's Publications' Office, McCumiskey House, Richview, Dublin 14 on 01-268 0100, price €20.

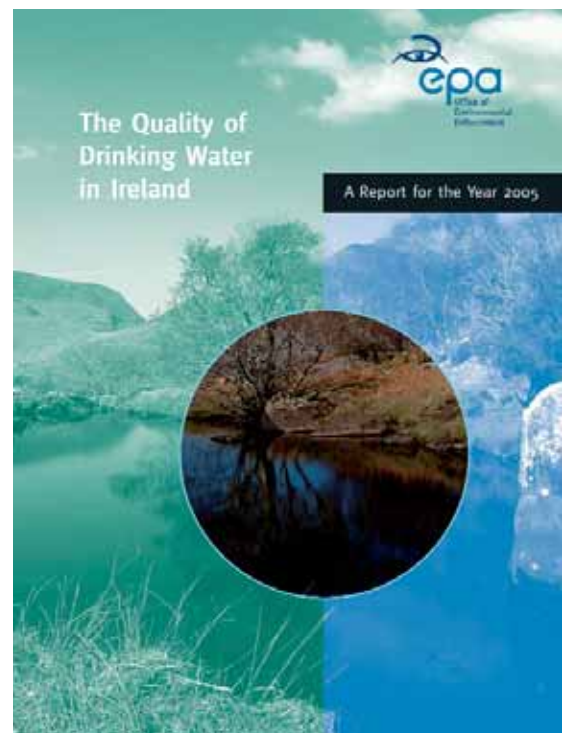


# Drinking Water Quality in Ireland

The EPA recently published *The Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland: A Report for the Year 2005*. The main findings of this report were:

1. The quality of drinking water provided to 83% of the population by the sanitary authorities in public water supplies and public group water schemes was satisfactory, while the quality of water provided to less than 7% of the population by private group water schemes was unsatisfactory.
2. The overall rate of compliance with the 48 standards for drinking water in 2005 was 96.7%, a slight improvement from 96.4% in 2004.
3. The microbiological quality of public water supplies was far superior to that of the private group water schemes with 98.9% of samples analysed for E.coli. In particular, the quality of drinking water produced in the larger public water supplies, serving more than 5,000 people, was high with 99.8% of samples analysed compliant with the E.coli standard.
4. The overall compliance rate for the E. coli standard in private group schemes fell from 78.1% in 2004 to 77.5% in 2005. This fall in compliance was mainly due to the worrying drop in compliance in Mayo from 75% in 2004 to 58.9% in 2005. More than half of the private group water schemes in Cavan (65%), Kerry (60%), Kilkenny (79%), Leitrim (82%), Mayo (67%), Donegal (53%) and Sligo (54%) were contaminated with E. coli at least once during 2005. Overall, 36.2% of private group schemes were contaminated with E. coli at least once during 2005.
5. No local authority audited by the EPA during the year had taken enforcement action to ensure compliance in the quality deficient group water schemes.
6. In 2005, there was a serious shortfall in the monitoring of water supplies in Ireland, particularly in the public and private group water schemes. 9% of public water supplies, 65% of public group water schemes and 41% of private group water schemes were not adequately monitored and in some cases not at all.
7. During 2005, there were 3 outbreaks of cryptosporidiosis, a gastrointestinal disease caused by the parasite *Cryptosporidium*, associated with drinking water supplies. They were in Carlow, Ennis and Roscommon.

Key Compliance Statistics	Percentage in 2005	Percentage Change from 2004
<b>Overall Compliance</b>	96.7	+0.3
Microbiological Compliance	95.7	+0.6
Chemical Compliance	99.2	-0.1
E. coli Compliance		
Public Water Supplies	98.9	Unchanged
Private Group Water Schemes	75.0	-3.1
Supplies Serving > 5,000 persons	99.8	+0.4
<b>Monitoring Deficiency - Supplies Not Monitored</b>		
Public Water Supplies	1.2	-
Public Group Water Schemes	34.5	-
Private Group Water Schemes	10.2	-



In evaluating the data that has been submitted to the EPA for 2005 a number of trends are evident that give rise for concern:

- 40% of the incidents of E. coli contamination of public water supplies were due to the failure of chlorination equipment that was not detected immediately by the sanitary authority.
- One in four samples taken from private group water schemes were found to contain E. coli. In spite of record levels of investment in the group water scheme sector, progress in upgrading schemes is simply not happening at a fast enough speed. A sizeable number of schemes have prepared no corrective action plan.
- The high number of supplies not having been monitored even once during the year is putting the health of people served by these supplies at risk, as they may be consuming contaminated water but are unaware of it.

Key recommendations of this report are:

1. Sanitary authorities must ensure that public water supplies, group water schemes and private supplies within their functional area are monitored to at least the minimum frequency required.



2. Sanitary authorities should ensure that each exceedance of the parametric values is investigated immediately and appropriate corrective action taken.
3. Sanitary authorities must use the enforcement options available to them to pursue persons responsible for the management of group water schemes that supply water to members of the public that is unfit for human consumption.
4. Sanitary authorities should carry out risk assessments to determine the vulnerability of public water supplies to contamination with *Cryptosporidium* on all public water supplies and take steps to reduce the risk of contamination of the water supply.
5. In relation to operation and maintenance of drinking water treatment and distribution systems, the following actions are required to be taken by sanitary authorities:
  - a. carry out a lead survey to determine the extent of lead piping in the distribution network and in the population served and commence treatment of supplies to reduce plumbosolvency in supplies at risk from exceeding the lead parametric value;
  - b. investigate the cause of disinfection by-product exceedances (i.e. bromate and trihalomethanes) in public water supplies;
  - c. ensure that fluoridation is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Fluoridation Act;
  - d. ensure that all treatment plants have adequate disinfection equipment in place and that all plants should have alarms fitted to immediately alert the sanitary authority to any failure of the disinfection equipment.

#### Recent Developments

Since the publication of this report new drinking water regulations were passed into law - on 8th March 2007. These new regulations contain many significant changes. The most significant of these changes is the assignment of enforcement powers to the EPA in respect of drinking water quality. The EPA is now the supervisory authority responsible for enforcing the quality of drinking water in public water supplies and responsible for ensuring local authorities take the appropriate action in the event of a failure of the drinking water to meet the required standards or where there is a problem with the quality of the water supply.

Since the commencement of these Regulations an outbreak of *Cryptosporidium* in the Galway City Supply has occurred and the EPA has been actively involved in the subsequent investigation into the cause and solution to the problem.

The EPA has also written to all local authorities advising them of what steps to take in relation to risk assessment for *Cryptosporidium*. The EPA has recommended that all local authorities:

- carry out risk assessments on all public water supplies that draw water from surface water sources (i.e. rivers, lakes and reservoirs);
- identify all public surface water supplies with only chlorination and report these to the EPA with plans to upgrade;
- consider monitoring for *cryptosporidium* at all high-risk supplies.

The Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland, 2005 contains summary reports for all sanitary authorities. It is available on the EPA web site: <http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water/drinking/> or from the EPA Publications' Office, McCumiskey House, Richview, Dublin 14 on 01-268 0100 - €25.

## EPA Code of Practice

### Environmental Risk Assessment for Unregulated Waste Disposal Sites

Mr. Dick Roche T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, launched the EPA's guidance document 'Code of Practice: Environmental Risk Assessment for Unregulated Waste Disposal Sites' on the 12th April.

The Code of Practice, prepared by the EPA at the request of Minister Roche, sets out a risk based assessment procedure that allows all historic unregulated waste disposal sites to be identified; the potential risks to be assessed and then the appropriate remedial measures or corrective actions to be put in place.

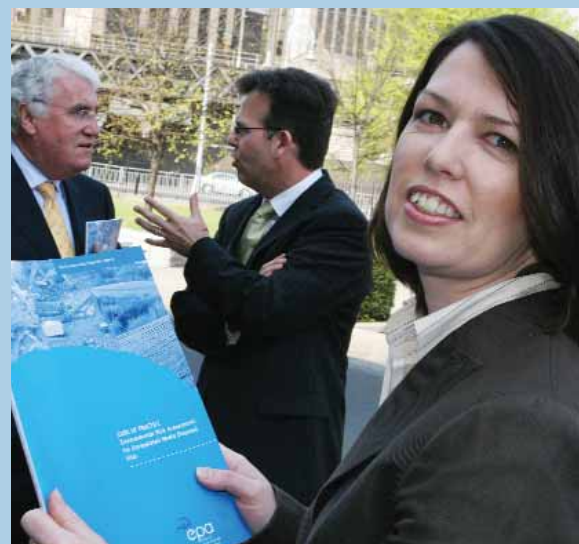
The Code has been produced to ensure a consistent approach to environmental risk assessment by local authorities when assessing the environmental impact and remediation options for historic unregulated waste disposal sites. It also provides guidance on how to deal with illegal landfills that have come into being since the introduction of the waste licensing regime.

As a starting point, all local authorities will identify possible sites by applying the EPA's guidance *Methodology for the Identification of Waste Disposal or Recovery Sites in Ireland*. These sites will then undergo a risk screening process, as set out in the Code of Practice, which allows the sites to be prioritised on the basis of the potential intrinsic risk that they may pose to the environment and human health. The intrinsic risk relates to the risk posed without any remedial measures having been put in place to reduce the risk, so it is a conservative approach.

The potentially highest risk sites will be investigated first and a detailed risk assessment will then be undertaken. As a result of the detailed risk assessment, remedial measures/corrective action may be proposed to reduce the risk that the site poses to the environment and human health.

This represents a significant part of Ireland's response to the European Court of Justice judgement against Ireland (case C-494/01) and it allows Ireland to meet the obligation to regulate waste activities from 1977 onwards as set out in the Waste Framework Directive (75/442/EEC amended by 91/156/EEC).

The EPA has also held a workshop for local authority staff to advise them on the implementation of this Code of Practice.



Mr Dick Roche, T.D., (Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government), Dara Lynott (Director, EPA Office of Environmental Enforcement) and Margaret Keegan (EPA) pictured at the launch of the EPA Code of Practice

# Urban Waste Water Report 2004/2005

The EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement recently published *Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland – A report for the Years 2004 and 2005*. This report provides:

- an analysis of the treatment of waste water for all agglomerations (mainly cities, towns and villages) with a population equivalent over 500 during 2004 and 2005;
- information on the quality of discharges from waste water treatment plants and
- commentary on trends for the period 1998 to 2005.

The report is based on information supplied by local authorities on an annual basis.

The end of the review period (31st December 2005) also coincided with a significant milestone in urban waste water treatment in Ireland, whereby secondary treatment was required for all agglomerations discharging to freshwaters and estuaries with population equivalents of 2,000 or greater and for agglomerations discharging to coastal waters with population equivalents of 10,000 or greater. The report includes a county-by-county analysis of the performance of secondary waste water treatment plants covering their compliance against the Urban Waste Water Regulations, 2001. The main findings of the report are:

1. The overall level of treatment provided at 478 agglomerations, which collectively represent a total population equivalent (p.e.) of 5,627,456, was as follows:
  - 11% of waste water arisings received no treatment;
  - 5% of waste water arisings received preliminary treatment;
  - 2% of waste water arisings received primary treatment;
  - 70% of waste water arisings received secondary treatment and
  - 12% of waste water arisings received nutrient reduction in addition to secondary treatment.
2. There have been delays in providing the required treatment plants at a number of locations throughout the country. Of the 158 agglomerations requiring secondary treatment or higher by 31st December 2005, the required level of treatment was not in place at 30 of these agglomerations.
3. Large agglomerations where the required secondary treatment has not yet been provided are:

Bray,Howth/Baldoyle/Portmarnock (Partial), Balbriggan, Killybegs, Shangannagh, Sligo Town, Tramore, and Waterford City. This was required to be in place by 31st December 2000.

4. The largest untreated discharge to a sensitive area is from Killybegs (Co. Donegal) with an estimated population equivalent of 400,000.
5. Secondary waste water treatment plants are now operational in the cities of Cork, Limerick and Galway and these plants are meeting the effluent quality standards set out in the Regulations.
6. Nutrient reduction, which is required for discharges to specified waters considered sensitive to the risk of eutrophication, has been provided for all agglomerations specified by the Regulations.
7. Compliance with discharge limits for the very large plants (i.e. >15,000 p.e.) has improved; however the majority of smaller treatment plants are not complying with these limits. The compliance rates based on monitoring results are summarised in table 1 below.
8. Local authorities failed to take the required number of samples at 38% of waste water treatments plants with a population equivalent of 2,000 or over and, where samples were taken, 43% of these were taken incorrectly (i.e. flow-proportional or time-based 24-hour samples were not taken).
9. 121,750 tonnes of dried sludge was produced nationally by wastewater treatment plants in the period 2004-2005. 76% of this went to agriculture and 17% went to landfill.
10. 75 waste water treatment plants were inspected by the EPA between 2004 and 2006.

Recurring problems identified at waste water treatment plants, which are in need of corrective action, include:

- Inadequate collection systems for waste water (e.g. combined sewer overflows);
- Inadequate screening of influent waste water and storm water overflows;
- Insufficient treatment capacity;
- Poor assimilative capacity for discharged effluent in some receiving waters and
- Poor sludge management on site and incomplete sludge records.

In evaluating the causes of the non-compliance with the Regulations the EPA has concluded that many waste water treatment plants are under increasing pressure from development that has taken place throughout the country over the last number of years.

In order to achieve compliance with the requirements of the Regulations and secure improvements in the quality of effluents from urban waste water treatment plants the EPA makes several recommendations, which are outlined in the report.

The EPA has issued a number of statutory notices to local authorities during the reporting period. In addition, the EPA is investigating those rivers which have been assessed by EPA Biologists as being seriously polluted. A summary of enforcement actions taken by the EPA since 2004 in relation to waste water treatment plants is listed in Chapter Three of the report.

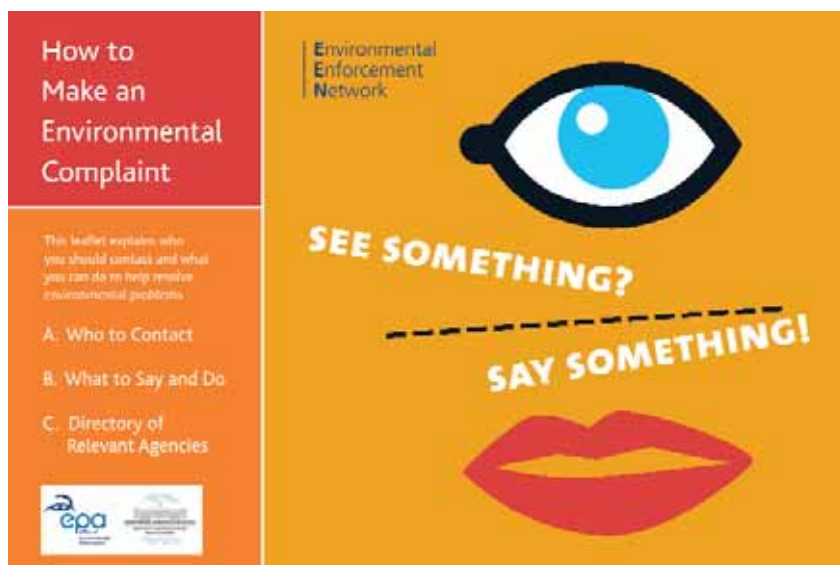
The report is available on the EPA web site at <http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water/wastewater/> or from the EPA Publications' Office, McCumiskey House, Richview, Dublin 14 on 01-2680100 - €20.

Plant Category	Compliance (%)			
	1998-9	2000-1	2002-3	2004-5
< 2,000 p.e.	18	18	22	19
2,000-15,000 p.e	22	28	29	38
> 10,000 p.e with nutrient reduction	56	68	57	86
> 15,000 p.e	53	64	52	67

Table 1.



# See Something? Say Something!



*See Something? Say Something!* is a leaflet designed to make it easier for members of the public to make an environmental complaint.

The leaflet was launched on 26 April and is the latest initiative of the Environmental Enforcement Network.

The leaflet is divided into three main sections:

- Who to Contact
- What to Say and Do and
- A Directory of Relevant Agencies.

*See Something? Say Something!* is available from both local authority and EPA offices. It may also be downloaded from the websites of local authorities and the EPA (<http://www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/other/corporate/>)

Prior to the launch of *See Something? Say Something!* people may have been unsure of whom to contact or how to make an environmental complaint.

When we see someone, or an organisation, damaging the environment we can - and should - bring it to the attention of the relevant authorities. And to help you do this the leaflet walks you through the process.

It isn't a terribly complicated process either!

The first step is to contact the person or organisation involved directly. Simply pointing out to them what is wrong can often resolve the problem. It is best to decide, before making the approach, what you would like them to do to resolve the problem. When you do make contact, whether it is in person, over the

phone or in writing, you should agree with them both the solution and how long it should take to achieve it. It is also a good idea to write down the details of the contact, when it happened, what was discussed, whom with and what the outcome was. This can be very useful if the problem isn't resolved.

Where you are not comfortable with dealing with the offender directly or where this doesn't produce a positive outcome then you should approach your County or City Council.

There are a few exceptions to this. Large companies are often regulated directly by the EPA, so they are the people to talk to next. And some areas like wildlife & habitat protection, workplace health and safety and public health are the responsibility of specific public bodies. The *See Something? Say Something!* leaflet contains a full listing of these to help you identify the correct one to contact.

But, as a rule of thumb, where the problem relates to matters like littering, backyard burning, water pollution, noise, dust and smells you should contact the local authority, unless the organisation has an EPA license. When dealing with the Local Authority the same guidelines apply. Agree both the solution that should be put in place and the timescale. The Local Authority should then keep you updated on progress. And do take note of whom you were dealing with and what was agreed.

If no significant progress is being made after the agreed time period has elapsed the third and final step in the

process is to contact the EPA directly. The EPA is obliged to ensure that Local Authorities deal with environmental problems correctly.

When you do decide to get involved in solving any environmental issues there are some things you should be aware of. To progress its investigation, the local authority or the EPA will, in many cases, need to be able to contact you for further information or assistance. You will be encouraged to give your name and contact details, as investigating anonymous complaints can be very difficult. You can, however, request that your name and contact details be kept confidential.

In order to maintain a complete public record of activities relating to an EPA licensed facility/site it is normal practice that complaint details about licensed facilities are put on public file. Again, you can request that your name and contact details be kept confidential in which case your name and details will be withheld from the public file.

Information submitted to public authorities is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003.

Finally, in some instances it may be necessary that a court action be taken to resolve a problem. If this is the case you may be asked to act as a witness and to give sworn testimony.

The Environmental Enforcement Network, which produced this leaflet, includes Local Authorities, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Fisheries Boards, the Health Service Executive, the Revenue Commissioners, An Garda Síochána, the National Bureau of Criminal Investigations and other government departments. The EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement co-ordinates the activities of the Network.

*Dara Lynott (Director), Valerie Doyle, Jacinta Ponzi and Matt Crowe (Programme Manager) - from the EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement - are pictured at the launch of the See Something, Say Something leaflet.*



# Prosecutions

A total of seven cases were brought by the EPA before the District Courts during the period between December 2006 and April 2007, six of which were successfully completed. In one case the District Court Judge refused jurisdiction and a file is now being prepared by the OEE for submission to the Director of Public Prosecutions for consideration to prosecute on indictment.

Five of the seven prosecutions were taken under the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992 – 2003 with the remaining two taken under the Waste Management Acts, 1996 to 2003.

The EPA initiated these legal actions having detected non-compliances through audits, EPA monitoring, complaints from residents and site investigations.

## Kepak Athleague

On the 16th January 2007 at Roscommon District Court, the EPA took a prosecution against Kepak Athleague in relation to offences under the Environmental Protection Agency Acts 1992 and 2003 for breaches of conditions of its IPC license.

The company pleaded guilty to two charges:

- - permitting emissions to the water, which exceeded the emission limit values set out in Schedule 2 (i) of the license and
- - providing the EPA with information that was false or misleading in a material respect

Breach of these conditions had the potential to cause contamination of the River Suck without the EPA's knowledge.

On hearing details of the offence from the EPA's solicitor, Judge Browne imposed fines totalling €4,000 and the EPA's costs of €6,552 were also awarded.

Kepak Athleague was granted an IPC license (Reg.No.0168-01) on 18th December 1997. The facility is located on the banks of the River Suck in Athleague, Co. Roscommon where it operates a slaughtering facility with associated processing and cold storage facilities.

This prosecution was taken following a site visit carried out on 27th September 2005 by the EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement.

## Adhesives Research Ireland Ltd.

On the 19th January 2007 at Limerick District Court, the EPA took a prosecution against Adhesives Research Ireland Limited in relation to offences under the Environmental Protection Agency Acts 1992 and 2003 for breaches of its IPC license.

The company pleaded guilty to three charges relating to failure to record sampling and monitoring of emissions to atmosphere and also providing the EPA with information that was false or misleading in a material respect on two separate occasions

Breach of these conditions meant the company could not demonstrate that the air emissions abatement systems were operating effectively and that the EPA could not assess compliance of the company with the emission limits set out in its license.

On hearing details of the offence from the EPA's solicitor, Judge O'Donnell imposed a fine of €500 in relation to one of the charges and took the other two into consideration. The EPA's costs of €6,865 were also awarded.

Adhesives Research Ireland Limited was granted an IPC license (Reg.No.0452-01) on 18th November 1998. The facility is a manufacturing, research and development facility located in Raheen Industrial Estate south of Limerick city.

This prosecution was taken following investigation by the EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement.

## Liffey Meats (Cavan) Ltd.

On the 5th February 2007 at Virginia District Court, the EPA took a prosecution against Liffey Meats

(Cavan) Limited in relation to offences under the Environmental Protection Agency Acts 1992 and 2003 for breaches of conditions of its IPC license.

The company pleaded guilty to three charges:

- permitting emissions to the water, which exceeded the emission limit values set out in its license,
- failing to notify the EPA of these emissions and
- failing to notify the EPA of a malfunction of control equipment, (aerator of wastewater treatment plant) which was likely to lead to loss of control of the abatement system.

Breach of these conditions had the potential to cause contamination of the receiving waters that eventually flow to Lough Sheelin. Non-notification of such an incident meant that the EPA was not in a position to evaluate or monitor the situation and determine appropriate remedial action. Failure of the wastewater treatment plant's aerator resulted in an increase in odours from the plant.

On hearing details of the three offences from the EPA's solicitor, Judge McBride imposed fines of €1,000 each in relation to charges one and three and took the other charge into account. The EPA's costs of €12,987 were also awarded.

Liffey Meats (Cavan) was granted an IPC license (Reg.No.0169-01) on 28th April 1998. The facility is located just outside the town of Ballyjamesduff, Co. Cavan where it operates a cattle-slaughtering unit and associated processing and storage facilities.

This prosecution was taken following an investigation by the EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement, with the assistance of the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board.

This is the fifth prosecution of Liffey Meats (Cavan) Limited taken by the EPA.

#### **Padraig Thornton Waste Disposal Ltd.**

On the 12th February 2007 at Dublin Metropolitan District Court, Padraig Thornton Waste Disposal Limited pleaded guilty to an offence under the Waste Management Acts 1996 - 2003 for a breach of its Waste license.

The company admitted breaching a condition of its license by causing odour emissions that resulted in significant impairment of, or significant interference with, amenities or the environment beyond the facility boundary on 07 November 2005.

On hearing details of the offence, Judge Coughlan imposed a fine of €2,750 and EPA costs of €10,000 were also awarded.

Padraig Thornton Waste Disposal Limited was granted a waste license in 1999. The EPA issued a revised license (Reg. No. WO044-02) on 02 May 2003 for the operation of a waste transfer station at Killeen Road, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10.

This prosecution was taken following complaints from local residents and a follow up site inspection undertaken by the EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement.

#### **Alert Packaging Limited**

On the 13th February 2007 at Bray District Court, the EPA took a prosecution against Alert Packaging Limited in relation to offences under the EPA Acts, 1992 and 2003 for a breach of its IPC license.

The company pleaded guilty to breaches of conditions of its license by permitting emissions to the atmosphere and to sewer, which exceeded the emission limit values set out in the license. The company also pleaded guilty to failing to notify the EPA as soon as practicable after the occurrence of an emission to the atmosphere.

On hearing details of the offences from an EPA inspector, Judge Hamill imposed fines totalling €3,000 and EPA costs of €10,000 were also awarded.

Alert Packaging Limited was granted an IPC license (Reg.No.P0366-01) on 14th October 1998, and a revised license (Reg. No. P0366-02) on 13th May 2004. The facility is located at IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Route, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

This prosecution was taken following a site visit carried out on 24th November 2005 and an Air Monitoring Visit carried out on 25th July 2005 by the Office of Environmental Enforcement.

#### **South East Recycling Company Ltd.**

On the 26th March 2007 at Wexford District Court, the EPA took a prosecution against South East Recycling Company Limited in relation to an offence under the Waste Management Acts, 1996 - 2003 for breaches of its Waste license (Reg. No. WO111-01).

While the company pleaded guilty to exceeding their annual waste tonnage limit in 2006 as set out in their license, Judge O'Buachalla asked that they give an undertaking to the court that they would operate within the confines of the license conditions. The barrister for the company stated that they could not give this undertaking. Judge O'Buchalla adjourned the case to 16th April and requested that representatives from the company appear before him to give this undertaking. On 16th April following a failure by the company to provide the court with this undertaking Judge O'Buchalla refused jurisdiction. A file is now being prepared by the Office of Environmental Enforcement for submission to the Director of Public Prosecutions for consideration to prosecute on indictment.

This prosecution was taken following an Audit on 22nd March 2006 and a Site Inspection on 20th July 2006 undertaken by the EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement.

The EPA has prosecuted South East Recycling Company Limited on two previous occasions, one of which was also for exceedance of their annual waste tonnage.

#### **Dynea Ireland Limited.**

On the 28th March 2007 at Cobh District Court, the EPA took a prosecution against Dynea Ireland Limited in relation to offences under the Environmental Protection Agency Acts 1992 and 2003 for breaches of its IPC license.

The company pleaded guilty to four charges, which related to non-compliant emissions to atmosphere on four separate occasions. Fines of €2,500 were imposed for each of these four charges.

The remaining charge, which related to failure to notify the EPA of these non-compliances, was contested by the company. However, Judge Patwell found this charge proven and imposed a further fine of €3,000.

The total fines imposed, therefore, were €13,000 and EPA costs of €10,000 were also awarded.

Dynea Ireland Limited was granted an IPC license (Reg. No. PO034-01) on 14th March 1996. The EPA issued a revised license (Reg. No. PO034-02) on 27th October 2006. The plant manufactures urea formaldehyde, melamine urea formaldehyde and melamine formaldehyde resins for the panel board, paper impregnation, firelighter and glass fibre tissue industries.

This prosecution was taken following EPA Air Monitoring on 20th March 2006 and an Audit on 25th July 2006 undertaken by the EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement.





# EPA Website gets a Makeover

The EPA website has recently been given a whole new look and has been reorganised to enable visitors to the site to easily find the environmental information they are looking for. The site has also been updated to allow visitors to conduct their online business where required.

The reorganisation follows a review of our website and consultation with our stakeholders in 2006.

The most obvious change is the style and layout of the website, but we have made very substantial changes across a range of areas to help visitors.

- We have completely changed the layout, navigation menus etc. The website now focuses on our activities and responsibilities rather than on our organisational structure.
- The EPA website has always contained a large number of reports and publications. These have all now been placed in a single location on the website, called **Downloads**. This will help visitors easily find the report they are looking for.

- We have improved the general performance of the site search engine and added a search engine just for publications, reports and file downloads.
- We have re-written the website content to make it more accessible to all visitors - both technical and general public visitors - so there is less jargon!
- There is improved accessibility for the visually impaired and we have provided layout options for people that use hand held devices e.g. PDAs.
- A new section called the "The Environment and You" has been added. This provides an overview of environmental quality in Ireland and suggests ways website visitors can help maintain a clean environment.

Work is still underway to improve the service and the information we provide via our website. And keep an eye out - in the near future we will be providing a mapping facility that will enable users to find environmental and licensing information specific to their own geographical areas.

So why not visit the new look EPA website at [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie) and see what you think!



*The following contributed to this issue of the EPA Newsletter:*

Mary Kelly, Micheál Lehane, Pauline Fanning, Gerard O' Leary, Michael McGettigan, John Feehan, Matt Crowe, Darragh Page, Margaret Keegan, David Smith, Jacinta Ponzi, Valerie Doyle, John Curtis, Tracey Berney, Noeleen Roche, Ann Kehoe, Noeleen Keavey, Annette Cahalane & Niamh Leahy.



**Headquarters**  
PO Box 3000, Johnstown Castle Estate  
County Wexford, Ireland

Ceanncheatru  
Bosca Poist 3000, Eastát Chaisleán Bhaile Sheáin  
Contae Loch Garman, Éire

T: +353 53 60600  
F: +353 53 60699

**Regional Inspectorate**  
McCumiskey House, Richview  
Clonskeagh Road, Dublin 14, Ireland

Cigireacht Réigiúnach, Teach Mhic Chumascaigh  
Dea-Radharc, Bóthar Cluain Sceach  
Baile Átha Cliath 14, Éire

T: +353 1 268 0100  
F: +353 1 268 0199

**Regional Inspectorate**  
Inniscarra, County Cork, Ireland

Cigireacht Réigiúnach, Inis Cara  
Contae Chorcaí, Éire

T: +353 21 487 5540  
F: +353 21 487 5545

**Regional Inspectorate**  
John Moore Road, Castlebar  
County Mayo, Ireland

Cigireacht Réigiúnach, Bóthar Sheán de Mórdha  
Caisleán an Bharraigh, Contae Mhaigh Eo, Éire

T: +353 94 904 8400  
F: +353 94 902 1934

**Regional Inspectorate, Seville Lodge,**  
Callan Road, Kilkenny, Ireland

Cigireacht Réigiúnach, Bóthar Challainn  
Cill Chainnigh, Éire

T: +353 56 7796 700  
F: +353 56 7796 798

**Regional Inspectorate**  
The Glen, Monaghan, Ireland

Cigireacht Réigiúnach, An Gleann  
Muineachán, Éire

T: +353 47 77600  
F: +353 47 84987

E: [info@epa.ie](mailto:info@epa.ie)  
W: [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie)  
LoCall: 1890 33 55 99

## e-epaNews

We hope that you enjoy this edition of the EPA newsletter. *epaNews* is also available on the EPA website at [www.epa.ie/NewsCentre/Newsletter/](http://www.epa.ie/NewsCentre/Newsletter/)

To subscribe to receive *epaNews* electronically simply email: [epanews@epa.ie](mailto:epanews@epa.ie)

