

The Environmental Protection Agency



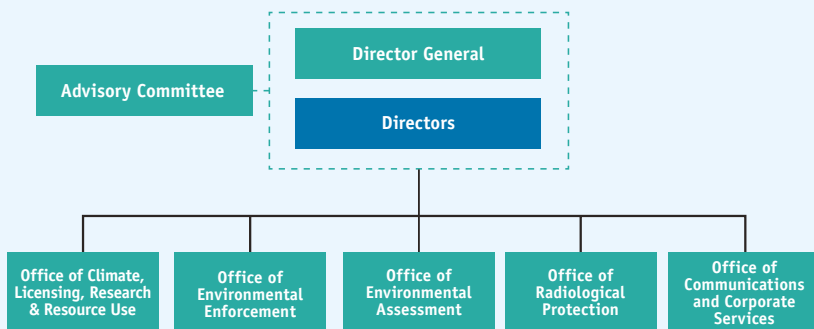
Who We Are – What We Do

Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for protecting and improving the environment as a valuable asset for the people of Ireland. We are committed to protecting people and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation and pollution. We play key roles in environmental **regulation**, provision of **knowledge** and **advocacy** for the environment.

Management and structure of the EPA

Set up in 1993, the EPA is managed by a full time Board, consisting of a Director General and five Directors. The work is carried out across five Offices, with each Director responsible for an Office:



- Office of Climate, Licensing, Research and Resource Use
- Office of Environmental Enforcement
- Office of Environmental Assessment
- Office of Radiological Protection
- Office of Communications and Corporate Services

The EPA is assisted by an Advisory Committee who meet regularly to provide advice to the Board on matters relating to the EPA's functions.

On 1st August 2014, the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland merged with the EPA and the Office of Radiological Protection was established. Together with its other responsibilities, the EPA is now the national competent authority for matters to do with ionising radiation.

We are responsible for:

Licensing

Licensing and regulating the following activities so that they do not endanger human health or harm the environment.

We licence:

- ◆ waste facilities (e.g. *landfills, incinerators, waste transfer stations*);
- ◆ large scale industrial activities (e.g. *pharmaceutical, cement manufacturing, power plants*);
- ◆ intensive agriculture (e.g. *pigs, poultry*);
- ◆ the contained use and controlled release of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs);
- ◆ sources of ionising radiation (e.g. *x-ray and radiotherapy equipment, industrial sources*);
- ◆ large petrol storage facilities;
- ◆ waste water discharges;
- ◆ dumping at sea activities.

National environmental enforcement

- Conducting an annual programme of audits and inspections of EPA licensed facilities.
- Overseeing local authorities' environmental protection responsibilities.
- As water quality regulator, supervising the supply of drinking water by Irish Water to its customers and enforcing urban wastewater licences in plants managed by Irish Water.
- Working with local authorities and other agencies to tackle environmental crime by co-ordinating a national enforcement network (NIECE), targeting offenders and overseeing remediation.
- Prosecuting those who flout environmental law and damage the environment.
- Promoting compliance and enforcing producer responsibility Regulations such as Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and batteries.
- Enforcing Regulations such as chemicals (REACH, mercury & detergents), paints, hazardous substances (RoHS, PCBs & POPs), fluorinated greenhouse gases and ozone depleting substances.
- Coordinating the implementation of the *National Hazardous Waste Management Plan*.

We are responsible for:

Water management

- Monitoring and reporting on the quality of rivers, lakes, transitional & coastal waters and groundwaters; measuring and reporting on water levels and river flows.
- Coordination and oversight of the technical aspects of the Water Framework Directive.
- Monitoring and reporting on Bathing Water Quality.

Monitoring, analysing and reporting

- Independent reporting to inform decision making by national and local government (*e.g. periodic reporting on the State of Ireland's Environment and Indicator Reports*).
- Monitoring air quality and implementing the EU Clean Air for Europe (CAFÉ) Directive.
- Collecting and reporting national statistics on waste generation and management including Ireland's progress towards EU waste targets.

Regulating Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions

- Preparing Ireland's greenhouse gas inventories and projections.
- Implementing the EU Emissions Trading Scheme for over 100 of the largest producers of carbon dioxide in Ireland and for the aviation sector.

Environmental research and development

- Funding environmental research to identify pressures, inform policy and provide solutions in the areas of climate, water and sustainability.

Strategic environmental assessment

- Assessing the impact of proposed plans and programmes on the Irish environment (*e.g. major development plans*).

We are responsible for:

Radiological protection

- Monitoring radiation levels and assessing the exposure of people in Ireland to ionising radiation (*i.e. radiation emitted by man-made sources used in industry and medicine and by natural radiation sources present in our environment, such as radon gas and cosmic radiation*).
- Assessing the impacts of discharges from UK and other nuclear plants.
- Assisting in the development of national plans for emergencies arising from nuclear accidents and acting in support of such plans.
- Monitoring developments abroad relating to nuclear installations and radiological safety.
- Providing, or overseeing the provision of, specialist radiation protection services.

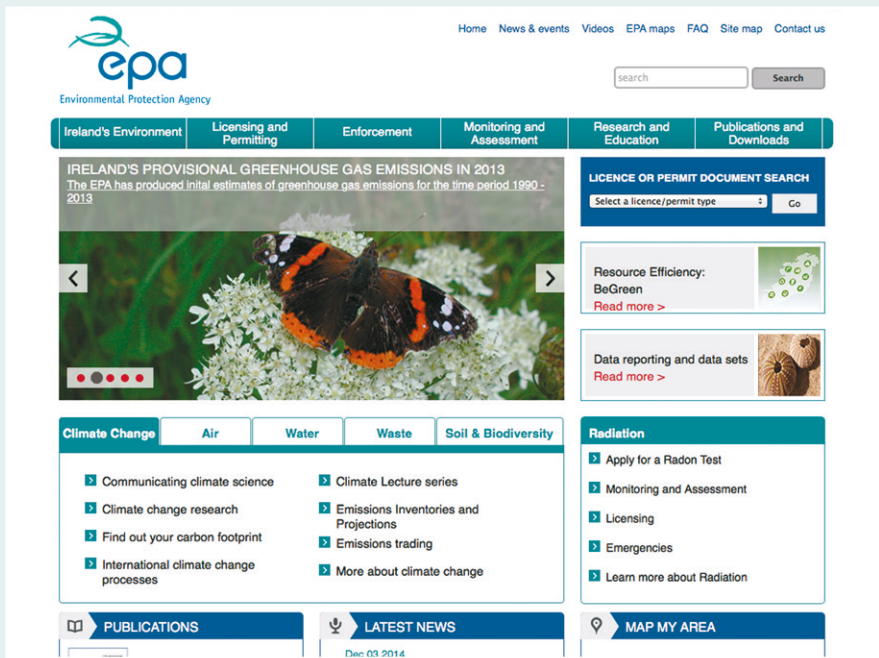
Guidance, accessible information and education

- Providing timely and easily accessible environmental information to encourage public participation in environmental decision-making (*e.g. My Local Environment, Radon Maps*).
- Providing advice and guidance to industry and the public on environmental and radiological protection topics.
- Advising Government on matters relating to radiological safety and emergency response.
- Providing resources in support of environmental and radiological protection education.

Awareness raising and behavioural change

- Implementing the strategy *Towards a Resource Efficient Ireland*, which incorporates the National Waste Prevention Programme.
- Generating greater environmental awareness and influencing positive behavioural change by supporting businesses, communities and householders to become more resource efficient.
- Promoting radon testing in homes and workplaces and encouraging remediation where necessary.

To find out more about the EPA and the environment...



www.epa.ie

Our website provides information on the work of the EPA and on Ireland's environment.

- **My Local Environment** mapping tool – information about your locality
- **Ireland's Environment** section – the current state of Ireland's environment by theme
- **Air Quality Index for Health** – local air quality information and health advice
- **Radon map** - locations of areas at particular risk from radon
- **Splash** – bathing water quality information
- **EPA Geoportal** – access to interactive maps
- **BeGreen** section – guides for businesses about resource efficiency
- Education resources for primary and secondary schools
- Infographics, factsheets, animations and videos

Have an environmental or radiation query?



FAQs

Check out the Frequently Asked Questions www.epa.ie/about/faq or contact our Queries Officer using the website Query Form or by phoning EPA Headquarters.



Environmental reports

The EPA produces a wide range of guidance documents, publications and research reports about environmental and radiological matters. Reports are free to download from www.epa.ie/pubs/reports.



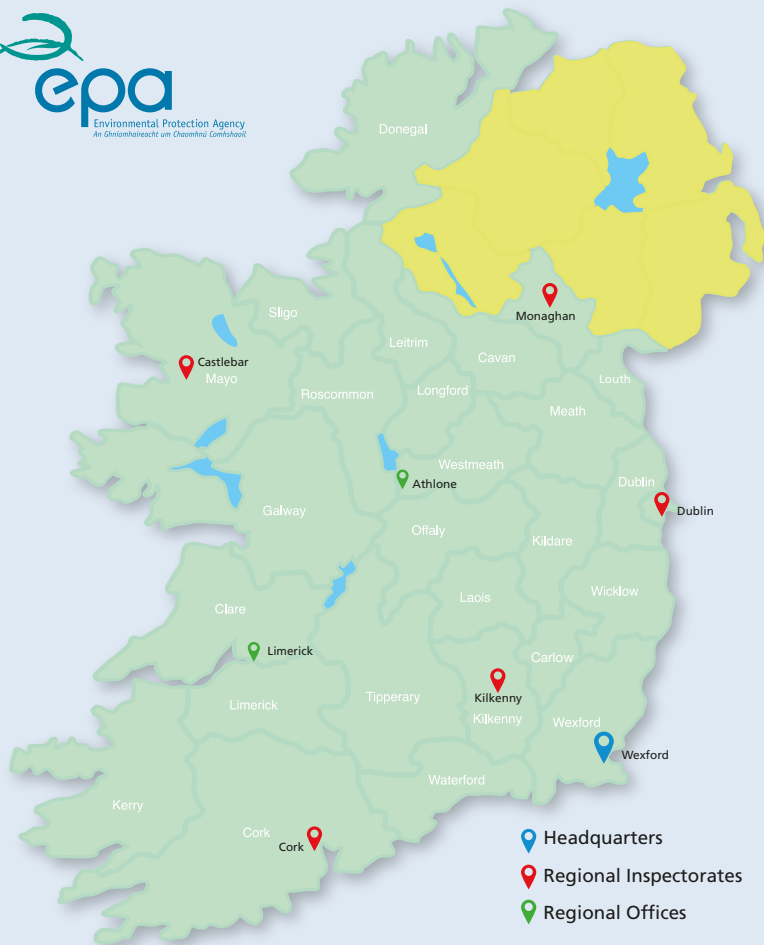
Reporting Environmental Pollution

There are a number of channels for making an environmental complaint. Advice is available at www.epa.ie/enforcement/report.

1. Contact the person or business that you think is causing the problem directly. If this has not produced a satisfactory result then:
2. Contact your local authority or phone the **National Environmental Complaints Line** (1850 365 121 – operates on a 24 hour basis) or use the *See it? Say it!* mobile phone app to report your complaint. Local authorities and/or the Gardaí and the EPA will follow up this information.
3. Contact the EPA if the problem has not been resolved and you've been dealing with an EPA licensed site or a local authority has investigated your complaint and the problem persists. We will investigate the matter further.

**QR Code for
See it? Say It! apps:**





Contact us:

Environmental Protection Agency

Headquarters

PO Box 3000

Johnstown Castle Estate

Co. Wexford, Ireland

Tel: +353 53 916 0600

Email: info@epa.ie

Lo Call: 1890 335 599

Website: www.epa.ie

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