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AIR



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ENFORCEMENT
SYSTEMS

Focus on Local Authority
Environmental Enforcement

2015 Performance Report

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.

The work of the EPA can be divided into three main areas:

Regulation: *We implement effective regulation and environmental compliance systems to deliver good environmental outcomes and target those who don't comply.*

Knowledge: *We provide high quality, targeted and timely environmental data, information and assessment to inform decision making at all levels.*

Advocacy: *We work with others to advocate for a clean, productive and well protected environment and for sustainable environmental behaviour.*

Our Responsibilities

Licensing

We regulate the following activities so that they do not endanger human health or harm the environment:

- 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.
- Supervising the supply of drinking water by public water suppliers.
- Working with local authorities and other agencies to tackle environmental crime by coordinating a national enforcement network, targeting offenders and overseeing remediation.
- Enforcing Regulations such as Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) and substances that deplete the ozone layer.
- Prosecuting those who flout environmental law and damage the environment.

Water Management

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

Monitoring, Analysing and Reporting on the Environment

- Monitoring air quality and implementing the EU Clean Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive.
- 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*).

Regulating Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

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

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*).

Radiological Protection

- Monitoring radiation levels, assessing exposure of people in Ireland to ionising radiation.
- Assisting in developing national plans for emergencies arising from nuclear accidents.
- 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 advice and guidance to industry and the public on environmental and radiological protection topics.
- Providing timely and easily accessible environmental information to encourage public participation in environmental decision-making (e.g. *My Local Environment, Radon Maps*).
- Advising Government on matters relating to radiological safety and emergency response.
- Developing a National Hazardous Waste Management Plan to prevent and manage hazardous waste.

Awareness Raising and Behavioural Change

- 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.

Management and Structure of the EPA

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:

- Office of Environmental Sustainability
- Office of Environmental Enforcement
- Office of Evidence and Assessment
- Office of Radiological Protection
- Office of Communications and Corporate Services

The EPA is assisted by an Advisory Committee of twelve members who meet regularly to discuss issues of concern and provide advice to the Board.



FOCUS ON LOCAL AUTHORITY ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT 2015 PERFORMANCE REPORT

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Preface

The environment, health and the economy are intrinsically linked and stand at the core of sustainable development. People, along with key growth sectors of our economy such as tourism, agriculture and food, depend on a clean environment. Enforcement of environmental laws is key to ensuring a clean environment.

The 31 local authorities in Ireland are collectively responsible for the enforcement of over 100 pieces of environmental legislation intended to protect public health and the environment.

Over the past number of decades, Ireland has introduced a broad range of European Union environmental legislation. As a result of these new standards our air, water and soil pollution has been reduced. However, while Ireland has a good quality environment, 31 per cent of our river bodies remain at poor or bad status; there is a risk that the State will miss some recycling targets; and we need to improve air quality across the country. These and other environmental challenges need to be tackled in a structured and coordinated way.

A key objective of the European Union's 7th Environmental Action Programme is to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing. Better implementation of existing legislation is identified as one of the critical factors to achieve this objective.

Work is now underway to further strengthen governance structures in local authorities for the implementation and enforcement of the Water Framework and Waste Framework Directives through the establishment of the Local Authority Waters and Communities Offices (LAWCO) and Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities (WERLA). By working together, local authorities will be in a better position to bring the full weight of the State's resources to bear on the most pressing environmental problems.

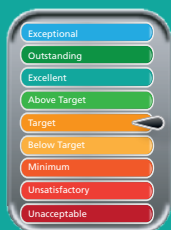
The EPA published in 2016 the first baseline report of environmental performance at local authority level based on 2014 data. This current report builds on that baseline assessment using 2015 data and examines trends in environmental performance. This information attempts to build a system-wide culture of continuous improvement in environmental protection and help Ireland to better implement EU legislation. The information contained in this report will also facilitate sharing of best practice and encourage solutions to common administrative challenges.

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Key Findings for 2015

Overall



- ▲ The environmental enforcement performance of local authorities remains on **'Target'** for 2015.
- ▲ **20** out of **31** local authorities met or exceeded the overall target standard set for performance in environmental enforcement. This is up from 14 in 2014.
- ▲ There is still significant potential to enhance the environmental enforcement performance of local authorities into the future.

Context

In 2015

- ▲ Local authorities enforced over **7,800** environmental licences/permits/certificates.
- ▲ There were over **160,000** environmental inspections undertaken by local authorities.
- ▲ Councils dealt with **58,000** environmental complaints, a decrease of 5,000 from 2014.
- ▲ Over **8,900** enforcement actions and over **500** prosecutions were taken, an increase of almost 2,000 from 2014 primarily owing to increased waste and litter enforcement actions.
- ▲ Local authorities reported that their average staff capacity during 2015 was 87% of their expected staffing levels.

Results

- ▲ **3** local authorities achieved an **'Excellent'** performance standard (Cork City, Louth and Meath County Councils).
- ▲ **17** authorities achieved **'Target'** or **'Above Target'** performance standard.
- ▲ **11** authorities were assessed as **'Below Target'**, **'Minimum'** or **'Unsatisfactory'** performance standard.

Priorities

Action is now required by local authorities to ensure all enforcement standards are at or above the targets set in this report, as specifically outlined below:

- ▲ Enhance the **planning and execution of inspections** across air, water, waste and recycling schemes.
- ▲ Ensure all enforcement activities are linked to key **environmental achievements and outcomes**.
- ▲ Ensure Ireland meets **EU Nitrates** requirements through adequate **farm inspections** and **cross-reporting**.
- ▲ Focus on improving **solid fuel regulation enforcement** to maximise health benefits.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Role of Local Authorities in Environmental Enforcement

Local authorities are at the forefront of environmental law enforcement nationally. Staff in local authorities enforce over **500** environmental protection obligations arising from more than **100** pieces of legislation. This includes:

- ▲ **Compliance with Water Quality** – such as impact from agricultural activities, effluent discharges from factories or hotels, and septic tank discharges.
- ▲ **Compliance with Waste Management** – permitted waste facilities such as recycling and waste soil and stones as well as the litter laws.
- ▲ **Waste Recycling & Producer Responsibility Initiative (PRI) schemes** – e.g. tyre recycling, batteries, packaging and electrical/electronic equipment, and food waste.
- ▲ **Air Quality** - e.g. 'smoky coal' ban, use of solvents and decorative paints.

Local authorities enforce over **7,800** licences/permits/certificates and in 2015 their staff conducted more than **160,000** inspections, handled **58,000** environmental complaints, and undertook **8,900** enforcement actions and over **500** prosecutions.

1.2 What is the Purpose of this Report?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designed a framework to measure the environmental enforcement performance of local authorities. The aim of the report is to provide local and national-level data to assist authorities to plan and implement a programme of continuous improvement. This summary report presents the outcome of an analysis of the performance of enforcement activities compared against expected standards. It uses the most recent data available (2015) and compares this with a baseline performance level determined in 2014.

By providing local and national comparative data, this allows each authority to benchmark their own enforcement processes and plan for making performance improvements. Following the review of local and national data in this report, the EPA will encourage the use of the National Environmental Enforcement Network (NIECE) to facilitate local authorities discussing and sharing approaches. It is expected that periodic public reporting will lead to the adoption of best practice right across the community of local authority enforcement staff.

1.3 What is Included in this Report?

This report presents summary results for each individual local authority and combined results to give a picture of local government enforcement. The performance results are generated from 26 environmental enforcement indicators. These indicators are selected from existing data that is provided voluntarily by local authorities to the EPA on an annual basis. The report also seeks to set these results within the operational context of each authority by including other key data such as staffing levels and population served.

For each indicator, a specific performance standard was defined by the EPA in conjunction with local authorities. The performance assessment is based on 38 individual datasets voluntarily submitted to the EPA through the Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) process. These datasets contribute to the 26 activity indicators (see **Table 1**). These activity indicators are grouped into five environmental areas and are aggregated into a composite assessment for each area.

Table 1 — Datasets used in each of the assessment areas

Overall Performance Assessment	Area Assessment	Indicator	No. of Datasets Used
National & County Level Performance Assessment	Enforcement Systems	1. Complaints – Contact assigned 2. RMCEI – Contact assigned 3. RMCEI – 2015 Enforcement plan evaluation 4. RMCEI – Plan submission date 5. RMCEI – Annual statistical return submission date 6. No. of Section 63 Notices issued by EPA 7. No. of Section 63 Directions issued by the EPA	8
	Waste Enforcement	8. Waste – % completion of target Inspections 9. Litter – % completion of target Inspections per 5,000 10. EPA Waste Licences Compliance Score 11. National Waste Collection Permit Office (NWCPO) Audit – % target completion 12. EPA National Waste Returns – timeliness & responsiveness	9
	Water Enforcement	13. Water Framework Directive (WFD) Investigative Monitoring – % completion of target Inspections 14. Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) – % completion of target Inspections 15. GAP – % Cross-reports 16. Septic Tanks/Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (DWWTS) – % completion of target Inspections assigned in the National Inspection Plan (NIP) 17. Section 4 Discharge Licences – % completion of target Inspections 18. Groundwater & Hydrometric Monitoring Activities	11
	Producer Responsibility Initiatives (PRI)	19. Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) – % completion of target Inspections 20. Tyres – % completion of target Inspections 21. Food Waste – % completion of target Inspections 22. Batteries – % completion of target Inspections	4
	Air Enforcement	23. Petroleum Vapour Regulations – % completion of target Inspections 24. Solvents Regulations – % completion of target Inspections 25. Deco Paints Regulations – % target completion 26. Solid Fuels Regulations ('smoky coal') – % target completion	4

The calculation of the performance assessment is determined by comparing activity data against performance criteria (see **Guidance Booklets A 'How It Works'**¹ and **B 'Practitioner's Guide to Indicators'**² for more details). The **overall assessment** for each local authority is adjusted for weightings attributed to each of the enforcement areas and then adjusted for staff capacity for 2015 (as reported to the EPA by each local authority). The calculated score is compared against an overall composite scoring range.

The composite national assessments are defined as follows in Table 2:

Table 2 — Assessment of performance

Exceptional	This indicates exceptional performance achieving the highest possible assessment.
Outstanding	This indicates outstanding performance achieving performance well above the target standard.
Excellent	This indicates excellent performance, exceeding the target in all areas of performance.
Above Target	This indicates generally very good performance in all areas and exceeding the target in particular areas of strength.
Target	This indicates good performance and is considered to represent the standard that is to be reached by all local authorities.
Below Target	This indicates some room for improvement to reach 'Target'.
Minimum	This indicates a mixed performance, with significant room for improvement.
Unsatisfactory	This indicates failings in a number of the areas examined.
Unacceptable	This indicates significant failings in a number of the areas examined.

1 Local Authority Environmental Enforcement - The Performance Measurement Framework: How it Works - Guidance Booklet A <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/enforcement/performanceframework/howitworksguidancebookleta.html>

2 Local Authority Environmental Enforcement - Performance Indicator Workbook: Practitioners Guide to Understanding Indicators - Guidance Booklet B <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/enforcement/performanceframework/laperformanceindicatorworkbookguidanceb.html>

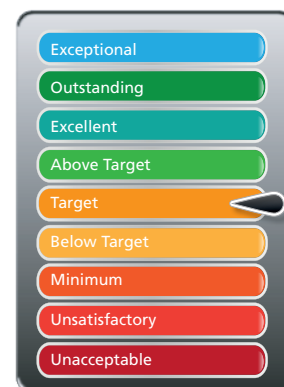
2. ENFORCEMENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

This section presents the results of the EPA's evaluation of the national environmental enforcement activities. The EPA's evaluation is based on the ranking of activities against agreed targets, taking account of the capacity of the local authority.

The adjusted baseline report of 2014 indicated that overall local authority environmental enforcement performance was on **"Target"**. This remained unchanged for 2015. However, a number of local authorities have individually improved their performance. Similar to the baseline year, many local authorities received better assessments in water, waste, or enforcement systems while assessments in the PRI and air enforcement areas were generally lower.

Interpretation of a local authority's overall assessment must be done with care and should take account of the underlying realities. By presenting this assessment along with the operational context and the environmental outcomes, the EPA is striving to put the data within its context and to avoid cursory interpretations of the results.

Meaningful conclusions about a local authorities' environmental enforcement performance can only be drawn from comparisons with 'like' local authorities and observing the performance of individual authorities over time. As such, the Framework has been designed to facilitate reporting of individual trend data.



Summary of Actions Required

This baseline assessment shows that there is a potential to improve the environmental enforcement activities carried out by local authorities. A comparison of national and local datasets has shown that improvements are necessary in the following areas in order to enhance environmental enforcement planning and bring activity levels up to the required standard:

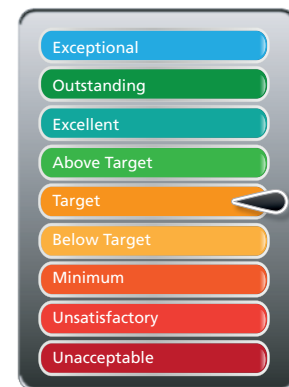
- ▲ Better planning and execution of environmental **inspections** across all areas.
- ▲ All enforcement activity must be conducted with a purpose and be targeted at solving environmental problems and environmental **outcomes** rather than just large numbers of inspections.
- ▲ In particular, there is a pressing need to improve performance for **farm inspections** and in cross-reporting in order to protect and improve water quality as well as maintain current nitrate derogation levels agreed at EU level.
- ▲ Improvement is needed in the enforcement of the **Solid Fuel Regulations**³ requirements, in particular, given the proven and widespread environmental and health benefits.

3 S.I. No. 326/2012 and S.I. No. 128/2016 Air Pollution Act (Marketing, Sale, Distribution and Burning of Specified Fuels) Regulations 2012 & 2016.

2.1 Enforcement Systems

Background

While involvement in RMCEI/Enforcement Planning is largely a voluntary undertaking between EPA and local authorities it is now established practice, and there is a requirement based on a Departmental Circular⁴ to carry out this planning. This letter states that *"A consistent approach to implementation of the Recommendation is desirable"* and that the EPA co-ordinates its implementation. It further directs local authorities to develop RMCEI plans for their functional areas (based on the guidance from the EPA); report on inspections and to prepare data returns to facilitate the compilation of national reports.



What this assessment measures

An assessment of the quality of RMCEI/enforcement planning in local authorities and the management of environmental complaints.

Why it is important?

The enforcement plan defines the approach of the local authority to ensuring compliance with environmental legislation. Designated enforcement contacts for planning and complaints ensure enforcement issues are dealt with quickly and adequately.

Result

Nationally, performance for this aspect meets the **'Target'** set. This is the same as the 2014 adjusted baseline result. Specific areas making up this assessment are analysed as follows:

- ▲ The quality of enforcement plans was assessed as being **'Above Target'**, though some local authorities are not adequately addressing environmental outcomes in their plans. The focus of every enforcement effort should be on solving specific problems rather than just aiming to meet inspection numbers.
- ▲ The number of statutory enforcement notices and directions issued to local authorities by the EPA remains low.
- ▲ There was a modest improvement in the timeliness of RMCEI statistic submissions from **'Unsatisfactory'** in 2014 to **'Minimum'** in 2015, however, RMCEI Plan submissions are still generally late across many local authorities and there is scope for significant improvement in this area.
- ▲ All local authorities have assigned contacts for complaints coordination and implementation of RMCEI/Enforcement planning. However, some local authorities are still not registered within the appropriate area of the NIECE website and this should be rectified.

4 Circular EPS 09/02

Actions required

Local authorities need to focus on matching activities to plans and focusing on solving problems above inspection numbers. Late submission of Enforcement Plans and Statistics is a perennial issue. While the reporting of environmental outcomes has improved significantly since being introduced there is a continued need for improvement in order to measure real environmental change versus enforcement effort.

Table 3 — Local Authority Enforcement Systems Performance Results

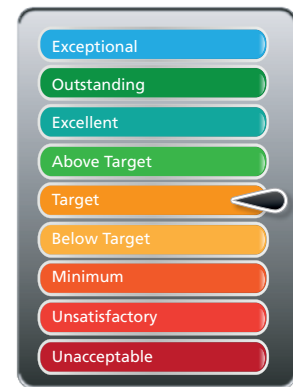
'Excellent' and above assessments:	'Above target' & 'Target' assessments:	'Below target', 'Minimum' and 'Unsatisfactory' assessments:
Cork City Council Galway City Council Galway County Council Kerry County Council Kilkenny County Council Leitrim County Council Tipperary County Council	Carlow County Council Clare County Council Cork County Council Donegal County Council Dublin City Council Fingal County Council Kildare County Council Laois County Council Limerick City & County Council Louth County Council Meath County Council Monaghan County Council Offaly County Council Roscommon County Council South Dublin County Council Waterford City & County Council	Cavan County Council Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Longford County Council Mayo County Council Sligo County Council Westmeath County Council Wexford County Council Wicklow County Council

2.2 Waste Enforcement

Background

Ireland has moved quickly from a position of almost total reliance on landfill for managing waste to a high level of recovery of certain recyclable materials, with complex waste flows to and between different waste recycling and recovery activities.

Nevertheless significant quantities of waste are transferred, recovered and disposed of nationally and local authorities (as coordinated by WERLA⁵) remain the primary agents in litter enforcement (including fines and prosecutions), litter management, and routine cleansing.



What this assessment measures

This area examines the completion of various waste inspections (e.g. waste permitted facilities, waste collectors, litter, hazardous waste, vehicle checkpoints amongst others), submission of waste data and performance of licenced sites.

Why it is important?

Local authorities play a vital role in the enforcement of waste legislation in this country. As a group they are the single largest 'waste enforcer', and therefore good enforcement by local authorities can have a significant impact on waste management in the country as a whole. Poor enforcement can lead to undermining good waste management practices undertaken by the majority of waste handlers, and can encourage illegal activity by the few.

Result

Overall national performance for this indicator is on **'Target'**. This is the same as the 2014 adjusted baseline result. Specific areas making up this assessment are analysed as follows:

- ▲ One third of local authorities continue to fail to reach **'Target'** across multiple waste inspection types – however the average performance is slightly improved on 2014.
- ▲ A dis-improvement is seen in the number of litter inspections being carried out with 9 failing to reach **'Target'** (was 5 in 2014). These findings should be viewed in light of the fact that objective litter surveys are carried out nationally which indicate that there are quite varying levels of litter across the country.
- ▲ Local authorities operate a number of waste sites that are licensed by the EPA, for example landfills. Local authorities generally performed to the **'Target'** standard regarding the operation of such sites. While local authority operated licenced sites make up almost 40% of all EPA waste licences, they only account for 12% of enforcement actions taken by the EPA.

5 Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities

- ▲ Regarding waste facility permit data auditing, overall performance has remained static with some room to improve – 1/3 of counties are not reaching **'Target'**. While submission of local authority waste data to the EPA remains on **'Target'**.

However, it should be noted that the increased activity levels in waste enforcement seen over the past four years, have continued in 2015 when the full range of inspection types is taken into account.

Actions required

As observed in the previous report, local authorities should examine the level of waste and litter inspections planned and carried out. It is important that these are commensurate with the environmental risk observed and that targets set in enforcement plans are carried out. Future targets in the waste area will be informed by Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities (WERLA) arrangements. While many local authorities have reached the targets set in their RMCEI/Enforcement plans, targets vary significantly between authorities, and regionalised planning and enforcement should result in the streamlining of resources and help ensure a more coherent approach to the deployment of enforcement resources.

Table 4 — Local Authority Waste Enforcement Performance Results

'Excellent' and above assessments:	'Above target' & 'Target' assessments:	'Below target', 'Minimum' and 'Unsatisfactory' assessments:
Carlow County Council Cork City Council Galway City Council Kilkenny County Council Laois County Council	Dublin City Council Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council Galway County Council Kildare County Council Limerick City & County Council Louth County Council Meath County Council Monaghan County Council Sligo County Council Tipperary County Council Waterford City & County Council Westmeath County Council Wicklow County Council	Cavan County Council Clare County Council Cork County Council Donegal County Council Fingal County Council Kerry County Council Leitrim County Council Longford County Council Mayo County Council Offaly County Council Roscommon County Council South Dublin County Council Wexford County Council

Note: Significant effort is also expended by local authorities in relation to non-routine waste activities (e.g. unauthorised activities/fly-tipping etc.) which is not encompassed by this indicator as it is unplanned and therefore not amenable to assessment against targets. However, this can impact significantly on resources available for planned activities.

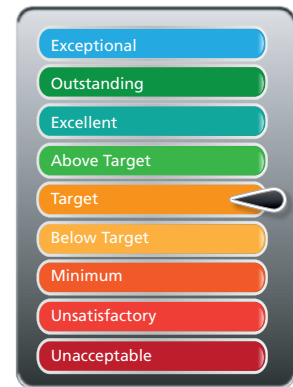
2.3 Water Enforcement

Background

Agriculture is one of the main sources of nitrates in groundwater and of nutrient enrichment of surface waters (53% in the case of rivers). Excess nitrate in drinking water poses a particular risk to infant health and surface water pollution. Elevated nitrate concentrations in groundwater are an issue, particularly in the south and south-east regions of the country.

Farm inspections are regarded as one of the 'basic measures' under EU law⁶ to reduce and prevent water pollution from nitrates from agricultural sources and are essential for the achievement of the objective of maintaining and restoring water quality status set out in the Water Framework Directive⁷. Enforcement through cross-reporting of non-compliances to the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM) for single farm payment (SFP) penalties is a national enforcement priority for Ireland.

In addition, a combined EPA and local authority approach to Water Framework Directive implementation at catchment level commenced in the second half of 2015



What this assessment measures

Implementation of the Water Framework Directive, farm and septic tank inspections including cross-reporting to DAFM, along with groundwater and hydrometric (river flow) monitoring performance.

Why it is important?

Diffuse pollution and agricultural impacts as well as smaller point sources such as septic tanks and water pollution licences (e.g. hotels or small factories) are of importance and can have significant impacts in some water catchments. These inspections are a key measure to protect surface and ground waters from excess nutrients.

Result

Overall national performance for this indicator is on **'Target'**. This is the same as the 2014 adjusted baseline. Specific areas making up this assessment are analysed as follows:

- ▲ Overall combined performance for farm inspections is still at **'Minimum'** and needs to improve from a national enforcement priority perspective. While there was a slight improvement in completed versus planned farm inspections in 2015, farm inspection numbers have continued to decrease in 2015 in comparison with

6 Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources as transcribed by S.I. No. 31/2014 - European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2014.

7 Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy

previous years. It should be noted that a previous EPA survey (2009) identified that the largest staff numbers and experience losses were in the Water Quality Section of local authorities (approx. 50% of total environment section technical staff losses), which may be a significant factor in reduced numbers of farm inspections undertaken.

- ▲ There is insufficient cross-reporting of farm non-compliances to DAFM for SFP penalties. On a national basis, only around 23% of farm non-compliances were stated as cross-reported to DAFM in 2015. This is even lower than the 2014 rate of 28%. National policy in this area is 100% cross-reporting of non-compliances. The assessment for this is **'Unacceptable'**, down from the **'Unsatisfactory'** assessment in 2014. Reasons given for local authorities not cross-reporting are loss of stakeholder engagement where financial sanctions are applied and resolution of non-compliances through Section Notices and re-inspection.
- ▲ Just over one third of local authorities did not complete their planned inspections of discharge licenses to water and performance in this area remains **'Below Target'**. There is still significant variability in the number of Section 4 licences registered across different local authorities. This suggests that there may be a number of unlicensed facilities in some functional areas.
- ▲ Performance was **'Below Target'** for completing Water Framework Directive (WFD) investigative monitoring. Completion of planned Water Framework Directive Investigative Monitoring was generally at **'Target'** or **'Above Target'** across most local authorities. However, a small number of local authorities recorded no activity in this area.
- ▲ Performance remained at **'Target'** in 2015 for domestic waste water treatment system (septic tank) inspections.
- ▲ Groundwater and hydrometric activities improved to **'Above Target'** in 2015 from **'Target'** in 2014. However, one-third of individual local authorities failed to reach the **'Target'** standard.

Actions required

Reduced farm inspections and cross compliance reporting requires corrective action. There is an urgent need for local authorities to address how farm inspections are planned and carried out and the subsequent implementation of cross-reporting of non-compliances. The licensing and enforcement of discharge licenses should also be examined by a number of local authorities.

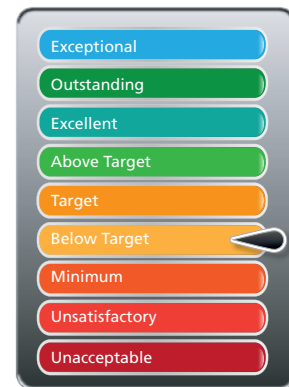
Table 5 — Local Authority Water Enforcement Performance Results

'Excellent' and above assessments:	'Above target' & 'Target' assessments:	'Below target', 'Minimum' and 'Unsatisfactory' assessments:
Clare County Council	Carlow County Council	Cavan County Council
Donegal County Council	Cork City Council	Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council
Dublin City Council	Cork County Council	Fingal County Council
Kildare County Council	Longford County Council	Galway County Council
Kilkenny County Council	Louth County Council	Kerry County Council
Laois County Council	Monaghan County Council	Mayo County Council
Leitrim County Council	Roscommon County Council	Offaly County Council
Limerick City & County Council	Tipperary County Council	Sligo County Council
Meath County Council	Wexford County Council	South Dublin County Council
Wicklow County Council		Waterford City & County Council
		Westmeath County Council

2.4 Producer Responsibility and Food Waste

Background

Producer Responsibility Initiatives (PRIs) allow product producers to devise schemes that have the capacity to fulfil the basic objectives of waste management legislation without resort to a “command and control” approach. The principal PRIs in Ireland are in the areas of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)⁸, batteries⁹, packaging¹⁰, end-of-life vehicles (ELVs)¹¹, tyres¹² and farm plastics¹³. Local Authorities regulate the various schemes (inspections, data collections, enforcement measures, reporting) to ensure the producers are conforming to the legislation. Whilst four such schemes are included as performance indicators in this report, other recycling schemes which local authorities have some responsibility for enforcing are not included because planned and/or completed inspections data is very limited and insufficient for use as indicators.



What this assessment measures

Waste enforcement inspections in the area of waste electronic and electrical equipment (WEEE), waste tyres, waste batteries, and food waste.

Why it is important?

Local authorities ensure that producers make provision for recycling of finite natural resource-based materials and recovery of potentially environmentally harmful materials under various recycling initiatives. Enforcement in this area is aimed at ensuring participation and compliance with the recycling schemes to ensure Ireland meets our national recycling targets.

Result

The overall national performance in this indicator is **‘Below Target’**. The enforcement of both the WEEE Regulations and food waste inspections was assessed as **‘Below Target’**, while the enforcement of tyre facilities battery inspections assessed as having a **‘Minimum’** standard.

-
- 8 S.I. No. 149/2014 - European Union (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) Regulations 2014.
 - 9 S.I. No. 283/2014 - European Union (Batteries and Accumulators) Regulations 2014, as amended by S.I. No. 347/2015.
 - 10 S.I. No. 282/2014 - European Union (Packaging) Regulations 2014, as amended by S.I. No. 542/2015.
 - 11 S.I. No. 281/2014 - European Union (End-of-Life Vehicles) Regulations 2014.
 - 12 S.I. No. 664/2007 - Waste Management (Tyres and Waste Tyres) Regulations 2007.
 - 13 S.I. No. 341/2001 - Waste Management (Farm Plastics) Regulations, 2001.

Actions required

Local authorities should plan and undertake adequate inspections commensurate with the environmental risk in these areas. Given more stringent recycling/diversion targets in the future, EU targets may not be met unless performance improves.

Table 6 — Local Authority PRI and Food Waste Performance Results

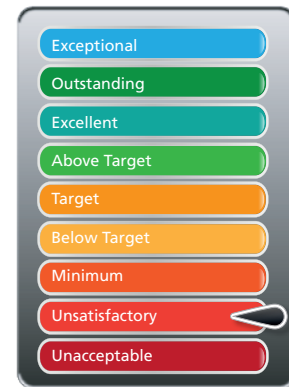
'Excellent' and above assessments:	'Above target' & 'Target' assessments:	'Below target', 'Minimum' and 'Unsatisfactory' assessments:
- - -	Cork City Council Dublin City Council Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Galway County Council Limerick City & County Council Louth County Council Mayo County Council Meath County Council Tipperary County Council	Carlow County Council Cavan County Council Clare County Council Cork County Council Donegal County Council Fingal County Council Galway City Council Kerry County Council Kildare County Council Kilkenny County Council Laois County Council Leitrim County Council Longford County Council Monaghan County Council Offaly County Council Roscommon County Council Sligo County Council South Dublin County Council Waterford City & County Council Westmeath County Council Wexford County Council Wicklow County Council

Note: Overall recycling/recovery rates continue to climb, particularly in the municipal, packaging and WEEE waste streams. Ireland collected nearly double the target quantity (4kg per person) of WEEE in 2012. Ireland exceeded the EU collection target of 25% for portable batteries for September 2012 with a collection rate of over 29% achieved at the end of 2011.

2.5 Air Enforcement

Background

The burning of coal and other solid fuel is a source of particulate matter and other air pollutants. The reduction in particulate matter pollution in bituminous coal ban areas is a result of supplier and consumer compliance in conjunction with local authority enforcement of the regulations¹⁴. In addition, Ireland is required to decrease exposure to fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) by 10% between 2012 and 2020¹⁵. The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment is planning to extend the ban on 'smoky coal' nationwide in order to address air quality issues in areas with no ban. In addition, the use of solvents and petroleum products pose certain health risks and can cause local environmental impacts.



What this assessment measures

The enforcement of the ban on the distribution and use of bituminous coal as well as controls on paints, solvent and petroleum vapours. It measures the completion of planned inspections across these areas. Inspections are directed at solid fuel merchants, motor factors, vehicle refinishers, paints suppliers and dry cleaners.

Why it is important?

Particulate Matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) are very small particles which can penetrate deep into the respiratory tract. Inhalation of these particles can increase the risk, frequency and severity of respiratory and cardiopulmonary disorders. The health impacts from the 'smoky coal' particulates, and the potential health, environmental and nuisance impacts from solvents, is well established. The enforcement effort reduces particulates and other pollutants in the air and reduces adverse impacts on health and the environment.

Result

The overall national performance in this indicator was assessed as **'Unsatisfactory'**. This is a dis-improvement from **'Minimum'** in the 2014 adjusted baseline. Specific areas making up this assessment are analysed as follows:

- ▲ Ten local authorities were assessed as having reached the **'Target'** standard set for solid fuel inspections – down from fifteen in 2014. However, other poorly performing authorities have improved thereby resulting in the same overall assessment of **'Minimum'** in 2014. Nevertheless activity has reduced and many local authorities are not reaching targets in this area.

14 S.I. No. 326/2012 and S.I. No. 128/2016 Air Pollution Act (Marketing, Sale, Distribution and Burning of Specified Fuels) Regulations 2012 & 2016.

15 Directive 2001/81/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2001 on national emission ceilings for certain atmospheric pollutants, as amended.

- Local authorities failed to reach **'Target'** standard set for the areas of decorative paints, solvents and petroleum vapours in approximately two thirds of cases, depending on the area under examination. This represents a further slight dis-improvement in the solvents area with continued poor performance in decorative paints and petroleum vapours. There is significant room for improvement in all three areas.

Enforcement of the air indicators examined continues to be inconsistent nationwide – with some local authorities completing all planned inspections and others having a very low completion rate. There has been a static number of inspections in the decorative paints, solvent and petroleum vapours area and a drop off in inspections regarding solid fuels ('smoky coal') seen nationally compared to 2014.

Actions required

Given the significant public health benefits of good local air quality in our towns and cities, increased enforcement in this area is required to protect public health – in particular 'smoky coal' enforcement. Local authorities should examine the enforcement efforts assigned and increase efforts as necessary and utilise Fixed Payment Notices where justified.







Table 7 — Local Authority Air Enforcement Performance Results

'Excellent' and above assessments:	'Above target' & 'Target' assessments:	'Below target', 'Minimum' and 'Unsatisfactory' assessments:
Cork City Council Cork County Council Louth County Council Meath County Council South Dublin County Council Wexford County Council	Clare County Council Kerry County Council Leitrim County Council Westmeath County Council	Carlow County Council Cavan County Council Donegal County Council Dublin City Council Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Fingal County Council Galway City Council Galway County Council Kildare County Council Kilkenny County Council Laois County Council Limerick City & County Council Longford County Council Mayo County Council Monaghan County Council Offaly County Council Roscommon County Council Sligo County Council Tipperary County Council Waterford City & County Council Wicklow County Council

3. CONTEXT OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITY

The following table provides a broad outline of the context in which local authorities operate. It gives an idea of the volume of the workload included in the enforcement of the many environmental regulations and permits required of a local authority and the resources available to carry out such work.

Table 8 — Key Environmental Enforcement Numbers

Key Environmental Indicator	No.	Description	2014 – 2015 Trend
Average of planned vs. completed inspections across all areas examined	122%	On average, local authorities exceeded their planned inspections but the performance varies considerably.	
Number of complaints received	59,000	This level of activity is within the normal range seen by local authorities over the past number of years.	
Total number of inspections undertaken	163,000	This is an increase in activity from 2014 of about one third. The introduction of the performance indicators has resulted in improved capture of inspection data which is partly responsible for the increase. Approximately 15% are reactive, such as responding to complaints or incidents.	
Total No. Licences/ Permits/Certificates/ Registrations	7,800	This includes all licence/ permits/certificates/ registrations across the waste, water and air sectors	
Enforcement Actions Taken	8,950	This has seen a recovery in numbers after reductions noted in 2014 (was 7,000).	
Total No. Prosecutions	525	This number has been relatively steady since 2011. The vast majority (almost 90%) of these prosecutions are in the waste area.	

There has been a steady decline in local authority environment staff available for environmental enforcement over the past number of years, as illustrated in Figure 1. There are almost 180 less enforcement staff available nationally in comparison with 2008, which represents almost a 30% reduction.

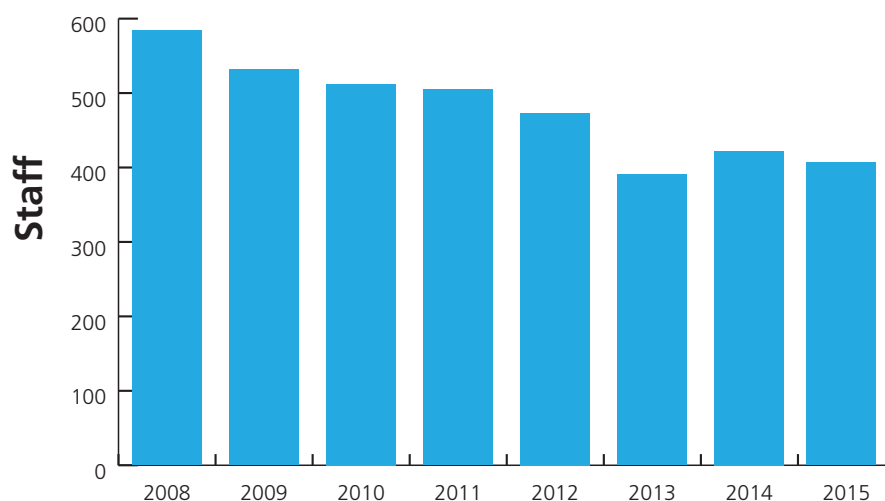


Figure 1 — Local Authority Environmental Enforcement Staff numbers 2008-2015.

Local authorities reported that their average staff capacity during 2015 was 87% of their expected staffing levels. Capacity includes both the experience and expertise of staff members and their availability. This was an increase from 82% in 2014 but varied considerably, e.g. 11 local authorities reported between 90-100% of expected capacity while 7 local authorities reported between 80-89%. Only one local authority reported less than 75% available capacity during 2015 as opposed to 7 local authorities in 2014.

The levels of environmental inspections have remained largely similar since 2008 despite reductions in staff numbers. The introduction of the environmental performance indicators has resulted in improved capture and quality control of inspection data which is partly responsible for the increase in inspection numbers observed in 2015.

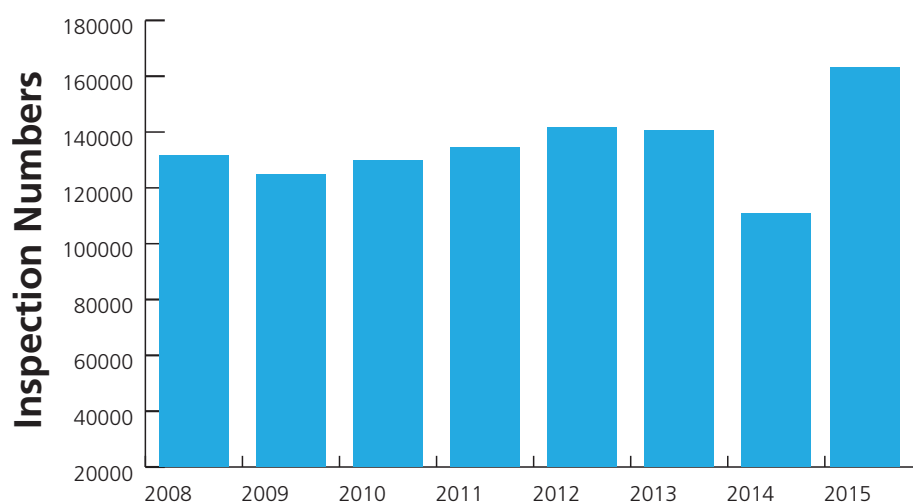


Figure 2 — Environmental Inspections carried out annually by Local Authorities 2008-2015.

The total volume of environmental enforcement activity for 2015 is compared with the 2014 adjusted baseline data. Table 9 summarises 15 activity (output) indicators which examine planned, targeted or mandated environmental actions.

Table 9 — Activity Indicators (Outputs)

Waste		2014 (Adjusted Baseline)	2015
1.	Waste Inspections examined ¹⁶	6,466	14,823
2.	Number of litter patrols completed	38,829	58,337
	No. Inspections per 5,000 population	42.3	63.5
3.	% Completion of Waste Collection Permit Audits	93%	89%
Water		2014	2015
4.	WFD Investigative Monitoring Completed	12,006	11,046
	% WFD Investigative Monitoring v Planned	105%	105%
5.	Total Farm Inspections Completed	3,426	3,352
	% Farm Inspections Completed	92%	130%
6.	No. Inspections required in Septic Tank National Inspection Plan	1,002	1,012
	% completed	112%	112%
7.	Discharge Licence (S4) Inspections Completed	2,135	2,147
	% planned v completed inspections	177%	152%
Producer Responsibility Initiatives		2014	2015
8.	WEEE Inspections Completed	687	771
	%planned vs Completed	59%	122%
9.	Tyre Inspections Completed	581	688
	%planned vs Completed	238%	137%
10.	Food Waste Inspections Completed	6,144	7,722
	%planned vs Completed	117%	102%
11.	Battery Waste Inspections Completed	656	730
	%planned vs Completed	50%	129%
Enforcement Actions		2014	2015
12.	Total No. Licences/Permits/Certs	>6,400	>7,800
13.	Total inspections	>110,000	~163,000
14.	Total No. Enforcement Actions Taken	>7,000	>8,900
15.	Total No. Prosecutions	>500	>500

Activity (output) data is limited to tabulating and describing the range and scope of enforcement activity carried out by local authorities. It attempts to answer the question: what was their level of effectiveness in performing their environmental enforcement responsibilities? Effectiveness in this context is not to be confused with assessment of efficiency. It merely describes what they planned to do or are legally mandated to do and to what extent they did what was required of them. As indicated above, levels of effectiveness (outputs achieved) are placed in the context of population size and available staff resources. The aim of the environmental enforcement performance indicators covered earlier is to assess these environmental activities in terms of efficiency and ultimately to actual environmental improvements and outcomes.

4. IMPACT INDICATORS AND CASE STUDIES

This chapter presents selected case studies of notable projects and good practice from among the many environmental enforcement initiatives run by local authorities. The intention of this section is to give further context to the activity data presented earlier but also, and more importantly, it highlights positive environmental impacts achieved and good practice that may be replicated. By showing innovative approaches across the range and scope of actions by local authorities, the aim is to foster new ideas and foster greater inter-authority cooperation. Given limited resources, it is particularly important that local authorities share knowledge and other tools to maximise efficiency.

4.1 Good Practices in Enforcement Planning

Local authorities produce enforcement plans each year in accordance with European Recommendation 2001/331/EC. These plans are submitted to the EPA for evaluation and feedback in order to encourage continual improvement year on year. The following authorities displayed good practices in enforcement planning. Planning of activities in particular has been highlighted in this report as an area that requires improvement generally.

▲ **Clare County Council**

Very good plan that sets out previous achievements, current priorities and provides well defined outcome planning with detailed metrics.

▲ **Fingal County Council**

Concise well-structured plan with an innovative RMCEI Review Table.

▲ **Galway County Council**

Innovative expansion of the Outcome Tables to include inspection planning.

▲ **Louth County Council**

Useful 2015 achievement summary captured within an Outcome Table.

▲ **Tipperary County Council**

Comprehensive and well developed plan with modified Outcome Table that could be considered as a revised template.

4.2 LAMA Community and Council Awards

The LAMA Community and Council Awards highlight and recognise community and Councils working together, bringing national recognition to projects and developments that may otherwise go unrecognised. Town, Borough, City and County Councillors nominate projects across 20 categories that demonstrate the work implemented through unique projects that enhance their local area for the good of the community. The following local authority environmental projects received LAMA recognition in 2015:

▲ Tipperary County Council

Council of the Year, LAMA Community & Council Awards 2015.

▲ South Dublin County Council

Most Innovative Authority, LAMA Community & Council Awards 2015, for the South Dublin County Development Plan Public Consultation.

▲ Cavan County Council

Finalist in the LAMA Community & Council Awards 2015 for Citizen Engagement Strategy for Domestic Wastewater Assessments (DWWA).

4.3 Improving Local Authority Environmental Data Handling

Waterford City & County Council

When plans were approved to amalgamate the separate city, county and town councils in the region, there was an immediate understanding that the new local authority would need to have a single, consolidated intranet and web GIS platform from the very first day. The newly formed Waterford City and County Council selected the ArcGIS Platform and created over a dozen different web applications for specific workflows or departments including housing, water, roads, environment, customer service and finance. To meet the specific requirements of mobile teams in the environment department, the Council then used the Collector for ArcGIS App to provide mobile GIS solutions. These apps allow field-based teams to collect data via smartphones and tablets, replacing time-consuming paper-based and manual processes.

A mobile GIS app, developed for the environment department, has reduced the time required to complete statutory, annual litter surveys by 80%. Furthermore, this ArcGIS-based solution significantly improves the quality of the information collected and costs 35% less per annum than the software-as-a-service product that the Council initially considered using for the litter survey.

Wexford County Council

In 2015 Wexford County Council's in-house IT section modified the complaints system by linking it to the smart phones of relevant staff via a web based service. Once an incident is logged on the system and is allocated, a notification is forward to an inspector, warden or outdoor clean-up crew via their smart phone. Similarly when staff make any follow up inspection on site, they can generate a digital report and returned it to the system via the web based service on their smart phone. Since implementing the service there has been a 35% decrease in the turnaround times in incident management, providing a more efficient and effective service to the community.

4.4 Achieving Results through Waste Initiatives

Longford County Council

In 2015 Longford County Council achieved a clean-up of a site illegally storing around 250,000 waste tyres. Successive attempts over 2 years to get the tenant to deal with the waste had failed. In 2015, a clean-up was achieved by targeting the landlord (a major company) directly and informing management of the company of the liabilities and reputational damage that could follow if the site caught fire.



The site owner forwarded proposals for the baling, loading and export all waste tyres in accordance with the requirements of the National Trans-frontier Shipment Office (NTFSO). It took approximately 6 weeks with 2 people working constantly for all tyres to be baled and removed for authorised disposal. The total number of tyres removed during the clean-up operation amounted to approximately 115,000 (the tenant removed a large quantity of tyres prior to abandoning the site).

Westmeath County Council

Westmeath County Council participated in the “Powering Kindness” Week in January 2015 by giving 200 free car passes for the recycling centres in Mullingar and Athlone. This was widely advertised and promoted the availability of the facilities and what can be recycled by the general public.

The Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund promotes projects that support and complement national environmental policies such as Waste, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Air, Water, Sustainable Development, etc. In 2015 grant aid of €9,500 was received from the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government. The Council matched this amount bringing the total fund to €19,000. A total of 35 projects were grant aided. The projects funded are diverse and range from community gardens, biodiversity surveys, nature walks, gardening projects to environmental workshops and up-cycling workshops.

4.5 Improving Water Quality Initiatives

Dublin City Council

In 2015 Dublin City Council installed information cabinets and electronic public information signs at bathing areas. The signs are solar powered and clearly inform the public of relevant bathing water information. They are controlled from Dublin City Council’s Civic Offices and thus do away with the need for the manual erection of signs.

4.6 Prevention & Reduction of Food Waste

Offaly and Westmeath County Councils

Westmeath and Offaly County Councils collaborated to deliver a Food Waste Awareness initiative. The initiative consisted of a public awareness event and cookery demonstration which had celebrity chef, Catherine Fulvio as the face of the campaign. The first event was held at the Tullamore Show and consisted of three 45 minute cookery demonstrations. The second event was a Festive Cookery Demonstration



in the Radisson Blu Hotel in Athlone. There were information points for questions and discussions on the area of food waste prevention and the use and benefits of the Brown Bin.

Offaly County Council carried out a household survey on approximately 500 households in Tullamore (roughly 10% of the population) that currently are obliged to segregate their organic waste. The objective was to establish the level of awareness and compliance of householders and use the opportunity to advise and inform householders about their waste management obligations. The three full-time litter wardens conducted the survey. A friendly advisory approach was taken to gather information rather than inspection or enforcement. An information leaflet was given to those who need it. All information received was input onto a database and information will be extrapolated as required.

Clare County Council

Clare County Council extended an initiative started in 2014 under the household waste collection bye laws to target a specific estate on the Woodstock Road in Ennis with illegal dumping problems. Significant dumping of domestic rubbish was taking place in the vicinity of a large newly built housing estate. The Council sent a letter to 82 houses in the estate to inform them of the requirement to have adequate waste collection and to warn against the consequences of illegal dumping. After the letters were sent, the Council conducted a clean-up and monitored the area. Within a short period it was apparent that the dumping stopped. The letter which was sent as an education and awareness initiative in itself helped to deal with the illegal dumping problem. It has also resulted in a large increase in take up of household waste collection service from Private Contractors.

Cork City Council

Initial compliance in 2013 with the Household Food Waste and Bio –Waste Regulations¹⁶ was poor with a reported brown bin rollout in the Cork City area of only 20%. Once it was evident that rollout rates were significantly below initial expectations, a comprehensive compliance drive was commenced by Cork City Council in late 2013. Through this process a timetable for roll out of the brown bins was agreed with each waste operator and they were requested to submit rollout figures at regular intervals in 2013, 2014 and into 2015. The issue of householder awareness was also raised and each collector made a commitment to increase their engagement

16 S.I. No. 71/2013 - European Union (Household Food Waste and Bio-waste) Regulations 2013.

efforts with their customers. The City Council's public campaign included newspaper, cinema and radio advertisements as well as the development of a specially designed leaflet for delivery to all 40,000+ householders in the City area at a total cost of €24,600.

Within the space of 12 months there was a substantial improvement in overall compliance with the Regulations with brown bin rollout having reached an estimated 68% overall in the Cork City area by the end of 2014. Further and ongoing enforcement and awareness raising efforts into 2015 resulted in continued improvement in rollout figures which by the end of 2015 was reported at 88%.

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council



Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council undertook an Apartment Food Waste Pilot Study in 2015 in response to the low rates of food waste segregation by apartment block tenants. The apartment complex selected contained 895 apartments and approximately 1,500 occupants. The majority of the apartments are let on short term renewable leases. The apartment complex is served by three waste collection areas, two of

which serve only apartments, while the third also takes waste from a number of restaurants and offices in the complex. Each waste collection area is accessed only by using a fob, which allows only authorised access to the waste collection area. There is video surveillance in place outside each waste collection area, together with an audio warning message, which records everyone accessing the waste collection area.

Prior to the commencement of the pilot project no food waste was being collected from the residential apartments. Tenants were in the habit of bringing their waste to the waste collection areas on a weekly basis. The odour and pest issues associated with keeping rotting food waste in a closed caddy was presenting a problem in persuading people to segregate their food waste. A breathable caddy and liner was sourced and used in place of the sealed caddies originally considered. In addition, many tenants were non-Irish nationals and had poor competence in written English. The information supplied with the caddies was modified to take this into account, by printing graphically based information.

The Council concluded that the provision of secure waste collection areas that are well lit and ventilated, the provision of clear visual signage and the active involvement of the managing agents are basic requirements if rates of food waste segregation from apartment complexes are to be increased.

Laois County Council



As part of ongoing promotion of European Waste Reduction week, Catherine Fulvio, celebrity Chef, delivered a free festive cookery demonstration in the Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise. The event was hosted by Laois County Council's Environment Section, financed under the Local Authority Prevention Network 2015 grant, and was attended by over 200 people.

The focus was on food waste prevention, highlighting how households can save up to €700 annually by implementing simple practices as menu planning and serving smaller portions.

Never to miss an opportunity, a brown bin display was given a prominent location. This consisted of 2 x 140ltr brown bins, caddies and compostable bags as well as two display panels and a 4 page flyer on brown bin requirements and the importance of not burning waste and engaging reputable and licensed waste collectors. A competition was also held and Laois County Council staff answered queries regarding brown bins. It was a great opportunity to find out about how much is known about brown bins, legislation requirements and provided staff with baseline information regarding public perception on brown bin use and showed that a lot of confusion arose regarding items that could go into a compost bin and a brown bin. The evening was covered in local media as well as on Irish TV.

Leitrim County Council

Leitrim County Council hosted the "Leitrim's Food Rescue Event" which was held in the Lough Rynn Castle in April 2015. Chefs turned out delicious dishes for 220 attendees, including a veggie cake, soup, pork stir fry, stuffed mushrooms and pasta dish which were all made from food that would have been thrown away. The chefs showed how to turn soggy vegetables into pickled wonders. Tips were provided to avoid food waste.



Leitrim County Council also hosted a seminar on food waste and the circular economy for local business and tidy town representatives before the food rescue event. It was also illustrated how to reduce business costs through waste-reduction initiatives. Mindy O'Brien, coordinator of the VOICE (Voice of Irish Concern for the Environment), who attended the Event said the "Bush Hotel" (Environment Award Winner) in Carrick-on-Shannon is an example in reducing its operating costs significantly through a zero waste approach. This "Zero Waste" Template can be duplicated by other businesses.

Leitrim County Council also engaged a consultant where they carried out 85 food waste inspections. The food businesses across the County were visited and the amount of food waste weighed and ascertained how they are dealing with their waste streams. The Consultant educated the businesses in relation to their legal obligations. A second visit was carried out to these businesses to establish if they had taken on board the Consultants advice.

4.7 Interventions to Improve Air Quality

Louth County Council

The burning of waste tyres in Halloween bonfires in Drogheda has been recognised as a significant environmental issue in recent years, with the theft of waste tyres from commercial premises also reported in the lead up to October 31st. In 2014, the Environment Section of Louth County Council and the Drogheda Community Gardaí embarked on a joint initiative to identify the sources and quantities of waste tyres arising from premises in Drogheda, and examine how waste tyres were disposed. This inspection initiative reduced the availability of waste tyres for bonfires on Halloween night, and was repeated in 2015.

Inspections were carried out by Louth County Council and the Community Gardaí at garages, tyre fitters, car dealerships and commercial premises in Drogheda in July 2015. Section 18 notices were served on 30 of these premises requiring them to keep records in relation to the quantity of waste tyres arising, together with details of waste tyre collection. Receipts submitted by these premises showed that over 4,000 waste tyres were collected by authorised waste collectors from these premises during the period August to October 2015. Tyre fitters also took steps to prevent theft of waste tyres by storing them out of sight and by getting waste tyres cleared more frequently.

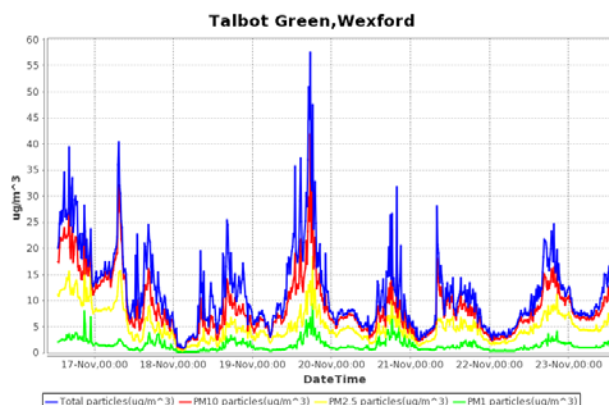
After Halloween, feedback from the Gardaí indicated that the 2015 inspection initiative was a success and reduced the availability of waste tyres for bonfires on Halloween night.

Wexford County Council



Despite Wexford Town being designated as a smokeless fuel area, a significant number of householders continued to purchase bituminous fuel outside of the town to burn in their own homes. This was resulting in deterioration in air quality in the town during the winter heating season. In 2015 Wexford County Council installed a live PM₁₀ monitor and streamed the air quality results live on the Council's web site <http://www.wexford.ie/wex/Departments/Environment/AirandNoise/AirMonitoring/>. In addition, the Council issue text alerts when the results go above the 50ug/l limit. It is hoped that the provision of live data and alerts will highlight the link between the burning of bituminous coal and the impact this is having on public health and the environment.

The Council intends to extend the programme and will install monitoring equipment in New Ross, Enniscorthy and Gorey in 2016/2017. The total cost of equipment and installation is approximately €13,000 per site.



Leitrim County Council

Leitrim County Council held a workshop in partnership with the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and the EPA for all local authorities regarding the National Local Authority Implementation Group for the Solid Fuel Regulations. The workshop included a field trip to Arigna Fuels. As a result of the workshop, Leitrim county Council, with limited resources, was proactive and took the initiative to carry out random coal sampling and testing for various coal products within the County to assess compliance in relation to the Air Pollution Act (Marketing, Sale, Distribution and Burning of Specified Fuels) Regulations 2012. Leitrim County Council worked closely with the Department, EPA and Sligo County Council on this sampling programme. The Council have taken action and notified the suppliers who were non-compliant with these regulations.

AN GHNÍOMHAIREACHT UM CHAOMHNÚ COMHSHAOIL

Tá an Gníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil (GCC) freagrach as an gcomhshaoil a chaomhnú agus a fheabhsú mar shócmhainn luachmhar do mhuintir na hÉireann. Táimid tiomanta do dhaoine agus don chomhshaoil a chosaint ó éifeachtaí díobhálacha na radaíochta agus an truaillithe.

Is féidir obair na Gníomhaireachta a roinnt ina trí phríomhréimse:

Rialú: Déanaimid córais éifeachtacha rialaithe agus comhlíonta comhshaoil a chur i bhfeidhm chun torthaí maíthe comhshaoil a sholáthar agus chun díriú orthu siúd nach gcloíonn leis na córais sin.

Eolas: Soláthraímid sonraí, faisnéis agus measúnú comhshaoil atá ar ardchaighdeán, spriocdhírítthe agus tráthúil chun bonn eolais a chur faoin gcinnteoireacht ar gach leibhéal.

Tacaíocht: Bímid ag saothrú i gcomhar le grúpaí eile chun tacú le comhshaoil atá glan, táirgiúil agus cosanta go maith, agus le hiompar a chuirfidh le comhshaoil inbhuanaithe.

Ár bhFreagrachtaí

Ceadúnú

- Déanaimid na gníomhaíochtaí seo a leanas a rialú ionas nach ndéanann siad dochar do shláinte an phobail ná don chomhshaoil:
- saoráidí dramhaíola (*m.sh. láithreáin líonta talún, loisceoirí, stáisiúin aistrithe dramhaíola*);
- gníomhaíochtaí tionsclaíocha ar scála mór (*m.sh. déantúsaíocht cógaisíochta, déantúsaíocht stroighne, stáisiúin chumhachta*);
- an diantalmhaíocht (*m.sh. muca, éanlaith*);
- úsáid shrianta agus scaoileadh rialaithe Orgánach Géinmhodhnaithe (*OGM*);
- foinsí radaíochta ianúcháin (*m.sh. trealamh x-gha agus radaiteiripe, foinsí tionsclaíocha*);
- áiseanna móra stórála peitril;
- scardadh dramhuisce;
- gníomhaíochtaí dumpála ar farraige.

Forfheidhmiú Náisiúnta i leith Cúrsaí Comhshaoil

- Clár náisiúnta iniúchtaí agus cigireachtaí a dhéanamh gach bliain ar shaoráidí a bhfuil ceadúnas ón nGníomhaireacht acu.
- Maoirseacht a dhéanamh ar fhreagrachtaí cosanta comhshaoil na n-údarás áitiúil.
- Caighdeán an uisce óil, arna sholáthar ag soláthraithe uisce phoiblí, a mhaoirsiú.
- Obair le húdaráis áitiúla agus le gníomhaireachtaí eile chun dul i ngleic le coireanna comhshaoil trí chomhordú a dhéanamh ar líonra forfheidhmiúcháin náisiúnta, trí dhíriú ar chiontóirí, agus trí mhaoirsiú a dhéanamh ar leasúchán.
- Cur i bhfeidhm rialachán ar nós na Rialachán um Dhramhthrealamh Leictreach agus Leictreonach (DTLL), um Shrian ar Shubstaintí Guaiseacha agus na Rialachán um rialú ar shubstaintí a ídíonn an ciseal ózón.
- An dlí a chur orthu siúd a bhriseann dlí an chomhshaoil agus a dhéanann dochar don chomhshaoil.

Bainistíocht Uisce

- Monatóireacht agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar cháilíocht aibhneacha, lochanna, uiscí idirchriosacha agus cósta na hÉireann, agus screamhuiscí; leibhéil uisce agus sruthanna aibhneacha a thomhas.
- Comhordú náisiúnta agus maoirsiú a dhéanamh ar an gCreat-Treoir Uisce.
- Monatóireacht agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar Cháilíocht an Uisce Snámha.

Monatóireacht, Anailís agus Tuairisciú ar an gComhshaoil

- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar cháilíocht an aeir agus Treoir an AE maidir le hAer Glan don Eoraip (CAFÉ) a chur chun feidhme.
- Tuairisciú neamhspleách le cabhrú le cinnteoireacht an rialtais náisiúnta agus na n-údarás áitiúil (*m.sh. tuairisciú tréimhsiúil ar staid Chomhshaoil na hÉireann agus Tuarascálacha ar Tháscairí*).

Rialú Astaíochtaí na nGás Ceaptha Teasa in Éirinn

- Fardail agus réamh-mheastacháin na hÉireann maidir le gáis cheaptha teasa a ullmhú.
- An Treoir maidir le Trádáil Astaíochtaí a chur chun feidhme i gcomhair breis agus 100 de na táirgeoirí dé-ocsaíde carbóin is mó in Éirinn

Taighde agus Forbairt Comhshaoil

- Taighde comhshaoil a chistiú chun brúnna a shainaitheint, bonn eolais a chur faoi bheartais, agus réitigh a sholáthar i réimsí na haeráide, an uisce agus na hinbhuanaitheachta.

Measúnacht Straitéiseach Timpeallachta

- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar thionchar pleananna agus clár beartaithe ar an gcomhshaoil in Éirinn (*m.sh. mórphleananna forbartha*).

Cosaint Raideolaíoch

- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar leibhéil radaíochta, measúnacht a dhéanamh ar nochtadh mhuintir na hÉireann don radaíocht ianúcháin.
- Cabhrú le pleananna náisiúnta a fhorbairt le haghaidh éigeandálaí ag eascairt as taismí núicléacha.
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar fhorbairtí thar lear a bhaineann le saoráidí núicléacha agus leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíochta.
- Sainseirbhísí cosanta ar an radaíocht a sholáthar, nó maoirsiú a dhéanamh ar sholáthar na seirbhísí sin.

Treoir, Faisnéis Inrochtana agus Oideachas

- Comhairle agus treoir a chur ar fáil d'earnáil na tionsclaíochta agus don phobal maidir le hábhair a bhaineann le caomhnú an chomhshaoil agus leis an gcosaint raideolaíoch.
- Faisnéis thráthúil ar an gcomhshaoil ar a bhfuil fáil éasca a chur ar fáil chun rannpháirtíocht an phobail a spreagadh sa chinnteoireacht i ndáil leis an gcomhshaoil (*m.sh. Timpeall an Tí, léarscáileanna radóin*).
- Comhairle a chur ar fáil don Rialtas maidir le hábhair a bhaineann leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíoch agus le cúrsaí práinnfhreagartha.
- Plean Náisiúnta Bainistíochta Dramhaíola Guaisí a fhorbairt chun dramhaíl ghuaiseach a chosc agus a bhainistiú.

Múscailt Feasachta agus Athrú Iompraíochta

- Feasacht chomhshaoil níos fearr a ghiniúint agus dul i bhfeidhm ar athrú iompraíochta dearfach trí thacú le gnóthais, le pobail agus le teaghlaigh a bheith níos éifeachtúla ar acmhainní.
- Tástáil le haghaidh radóin a chur chun cinn i dtithe agus in ionaid oibre, agus gníomhartha leasúcháin a spreagadh nuair is gá.

Bainistíocht agus struchtúr na Gníomhaireachta um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

Tá an ghníomhaíocht á bainistiú ag Bord lánaimseartha, ar a bhfuil Ard-Stiúrthóir agus cúigear Stiúrthóirí. Déantar an obair ar fud cúig cinn d'Oifigí:

- An Oifig um Inmharthanacht Comhshaoil
- An Oifig Forfheidhmithe i leith cúrsaí Comhshaoil
- An Oifig um Fianaise is Measúnú
- An Oifig um Cosaint Raideolaíoch
- An Oifig Cumarsáide agus Seirbhísí Corparáideacha

Tá Coiste Comhairleach ag an nGníomhaireacht le cabhrú léi. Tá dáréag comhaltaí air agus tagann siad le chéile go rialta le plé a dhéanamh ar ábhair imní agus le comhairle a chur ar an mBord.

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