

National Enforcement Priorities 2025

National Enforcement Priority (2025 -2027)	Objective (2025 – 2027)	Outcome (2025 -2027)	Activities for Focus in 2025
Planning for Environmental Inspections and Compliance	Environmental inspection tasks are planned and carried out according to Recommendation 2001/331/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, providing for Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI), thereby strengthening compliance with, and contributing to a more consistent implementation and enforcement of environmental law in all local authority functional areas.	Appropriate inspection and compliance planning, resourcing environmental tasks based on risk, and implementing inspection schedules, focussed on the National Enforcement Priorities (NEPs).	➤ Produce an Environmental Inspection & Compliance Plan according to RMCEI requirements to include: ➤ The time period and geographical area to which the plan relates. ➤ The resources available to undertake inspection tasks and any challenges to implementation. ➤ The incorporation of the National Enforcement Priorities (NEPs) into the Plan with related inspection/compliance tasks. ➤ The sites or types of installations covered by the plan. ➤ Environmental risk ranking of sites or installations and prioritisation of resources based on risk. ➤ A programme for routine environmental inspections and resource provision for non-routine inspections. ➤ A periodic review structure (minimum biannually) for assessing the implementation and adaptation of the Plan and progress of NEPs and planned inspection targets. ➤ Sign-off of the Plan and reviews by Director of Services. ➤ Submit the Plan to the EPA by the required deadline.

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Recording & Reporting of Environmental Inspections, Compliance, and Enforcement Data	Environmental Inspections, Compliance, and Enforcement Data is reported in a timely manner through the National Environmental Management Information System (NEMIS), to facilitate national reporting on RMCEI statistics and implementation of the National Enforcement Priorities (NEPs).	Accurate and timely data recording and reporting of inspections, compliance, and enforcement data by all local authorities.	➤ Enter environmental inspection and complaints data on a quarterly basis in NEMIS across all environmental sectors of Waste, Water, Air and Noise. ➤ Enter agricultural inspection, compliance, and enforcement data on a quarterly basis in the NAIP spreadsheet and submit this to naip@epa.ie ➤ Produce NEP Progress Reports for each priority area and submit to the EPA by the required deadline. The NEP reports should adhere to the criteria set out in <i>Local Authority Performance Framework Assessment Methodology and Guidance</i> with clear examples of positive environmental outcomes provided. ➤ Use relevant inspection templates and guidance from WERLA, NAIP, etc. ➤ Ensure all annual RMCEI statistics are reported via NEMIS by the required deadline.

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Tackling illegal waste activities and Multi-Agency Sites/Operators of Concern	Detection, cessation and remediation of unauthorised waste sites, collectors and sites/operators of concern.	• Unauthorised waste sites, collectors and sites/operators of concern detected, and appropriate action undertaken. • Authorised (permitted & licensed) facilities and collectors not facilitating the unauthorised treatment of waste.	➤ Targeted inspections and consistent approach to follow up enforcement actions of unauthorised collectors and site operators using intelligence from waste data flows, complaints and other available data in line with the organisation’s waste enforcement policy. ➤ Co-ordinate enforcement activity with regulators through the NWESC, NIECE, Garda Multi Agency forums and by multi-lateral concerted actions. Regulators, including but not limited to, Social Welfare, An Garda Síochána and the Office of the Revenue Commissioners, EPA, WERLA and NPWS. ➤ Relevant Anti-Dumping Initiatives implemented. ➤ Identify and enforce illegal waste activities at authorised sites, with a particular focus on traceability and the unauthorised movement of waste including waste metal. ➤ Keep the Convictions Register up to date.

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Construction & Demolition material	Effective enforcement of the management, movement, recovery and disposal of C&D material.	• Construction sites compliant with waste classification, segregation and movement (as per ‘Best practice guidelines for the preparation of resource & waste management plans for construction & demolition projects’). • Waste recovery levy implemented and complied with. • Regulation 27 and Regulation 28 requirements and National Criteria are complied with. • Authorised waste treatment facilities accepting C&D material from authorised collectors/sources only. • Authorised waste treatment facilities dispatching material to authorised facilities by authorised collectors only. • Accurate waste classification and quantification of waste data in AERs from WCP/WFP and licensed operators. • Routes for leakage of waste from the system identified and ceased.	➤ Ensure Resource & Waste Management Plans are assessed and priority sites for inspection are identified. ➤ Risk based site inspections of construction and development sites utilising local and WERLA intelligence and using WERLA inspection templates. ➤ Desktop assessment and/or inspection of regulation 27 sites of origin and destination to include material registered under the National By-product Criteria Greenfield Soil and Stone - Reference Number BP-N002/2023. ➤ Validation and cradle to grave inspection of WCP and authorised sites dealing with C&D waste, with a particular focus on C&D waste subject to the waste recovery levy. ➤ Risk based site inspections, using the relevant inspection templates, at certificate of registration, waste facility permit and licenced sites to identify and resolve non-compliances. ➤ Authorised waste treatment facilities producing recycled aggregates are registered on the End-of-waste Register and are adhering to National Criteria requirements in terms of waste intake, treatment and compliance testing.

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Household Waste	Effective enforcement of the household waste sector to encourage increased segregation and recycling of municipal waste.	- Improved diversion of waste from landfill and thermal treatment to meet the 2025 and 2030 EU Recycling Targets (55% and 60% respectively) and reduce burden/pressure on the national waste capacity. - Improved segregation of waste presented in order to meet the 2025 and 2030 EU PPWD/PPWR targets (65% and 70% respectively) with particular focus on plastic targets (50% and 55% respectively). - High level of compliance amongst households and apartments availing of and appropriately using (i.e. high rate of separation and low rate of contamination) a 3 bin kerbside waste collection service or a suitable alternative. - Accurate classification and quantification of waste data in AERs from WCP and WFP/licensed operators of municipal waste. - Reduced contamination in residual and mixed dry recycling streams. - Improved fire risk controls at authorised waste facilities.	➤ Inspection of WCP operators for provision of 3 bin system (focus for WERLAS). ➤ Intelligence based household waste inspections and apartment inspections in areas with low levels of waste segregation and collection by permitted collectors and using supporting templates and guidance. ➤ Continued enforcement of non-routine activity under the waste presentation bye-laws. ➤ Risk based site inspections at authorised facilities using relevant inspection templates with a focus on: ○ Waste acceptance to help combat misclassification and contamination of wastes and ensure waste acceptance criteria are complied with. ○ Assessment of fire risk controls at authorised facilities. ➤ AER Validations on WCP (focus for WERLAS) and WFP (focus for LAs) with a focus on priority list operators, and data validation on licensed sites (focus for EPA).

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Commercial Waste	Effective enforcement of the commercial waste sector to encourage increased segregation and recycling of municipal waste.	• Improved diversion of waste from landfill and thermal treatment to meet the 2025 and 2030 EU Recycling Targets (55% and 60% respectively) and reduce burden/pressure on the national waste capacity. • Improved segregation of waste presented in order to meet the 2025 and 2030 EU PPWD/PPWR targets (65% and 70% respectively) with particular focus on plastic targets (50% and 55% respectively) • High level of compliance amongst commercial premises availing of and appropriately using (i.e. high rate of separation and low rate of contamination) a 3 bin waste collection service or a suitable alternative. • Reduced contamination in residual and mixed dry recycling streams. • Accurate classification and quantification of waste data in AERs from WCP and WFP/licensed operators of municipal waste. • Improved fire risk controls at authorised waste facilities.	➤ Inspection of WCP (focus for LAs and WERLA) operators for provision of 3 bin system. ➤ Intelligence based commercial premises inspections in areas with low levels of waste segregation and collection by permitted collector and using supporting templates and guidance. ➤ Continued enforcement of non-routine activity under the waste presentation bye-laws. ➤ Risk based site inspections at authorised facilities using relevant inspection templates with a focus on: ○ Waste acceptance to help combat misclassification and contamination of wastes and ensure waste acceptance criteria are complied with. ○ Assessment of fire risk controls at authorised facilities. ➤ AER validations on WCP (focus for LAs and WERLA) and WFP (focus for LAs) with a focus on priority list operators, and data validations on licensed sites (focus for EPA).

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Plastics and Producer Responsibility Initiatives	All industry operators are registered with appropriate compliance schemes and comply with the relevant regulations.	• Compliance with the Extended Producer Responsibility Regulations. • Effective and regular engagement with the compliance schemes.	➤ Focus on compliance with Tyres, DRS, WEEE/Batteries, and SUP (focus for the EPA). ➤ EPA, DECC and local authorities continue to raise awareness, identify, inspect and monitor all obligated partners in the relevant sectors under existing compliance schemes having regard to sectoral and local issues.

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Pressures from Agriculture (Farmyards) - slurry/soiled water collection and storage	Reduce the impact of agricultural activities on water quality. Issues at farm level are identified and resolved through farm inspections both in areas identified with agriculture as a significant pressure and in areas where agriculture has not been identified as a significant pressure, as appropriate to each local authority.	• Adequate capacity to store all livestock manure and other organic fertilisers produced on the holding for the minimum periods required under the Regulations. • Livestock manure and other organic fertilisers, prior to its application to land, is collected and held in a manner which prevents the run-off or seepage, directly or indirectly, into groundwaters or surface waters. • Absence of direct discharges. • Local issues identified and resolved through the National Agriculture Inspection Programme (NAIP).	➤ Identify appropriate farms for inspection considering agriculture pressures using the Targeting Agricultural Measures map, restore and protect waterbodies, Areas for Action, ASSAP work areas and local knowledge, and ensure adequate sharing of information between all relevant agencies and competent authorities to facilitate an effective inspection regime. ➤ Undertake targeted agricultural inspections specific to the pollutants of concerns (N, P, and sediment), using the EPA Pollution Impact Potential (PIP) maps. ➤ Take all necessary steps to ensure compliance, including follow up and close out of non-compliances. ➤ Cross-reporting of non-compliances to DAFM, and reporting of pressure/incidents to other agencies (e.g. IFI, NPWS or other relevant body), as appropriate. ➤ Document and report results for all farm inspections to the EPA.

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Pressures from Agriculture (Farmland) - slurry and fertiliser spreading	Reduce the impact of agricultural activities on water quality. Issues at farm level are identified and resolved through farm inspections in areas identified with agriculture as a significant pressure and in areas where agriculture has not been identified as a significant pressure, as appropriate to each local authority.	• The application of livestock manures and other fertilisers to land adheres to best practices which includes, inter alia, the prohibited spreading periods, spreading buffer zones, weather, and ground conditions. • Farm roads are sited and managed correctly, so as not to contribute a pressure to water through sediment or nutrient loss. • Local issues identified and resolved through the National Agriculture Inspection Programme (NAIP).	➤ Identify appropriate farms for inspection considering agriculture pressures using the Targeting Agricultural Measures map, restore and protect waterbodies, Areas for Action, ASSAP work areas and local knowledge, and ensure adequate sharing of information between all relevant agencies and competent authorities to facilitate an effective inspection regime. ➤ Undertake targeted agricultural inspections specific to the pollutants of concerns (N, P, and sediments), using the EPA Pollution Impact Potential (PIP) maps. ➤ Take all necessary steps to ensure compliance, including follow up and close out of non-compliances. ➤ Cross-reporting of non-compliances to DAFM, and reporting of pressure/incidents to other agencies (e.g. IFI, NPWS or other relevant body), as appropriate. ➤ Document and report results for all farm inspections to the EPA.

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Discharge Licences / Misconnections	Reduce the impact of licensed discharges and misconnections on water quality.	• All licensable discharges are authorised by a Section 4 licence under the Water Pollution Act. • Section 4 discharge licences are compliant. • Misconnections impacting on water quality are remediated.	➤ Identify, investigate, and licence any unauthorised discharges. ➤ Undertake risk-based inspections/monitoring of Section 4 licences, including all licences identified as significant pressures on receiving waterbodies. ➤ Ensure compliance with discharge licence conditions and follow up and close out non-compliances and LAWPRO referrals on Section 4s and misconnections. ➤ Undertake misconnection surveys, particularly in areas where urban run-off is identified as a significant pressure. Ensure that remedial works are undertaken by property owners where misconnections are identified.

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Local Water Quality Pressures including Septic Tanks and Private Water Supplies	Protect waterbodies at good or high status or restore waterbodies to at least good status. Reduce the impact of domestic wastewater discharges on water quality through implementation of the National Inspection Plan. All private water supplies are registered and monitored to ensure they are safe to drink.	• Pressures impacting on local water quality are identified and resolved. • Faulty DWWTS/Septic Tanks are fixed. • Private water supplies are safe to drink.	➤ Follow up and ensure septic tank advisory notices are closed out, in particular those open more than two years. ➤ Identify and register private water supplies that fall within the remit of the Drinking Water Regulations 2023, monitor these supplies at the required frequency of the Regulations and inform private supplies of their monitoring results as soon as they become available. ➤ Investigate supplies that fail to meet drinking water quality standards and take necessary enforcement action. ➤ Identify and investigate local issues affecting water quality, including: ○ Non-compliances with surface water or groundwater quality standards, e.g. detected by investigative monitoring results or complaints. ○ Non-compliances with Bathing Water standards. ○ EPA Red Dot+ notifications. ○ LAWPRO significant pressure referrals. ○ Other pressures identified as impacting on Water Framework Directive objectives, e.g. extractive industry, aquaculture.

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Solid Fuel	Only approved solid fuels are sold and distributed.	Fuel products used by the end-user comply with requirements of the Solid Fuel Regulations.	➤ Carry out inspections of retailers, producers and distributors of solid fuels. Carry out checks for online sales and distribution of unapproved solid fuels. Follow up on any instances of non-compliance identified in the course of inspections. ➤ Maintain an up-to-date register of solid-fuel retailers and distributors operating in each local authority area, including those using social media platforms to market and distribute solid fuels. ➤ Participate in multi-agency operations investigating the sale of unapproved solid fuels. ➤ Participate and collaborate with the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) and the EPA on the sampling and analysis of solid fuel types. Liaise with DECC and the EPA on results findings and follow-up actions.

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Air Quality Monitoring and Data Use	Deliver enhanced real-time information to improve air quality forecasting and identification of priority areas for action. Air quality data is used to identify priority areas for action. Encourage greater understanding and involvement of the public in issues affecting local air quality.	Issues impacting on local air quality are identified and addressed.	➤ Display real-time data on local air quality via the local authority website. ➤ Review current and historic air quality data to identify localised areas of poor air quality and identify measures to address them. ➤ Assist the EPA National Ambient Air Quality Unit to troubleshoot issues at air quality monitoring stations. Notify the EPA of a primary and secondary contact person in this regard. ➤ Carry out air quality awareness raising campaigns, including the use of social media and information on local authority websites.
Environmental Noise Directive (ENDs)	Reduce the share of people chronically disturbed by transport noise as well as preserve environmental noise quality where it is good.	Strategic management of environmental noise.	➤ Provide public access via the local authority website to the Round 4 Noise Action Plan, and links to the Round 4 Strategic Noise Maps available on the EPA website. ➤ Demonstrate progress on the actions identified within Noise Action Plans and include updates in the Noise Action Plan Progress Report to be submitted to the EPA by 28th February 2025. ➤ Deliver the Round 5 Noise Mapping requirements as set out in the European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations of 2018, as amended by the 2021 noise regulations. This includes the timely submission of any relevant data in the required format, as requested by relevant Noise Mapping Bodies project teams and/or any other relevant specified body.

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Local Air and Noise investigations	Minimise, reduce or prevent air and noise emissions that may be harmful to the environment or to human health.	Appropriate controls in place to minimise, reduce or prevent air and noise emissions that may be harmful to the environment or to human health.	➤ Inspect and carry out required enforcement actions for sites licensed under the Air Pollution Act and sites registered under the Solvents / Deco Paints / Petroleum Vapours Regulations, with a focus on unauthorised operators. ➤ Investigate and address air and noise complaints. Inspect and carry out any required enforcement actions to limit air and noise nuisance in accordance with the Air Pollution Act 1987, as amended, and the EPA Act 1992, as amended. ➤ Provide public access via the local authority website to the following: ○ Information on how to make air and noise complaints and associated procedures for affected parties. ○ Up-to-date registers under the Solvents and Deco Paints Regulations. ○ Best Practice Guidelines for Dry Cleaning, Vehicle Refinishing and the EPA Vehicle Refinishers video (use appropriate channels to promote these materials).