



Circular L3/20 (V2)

4th June 2020

To each Director of Service (Water Services)

To each Rural Water Liaison Officer

Introduction of a new Domestic Waste Water Treatment System (DWWTS) grant scheme for the remediation, repair or upgrading works to, or replacement of a DWWTS in a High Status Objective Catchment Area (in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021).

You are advised that under the ***Housing (Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems Financial Assistance for High Status Objective Catchment Areas) Regulations 2020 (S.I. No. 186 of 2020)***, a new grant scheme is being introduced to support the attainment of water quality objectives in High Status Objective Catchment Areas, as outlined in the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021.

This scheme forms part of the funding investment under Measure 8 of the Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme (MARWP) 2019 to 2021.

The intention is to maintain the existing quota of inspections under the National Inspection Plan as a separate scheme.

This new grant scheme relates solely to a DWWTS that serves a house that complies with registration requirements¹, and is situated in a High Status Objective Catchment Area. The scheme will be available to assist with the costs of remediation, repair or upgrading works to, or replacement of, such DWWTS:

- where the works arise in a High Status Objective Catchment Area, as confirmed by checking the interactive map²; and,
- that have been the subject of a letter from the relevant housing authority confirming potential eligibility to apply for a grant under the scheme.

¹*The Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Registration) Regulations 2012 (S.I. No. 220 of 2012) as amended by the Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Registration) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No. 180 of 2013).*

² [Map of High Status Objective Catchment Areas](#) (chrome browser is recommended to ensure full functionality)



All works must be in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice (CoP) – Waste Water Treatment and Disposal Systems serving Single Houses 2009 but having due regard to the recommendations at Section 6.6 of the CoP referring to existing on-site domestic waste water treatment systems that pre-date the CoP.

Proposed approach

With regards to the High Status Objective Catchment Areas, the housing authority shall:

- Raise awareness of DWWTS and the problems that can arise that may pose a risk to human health and the environment; and
- Promote the availability and uptake of the new grant scheme in the eligible areas.

Participation in the new scheme is voluntary and is therefore at the discretion of potential applicants.

Grant application, approval and payment process

The following process applies in relation to grant applications:

1. The potential applicant, having satisfied themselves that the house served by the DWWTS which is the subject of the application is situated in a High Status Objective Catchment Area, submits a completed application form (Form DWWTS 3a) to the relevant housing authority, accompanied by a detailed proposal prepared by a competent person to upgrade the works to the EPA CoP standards, and having due regard to its recommendations on existing on-site DWWTS that pre-date the CoP.
2. The relevant housing authority then arranges a site visit in order to:
 - (i) verify whether or not the applicant qualifies for the grant, subject to the terms and conditions specified; and,
 - (iii) confirm the validity of the application with regard to the scope of works proposed.
3. The housing authority will subsequently advise the applicant in writing if the application is deemed eligible (subject to terms and conditions) or ineligible.
4. The applicant may proceed with the required works however only works that are included in applications deemed eligible will receive payment of grant aid.
5. Once the works have been completed and certified by a competent person, the applicant should submit all receipts from each contractor engaged for the purpose of the remediation works to the housing authority, in order to claim payment.
6. The housing authority or its representative shall carry out a post completion site visit in order to confirm that the works have been completed in accordance with the detailed proposal submitted as signed by the competent person and that they comply with all other terms and conditions.
7. The housing authority will notify the applicant that payment will be made in due course.
8. In cases where the housing authority is not satisfied that the works have been completed in accordance with the detailed proposal submitted or they do not



comply with all other terms and conditions, the housing authority will issue a letter to the applicant advising that the claim is ineligible or partially ineligible, noting the relevant reasons.

9. The housing authority will recoup the cost of the grants paid, from the Department in accordance with a timeline to be agreed with the Department.

Appeals process

In administering this grant scheme, it is recognised that some applicants may be dissatisfied with housing authority decisions. Authorities will give every applicant an appeal mechanism allowing them to have the decision in their case reviewed by a housing authority official who did not deal with their original application.

The following procedure shall apply to each appeal:

1. The dissatisfied applicant is invited to submit a **written appeal** (this may be via email) on any decision notified to them by the housing authority on their application.
2. The appeal must be received by the housing authority within three weeks of the date of the decision and must state the reasons for the appeal.
3. The appeal will be considered by the housing authority and adjudicated upon within four weeks of receipt.
4. A decision on the appeal will be notified in writing to the appellant within two weeks of the decision being made.

Operation of the scheme

When a housing authority pays a grant under the scheme:

- The Department will reimburse 100% of the amount paid by the housing authority.
- All requests for refunds of grants paid should be submitted to the Department's Rural Water Unit, Government Offices, Ballina, Co. Mayo, F12 E8N6, rural.water@housing.gov.ie.

Monitoring and oversight

The Department will monitor the expenditure under the scheme on an ongoing basis, to ensure alignment with the scheme allocation.

- The housing authority will ensure that its systems are set up in a format that facilitates the extraction of information on claims at all stages e.g. new claims, approved claims, payment pending, etc.
- The housing authority will provide any information, reports, etc. relating to expenditure in a timely manner, including material for inclusion in Ministerial briefings or Parliamentary Questions.
- All payments will be subject to audit by the Department, and it is envisaged that a maximum of 10% of payments would be audited in any one calendar year. Full and accurate documentation to support all expenditure should be maintained, and accessible for audit purposes at all times, and for a period of four years from the end of the MARWP 2019-2021 cycle.



The Department may from time to time issue guidelines to housing authorities in relation to the operation of the grant scheme.

The documents which are to be used by housing authorities when requesting refunds of grants from the Department's Rural Water unit are attached (Form DWWTS 3 and DWWTS 3 Schedule). Also included with this letter is the Terms and Conditions note for applicants (including the application form [Form DWWTS 3a] and payment claim form [Form DWWTS 3b]).

A copy of the Housing (Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems Financial Assistance for High Status Objective Catchment Areas) Regulations 2020 (S. I. No. 186 of 2020), which include details of the eligibility criteria, the level of grants available and the supporting documents required for each application, is issued with this Circular.

The electronic versions of the various documentation allow for the insertion of housing authority details and logos – they should not be otherwise modified. Housing authorities are asked to place the material issued under this Circular on the Water Services section of their Website, with appropriate links for ease of access by potential applicants.

The Department will arrange a workshop for housing authorities on the new scheme in the near future, this is likely to be a web-based event given the current restrictions due to the global crisis. The Department will undertake a review of the grant scheme after one year of operation to ensure its alignment with policy objectives.

Any queries on this circular should be sent to rural.water@housing.gov.ie .

Yours sincerely

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Application to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government for refund of grants paid by housing authorities towards the remediation, repair or upgrading works to, or replacement of, a domestic waste water treatment system (DWWTS) in a High Status Objective Catchment Area where the housing authority has confirmed eligibility to apply for a grant.

Housing authority:

1. I hereby certify that the grant payments set out in the attached schedule have been made by this housing authority to persons in respect of the DWWTS listed in the schedule and that such payments are in compliance with the *Housing (Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems Financial Assistance for High Status Objective Catchment Areas under the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021) Regulations 2020 (S.I. No. 186 of 2020)* and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government's Circular L3/20 4th June 2020.
2. I hereby claim recoupment of € , being the total of the grant payments made by the above name housing authority to persons in respect of the DWWTS listed in the attached schedule.
3. I hereby certify that none of the grant payments as set out in the attached schedule have previously been claimed from the Department.

Prepared by: _____ (Signature)
_____ (Name in BLOCK)

Date: _____

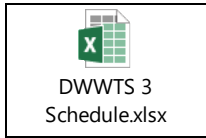
Certified by*: _____ (Signature)
_____ (Name in BLOCK)

Date: _____

* *Director of Services or equivalent*

DWWTS 3 Schedule

The schedule can be found in the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, attached below.



This Schedule should be completed by the housing authority and submitted with FORM DWWTS 3 to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

Housing authority confirmation of approval of grant aid for a domestic waste water treatment system (DWWTS) in a High Status Objective Catchment Area (in accordance with the national River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021)

Reference No: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Eircode: _____

Housing Authority : _____

Work is carried out nationally to identify causes and potential causes of pollution that may impact water quality, with a particular focus on “High Status Objective Catchment Areas” under the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2020. These are areas where activities, such as discharges from DWWTS, are causing pollution and affecting the quality of rivers and lakes.

The DWWTS located at the above address constitutes or is likely to constitute, a risk to the environment, and in particular – (1) creates a risk to water, air or soil, or to plants and animals, (2) creates a nuisance through noise or odours, or (3) adversely affects the countryside or places of special interest.

This opinion is based on a site assessment of the DWWTS at the above property, which is located in a High Status Objective Catchment Area. These areas have been identified in accordance with the national River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021.

You have been approved for a grant to upgrade the DWWTS at the above address, details of eligible works to be undertaken and grant approval amount are attached.

Signed: _____

[XXXXXX] County Council

[Address line 1]

[Address line 2]

[Address line 3]

[Eircode]

Date: _____