An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage

Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems Grant for Houses in Areas for Action

Terms and Conditions

2026

Prepared by the Department of
Housing, Local Government and Heritage
gov.ie

Housing (Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems Grant for Prioritised Areas For Action) (Amendment) Regulations 2026 (S.I. No. 452 of 2026)

- Please read the following information notes before completing the application form.
- All questions on the form must be answered and, where specified, supporting documents must be provided. Incomplete forms, or those not accompanied by the appropriate documents, will not be processed.
- Work must NOT start before the local authority has issued written approval of the grant application. The local authority should carry out such inspections or other checks as it considers necessary before approving the application. Works started before written approval are not eligible for grant assistance.
- The grant scheme is administered by local authorities. Any enquiries should be addressed to the Rural Water Liaison Officer or the Environment Section in the local authority
- All forms to be used can be obtained from the local authority, who will provide assistance with completing them, if required.
- In respect of an applicant receiving grants, subsidies or similar type payments from a Government Department or Public Authority that have a total value of more than €10,000 during the year, you will be required to provide an e-Tax Clearance certificate.
- The local authority reserves the right to make any necessary enquiries to verify information or for clarification of supporting documents provided with a grant application. An application that includes false or misleading information or documents will not be approved for a grant.

1 Purpose of Grant

This grant supports homeowners to repair, remediate, upgrade or replace a defective or inadequate domestic wastewater treatment system (DWWTS) to protect water quality and public health.

The grant applies to houses located in Areas for Action, which include Priority Areas for Action (PAAs), Local Authority Areas for Action and other targeted public health

areas where a DWWTS has been identified as causing, or likely to cause, a risk to human health or the environment.

This is a targeted grant scheme. A homeowner cannot apply for a grant simply because they have a defective DWWTS. A homeowner must first be identified as potentially eligible through one of the assessment routes set out in the Areas for Action section (Section 7) and must satisfy all other eligibility requirements.

The grant scheme operates within the limits of the funding allocated annually by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage and does not create an automatic entitlement to grant assistance. The scheme focuses public funding on DWWTS associated with identified environmental or verified human-health risks in areas for action designated under the most recent River Basin Management Plan.

All works funded must comply with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 2021 Code of Practice for Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (or as amended).

Important: Costs incurred for the routine maintenance, servicing or de-sludging of a DWWTS do not qualify for a grant.

2 Level of Grant

The level of grant available is 85% of the approved cost of the works, subject to a maximum of €12,000. The minimum expenditure on eligible works required to process the application is €750.

3 Eligibility

To qualify, the local authority must be satisfied that the house and system meet **all** of the following conditions:

a) The house is occupied by the applicant as their primary residence (not a holiday home). This may include private, long-term rental properties.
b) The house is not connected to a public sewer.
c) The house is not currently under construction and was not constructed within the last 7 years.

d) No grant for these DWWTS that is the subject of the application has been paid in the last 7 years.
e) All proposed works will be completed satisfactorily as detailed in the approved proposal.
f) The house is situated in an Area for Action (AfA) under the most recent River Basin Management Plan and the DWWTS has been identified, through the relevant assessment process, as causing or likely to cause a risk to human health or the environment (including risks to waters, atmosphere, land, soil, plants or animals). The assessments will be carried out by the River Basin Management Service (RBMS) or the relevant local authority.

Important: Being located within an Area for Action **does not**, by itself, make a homeowner eligible for the grant. Eligibility must be confirmed through the relevant assessment process and the issue of a letter of potential eligibility. Grant approval and payment are also subject to all other scheme requirements and the availability of funding within the annual allocation.

4 Planning Permission

In general, planning permission is not required for works to repair or maintain an existing DWWTS where the works fall within the relevant planning exemption under Section 4(1)(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Where the works are for the purpose of maintaining or improving an existing DWWTS and fall within the exemption, the local authority should not require the applicant to obtain planning permission as a condition of grant approval.

The local authority should consider whether planning permission is required based on the nature and extent of the works proposed.

Where there is any uncertainty as to whether the proposed works constitute development or exempted development, the applicant should be advised to contact the relevant planning authority.

5 Approved Cost

For the purposes of this grant scheme, approved cost means the lesser of:

- the actual cost of the works for the repair, remediation, upgrade, or replacement of a DWWTS (including site assessment if required) or the cost of connection to the public network,

  or

- the reasonable cost of carrying out those works as assessed by the local authority.

The local authority will determine the reasonable cost of connection to the public network against the cost of remediation, repair, upgrade or replacement of a DWWTS, and establish if a grant can be given for connection to the public network.

The local authority shall determine whether the proposed works are necessary, proportionate and reasonable, having regard to the nature and extent of the identified environmental or verified human-health risk. The local authority may restrict approved costs to those considered necessary to address the identified risk and achieve compliance with the EPA Code of Practice.

6 Tax Clearance Requirements and Proposal of Works

The current tax clearance status of the contractor(s) and the applicant (when required), must be confirmed to the satisfaction of the local authority.

In respect of each contractor, the applicant should include with their application form:

- the Tax Clearance Access Number (TCAN) and Tax Reference Number issued to the contractor by the Revenue Commissioners;

  or

- an up to date Revenue On-Line Service (ROS) printout of an eTax Clearance Certificate provided by the contractor.

This can be applied for using Revenue's online service at revenue.ie. The applicant can request a "TC1" application form to be posted to their address.

Where the tax clearance status of the contractor cannot be established at the time the grant application is being assessed, then the local authority must refuse the application for a grant.

In respect of an applicant receiving grants, subsidies or similar type payments from a government department or public authority of more than €10,000 during the year, you will need a Tax Clearance Certificate.

Proposal of works

Each application for approval of grant aid must be accompanied by a detailed proposal prepared by a competent person to upgrade the system to the EPA Code of Practice standards, and having due regard to its recommendations in relation to existing DWWTS that pre-date the Code of Practice.

7 Areas for Action and Access to the Grant

Access to the grant scheme is controlled through a structured assessment and gatekeeping process to ensure that available resources are directed towards priority environmental and public-health risks identified under the most recent River Basin Management Plan.

A letter of potential eligibility allows a homeowner to submit an application for consideration under the scheme. It does not constitute grant approval, reservation of funding or a commitment to provide financial assistance.

There are three routes under which a homeowner may be issued a letter of potential eligibility, as set out below.

7.1 Prioritised Areas for Action (PAA)

- RBMS carries out local catchment assessments in selected water bodies each year to identify likely sources of pollution and target measures to assist in ensuring that available resources are allocated towards priority catchments where DWWTS are a pollution risk to the waterbody.

- Where the assessment identifies a DWWTS as causing, or likely to cause, a risk to human health or the environment, RBMS may issue a letter of potential eligibility to the homeowner.
- Assessments are scheduled annually; therefore, a limited number of areas are covered each year; access to the grant is therefore limited to those areas at that time, and assessments cannot be requested by homeowners.
  RBMS does not undertake an inspection of individual DWWTS as part of this process. Any inspection or other verification required during the application process will be determined by the local authority.

7.2 Local Authority Areas for Action (LA AfA)

- Local authorities carry out local catchment assessments in selected water bodies (LA AfAs) each year to identify likely sources of pollution and target measures to assist in ensuring that available resources are allocated towards priority catchments where DWWTS are a pollution risk to the waterbody.
- The local authority shall apply assessment principles equivalent to those used by the River Basin Management Service to ensure consistency, transparency and appropriate targeting of public expenditure.
- The local authority may issue a letter of potential eligibility where following their assessment the evidence indicates that a DWWTS may be contributing to an environmental risk or verified human-health risk, subject to further validation and available funding.

7.3 Public Health Areas for Action

- These areas focus on protecting public health, commonly linked to Group Water Schemes (GWS) with Integrated Source Protection Plans (ISPPs), Public drinking water source protection areas (managed by Uisce Éireann), shellfish and bathing waters led by local authorities or RBMS.
- Where ISPPs or Source Catchment Risk Assessment under the Drinking Water regulations identify DWWTS posing a risk to human health, the NFGWS/GWS will liaise with the local authority in its role as Drinking Water supervisory authority. The local authority will evaluate the evidence and, where appropriate,

issue a letter of potential eligibility. A similar process will apply to public supplies managed by Uisce Éireann where their Risk Assessment/Risk Management Plans identify a risk.

- In cases of Public Health Areas for Action for bathing waters and shellfish waters, the local authority shall apply assessment principles equivalent to those used by the River Basin Management Service to ensure consistency, transparency and appropriate targeting of public expenditure.
- Homeowners cannot self-declare for letters in these areas; only those identified through ISPPs or Source Catchment Risk Assessments under the Drinking Water regulations, bathing water or shellfish waters investigations may be considered.

7.4 Tracking of Letters of Potential Eligibility

RBMS and local authorities will maintain a register of letters of potential eligibility issued. The registers will support programme oversight, prioritisation of applications, management of annual allocations, monitoring of expenditure and reporting to the Department. The Department's Rural Water Unit will provide quarterly reports to RBMS and relevant local authorities on grant drawdown.

8 Submitting and Processing of Grant Applications

Once the applicant has received a letter from the local authority confirming eligibility to apply for a grant, the applicant may submit an application for grant approval using Form DWWTS AfA (a)

The application must be completed in full and accompanied by all required supporting documentation, including a detailed proposal of works prepared by a competent person. The proposal must describe the works required to repair, remediate, upgrade or replace the DWWTS and must have regard to the EPA Code of Practice.

The local authority will:

(a) verify that the application is complete and that the applicant and DWWTS meet the eligibility requirements;
(b) carry out such inspection, assessment or other checks as it considers necessary to verify the condition of the DWWTS and assess whether the proposed works are appropriate, having regard to the identified risk and the EPA Code of Practice;
(c) assess the proposed works and the associated costs and determine the grant amount to be approved; and
(d) notify the applicant in writing of the outcome of the application.

The applicant must not commence any works until the application has been approved in writing.

Only the costs of works included in the approved proposal will be considered for grant payment.

9 Submitting Grant Payment Claims

When the works are completed in accordance with the approved proposal and certified by a competent person, the applicant must submit a grant payment claim on Form DWWTS AfA (b) to the local authority. The claim must be submitted within six months of the completion of the works.

10 Processing Grant Payment Claims

The local authority will:

a) verify that your claim is valid and complete;

b) confirm, through such checks or inspections as it considers necessary, that the works have been completed in accordance with the approved proposal and the EPA Code of Practice and that all relevant terms and conditions of the scheme have been met; and

c) notify the applicant in writing of the outcome and issue payment where the claim is approved.

Where payment of the grant is refused or part-refused, the local authority will notify the applicant in writing, clearly setting out the reasons for the decision and advising of the right to appeal.

The local authority shall verify that grant expenditure represents an appropriate and reasonable use of public funds and complies with all conditions of the scheme.

Payment of grant assistance remains subject to compliance with all scheme requirements and the availability of funding under the annual allocation determined by the Minister.

11 Appeals Process

An applicant may appeal a local authority decision to refuse or partially refuse payment of a grant.

The appeal must be made in writing, including by email, within three weeks of the date of the decision letter and should clearly set out the reasons for the appeal.

The appeal will be considered by an officer of the local authority who was not involved in the original decision.

A decision on the appeal will be made within four weeks of receipt of the appeal.

The applicant will be notified of the appeal decision in writing within five working days of the decision being made.

12 General Funding and Entitlement Provision

Nothing in these Guidelines, the issue of a letter of eligibility, the acceptance of an application, the carrying out of an inspection, the approval of proposed works or any communication from RBMS, a local authority or the Department shall be construed as creating an entitlement to grant funding.

Grant assistance is always subject to the availability of funding, annual allocations determined by the Minister, compliance with statutory requirements and compliance with all conditions of the scheme.

Approval of an application does not guarantee payment of the maximum grant amount. The amount paid will be based on the approved cost of eligible works and the actual eligible expenditure incurred, subject to the terms and conditions of the scheme.

13 Help and Contact

For forms, help with completing an application or general queries, contact your local authority's Rural Water Liaison Officer or Environment Section.

14 Appendices

14.1 FORM DWWTS AfA (a) Application Form

APPLICATION FORM

Works for the repair, remediation, upgrade or replacement of a Domestic Wastewater Treatment System (DWWTS) in an AfA where the applicant has received a letter from River Basin Management Service (RBMS), formerly Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO), or the Local Authority confirming eligibility to apply for a grant.

- Please read the information notes before completing the application form.
- All questions on the form must be answered and where specified, supporting documents must be provided. Incomplete forms, or those which are not accompanied by the appropriate documents, will not be processed.
- Work must NOT start before the local authority has issued written approval of the grant application. The local authority may carry out such inspections or other checks as it considers necessary before approving the application. Works started before written approval are not eligible for grant assistance.
- The grant scheme is administered by local authorities. Any enquiries should be addressed to the local authority's Rural Water Liaison Officer or the Environment Section.

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- All forms to be used can be obtained from the local authority, who will provide assistance with completing them, if required.
- In respect of an applicant receiving grants, subsidies or similar type payments from a Government Department or Public Authority that have a total value of more than €10,000 during the year, you will need an e-Tax Clearance certificate.
- The local authority reserves the right to make any necessary enquiries to verify information or for clarification of supporting documents provided with a grant application and will exclude from consideration for a grant any applicant who supplies false or misleading information or documents.

1. Details of the Applicant	
Name of applicant (in block capitals):	
Address (location of DWWTS): EIRCODE (required):	
Telephone no:	
E-mail address:	
E-Tax clearance printout:	Yes ☐ No ☐
Reference on letter from RBMS/local Authority:	
In the last 12 months, have you received a grant from any public body? If yes, please provide details: • amount: • date paid:	Yes ☐ No ☐ €
2. Checklist to identify defects	
(a) Has the DWWTS been de-sludged within the last year?	Yes ☐ No ☐
(b) Is all surface water/roof water diverted away from the DWWTS?	Yes ☐ No ☐
(c) What is the system type?	☐ Septic tank ☐ Secondary ☐ Tertiary

SAMPLE

(d) Has the system been inspected and maintained within the last 2 years?	Yes ☐ No ☐
(e) What is the infiltration type?	☐ Soakaway ☐ Percolation area ☐ Raised percolation area (Mound System) ☐ Polishing filter ☐ Pipe to surface water ☐ Wetland/Reed bed ☐ Willow bed ☐ Other (specify on separate sheet)
(f) Is there presence of adverse vegetation (percolation) indicators in the infiltration area such as: • wet areas/ponding, • lush grass, • rough lands/rushes, etc.	Yes ☐ No ☐

3. General description and cost of works to be undertaken, as prepared by a competent person (copy of full proposal must also be attached)

4. Previous payments

Was any grant paid in respect of this DWWTS in the last 7 years? If yes, please provide details: • amount: • date paid:	Yes ☐ No ☐ €

5. Details of Contractor(s) (e-Tax Clearance printout for each contractor must be provided)

Contractor 1	**Contractor 2 (if applicable)**
Contractor name:	Contractor name:
Contractor address:	Contractor address:

SAMPLE

EIRCODE:	EIRCODE:

6. Declaration

I declare that the information provided by me on this application form is correct and I understand that the provision of any false or misleading information or invalid supporting documents may result in this claim being cancelled.

Signature of applicant: _____

Date: _____

CHECK LIST

Please ensure that the following documentation is included with your application:

☐ Itemised receipts for all work(s) carried out,

☐ Proposal of works included

☐ e-Tax Clearance printout for each contractor engaged.

PLEASE SUBMIT THE FULLY COMPLETED FORM DWWTS AfA (a) AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION TO YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY OFFICE

14.2 FORM DWWTS AfA (b) Payment Claim Form

GRANT PAYMENT CLAIM FORM

Works for the repair, remediation, upgrade or replacement of a Domestic Wastewater Treatment System (DWWTS) in an AfA where the applicant has received a letter from River Basin Management Service (RBMS), formerly Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO), or the Local Authority confirming eligibility to apply for a grant.

- Please read the information notes before completing the claim form.
- All questions on the form must be answered and where specified, supporting documents must be provided. Incomplete forms, or those which are not accompanied by the appropriate documents, will not be processed.
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other checks as it considers necessary before approving the application. Works started before written approval are not eligible for grant assistance.

- The grant scheme is administered by local authorities. Any enquiries should be addressed to the local authority's Rural Water Liaison Officer or Environment Section
- All forms to be used can be obtained from the local authority, who will provide assistance with completing them, if required.
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- The local authority reserves the right to make any necessary enquiries to verify information or for clarification of supporting documents provided with a grant application. An application that includes false or misleading information or documents will not be approved for a grant.

1. Details of the Applicant	
Name of applicant (in block capitals):	
Address (location of DWWTS): EIRCODE (required):	
Telephone no:	
E-Tax clearance printout:	Yes ☐ No ☐
E-mail address:	

2. General description and cost of works carried out, as detailed by a competent person (itemised receipt(s) must be provided when the works are completed)

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3. Details of Contractor(s) (e-Tax Clearance Certificate printout for each contractor *must* be provided if different from the contractor listed on the application form)

Contractor 1	**Contractor 2 (if applicable)**
Contractor name:	Contractor name:
Contractor address: EIRCODE:	Contractor address: EIRCODE:

4. Declaration

I declare that the information provided by me on this grant payment claim form is correct and I understand that the provision of any false or misleading information or invalid supporting documents may result in this claim being cancelled.

Signature of claimant: _____

Date: _____

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14.3 Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems Grant Areas for Action Application Process Flow Chart

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The Department of
Housing, Local Government and Heritage

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