


2022 National Enforcement Priorities Progress Report

National Enforcement Priority:	GOVERNANCE - RMCEI Review & Reporting
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RMCEI Plan frequency of reviews should be bi-annual at a minimum. The review frequency and the outcomes should be included in the progress report. • RMCEI reviews should evaluate progress of NEPs and assess if planned inspection targets are on track. • RMCEI reviews should provide reasons for any deviation from targets, planned activities or objectives set out in the plan. • RMCEI reviews should be presented to the Director of Services/Senior Engineer/Senior Management/Environment Strategic Policy Committee at least once during the earlier part of the year, to facilitate plan review. • The RMCEI Plan, RMCEI Data Return and NEP Progress Report should be submitted to the EPA on schedule. 	<p>2022 saw a change in submission dates for the 2022 RMCEI plan and 2021 progress report. This later date in February was welcomed as with new staff and previously introduced changes in reporting format there was some upskilling and learnings required amongst the various inputting teams. That said, SDCC submitted all documentation to the EPA on time.</p> <p>EPA grading on our 2021 plan and subsequent review was received in August, with a mixed set of results. South Dublin was disappointed by some of the grading and the lack of opportunity to respond to EPA comments in advance of official publication. Learnings from the EPA review have been taken on board in preparation of this years returns.</p> <p>Since its initial development in 2017, South Dublin County Council's Waste Enforcement & Licensing Section has been developing its Enforcement Indicators spreadsheet to capture all RMCEI inspection activities throughout the year. 2021 had seen an overhaul of the spreadsheet in amending outdated criteria, but in order to make the capture of data more cross cutting, 2022 saw the spreadsheet expanded to include all RMCEI reference criteria. This spreadsheet was shared amongst inputting sections and was updated in advance of each RMCEI plan review meeting.</p> <p>Reports are generated monthly on RMCEI progress for SDCC Senior Management to be reviewed at Departmental monthly meetings. A progress update is provided by the Senior Executive Engineer and any issues highlighted. 2022 saw changes in team personnel again as WEO's sought promotional opportunities outside the Waste Enforcement area and this had a knock on effect on AER validations. Progress in validations was slow following NWCPO publication in April as new members had to be trained in how to carry out AER validations. This was flagged with Senior Management at departmental meetings, and they were kept abreast</p>

of situation, but as the competency of the team improved, some 72% of all AER validations was completed in the June to September period.


2022 also saw the implementation of the NEMIS system which replaced the monthly reports to the WERLA introduced during the pandemic. NEMIS was used for reporting on the Waste stream with the Water, Air & Noise modules set to follow in 2023.

RMCEI plan implementation review meetings were held formally three times in 2022 with all inputting sections in May, July and November with shorter informal meetings held in between to provide updates on activities surrounding RMCEI topics such as the advent of NEMIS. These shorter ad-hoc meetings also afforded us a more relaxed environment to discuss team personnel changes and welcome new staff and outline their areas of input in advance of formal reviews. The formal review meetings allowed each inputting section to report on their progress to date and where they were in relation to their planned works.

As a number of teams had had personnel changes during the year, with fresh eyes some of the proposed planned inspection figures were questioned. It was at our formal review meeting in November that it was identified that our Water Pollution Section would not be carrying inspections in relation to 6.4.6 Farm Inspections Other e.g. routine farm inspection but not GAP inspection in 2022, nor had they in previous years and that this planned inspection was obviously an erroneous entry. From a review of data provided for the creation of the 2022 plan, it was noted that these inspections had been proposed, but after additional review with the relevant section it was accepted that they had been proposed in error. The matter was discussed with and approved by the Director of Service. A revised 2022 RMCEI Plan was submitted to the EPA on the 7th December.

It is noted that the realisation of target not being achieved should have been flagged sooner but with changes in personnel it is not always evident that slippage occurs.

That said, the mechanisms we have in place for responding to plan updates was shown to be robust and worked well in this instance.


National Enforcement Priority: GOVERNANCE - Environmental Complaint Handling	
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the <u>previous reporting year</u> – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment of a dedicated Environmental Complaints Co-ordinator. • Implementation of the National Environmental Complaints Procedure. • Appropriate systems in place for recording and tracking environmental complaints. • Adequate resources assigned to complaint investigation in the RMCEI Plan. • Appropriate handling of EPA referred complaints and Section 63 Notices received by the local authority. • Ensuring timely investigation of complaints and reporting of complaints outcomes. This should include progress on complaints outstanding from previous years and the timeframes for complaint investigation. • Analysis of complaints numbers and inspection intelligence that may have potential impacts on NEPs and other thematic areas. • Details of environmental complaint handling should be provided in the appropriate section of the NEP Progress Report. 	<p>South Dublin assigns the role of Environmental Complaints coordinator to the Senior Executive Engineer in the Waste Enforcement & Licensing Section. Their role is to ensure that the relevant sections receive the complaints in a timely manner, that they have a robust recording system in place and that the complaints are investigated, and the complainant made aware of the investigations. Where enforcement action is required, the relevant section deals with South Dublin County Councils Law department directly in a strict client-solicitor relationship.</p> <p>The coordinator will also triage initial referrals from the EPA and determine whom best within the Local Authority should deal with the complaint as it may involve many departments, not all of whom would have an input into RMCEI activities. It is noted that complaints in relation to public sewerage network continue to be referred to the LA. Uisce Eireann are the public utility responsible for public networks and private connections to these. While the LA's provide service to Uisce Eireann under an SLA, these referrals should be directed to Uisce Eireann in the first instance.</p> <p>South Dublin County Council maintains a number of computer databases for the recording of Environmental complaints.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Complaint System. (ECS) This system maintains Environmental Complaints generated from members of the public. This system is used to track actions and progress of the individual complaints. The individual cases can be tracked through its workflow by means of a unique identifier from the original complaint to prosecution. At each stage of the process, the person assigned to the task is identified. Data recovered during investigations such as photos, correspondence etc is documented along with each complaint held in the system. The system is also used to allow other SDCC Departments to raise Environmental Issues/Concerns which require reporting. Reports from external sources, such as EPA's National Environmental Complaints line and Fix your Street, requiring environmental inspections are also logged

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting of complaint numbers and investigation for each thematic area in the RMCEI Data Returns. 	<p>on this system. In 2022 a total of 4086 environmental complaints across the organisation were recorded, 70% in litter , 22% in waste, 7% in Air & Noise and 1% in Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member Representation This system logs queries generated by Local Elected Representatives for the attention of South Dublin County Council Staff. The queries relating to environmental issues generally fall under the non-routine inspection. The query is directed to the relevant section and in turn it is assigned to an individual staff member or team. For the purpose of Waste Enforcement, all queries are monitored to ensure the case is closed once appropriate action is taking. Any actions resulting from investigations, enforcement and clean ups are recorded. Monthly management team reports are generated to ensure activities are correctly closed and elected members are informed of the progress of the issue raised. 373 environmental queries were raised by Elected Members in 2022 Section Reporting Logs The individual sections maintain report logs for the investigations carried out under the RMCEI Plan. The log layout is agreed at the start of the year, with the RMCEI Coordinator, to ensure the details captured at the time of the inspection allows for accurate reporting of investigations, monitors the sections progress throughout the year and where possible identify trends or areas of concerns that require further focus. Based on all waste enforcement investigations carried out in 2022, some 82 cases were referred to our Law Department for prosecution, which is a 48% increase on 2021 and a 86% increase on 2020. Those referred for prosecution in 2021 and heard in 2022 saw 9 successful convictions. <p>It was noted that during the pandemic there was a massive increase in environmental complaints received from the public. Annual complaints between 2019 and 2021 averaged just under 5400 per year, however, 2022 saw a dramatic drop to 4086 environmental complaints received. The use of the 'Fix Your street' platform was one of the most widely used channels for complaint reporting. As the pandemic weaned and people returned to pre-pandemic ways of life, we noted a resulting drop in complaints received through this platform.</p>
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This service ceased in July of 2022. The EPA ‘See it? Say It!’ smartphone app could be used as a replacement for the Fix Your Street model, however we have not noted any corollary in reports since its launch. South Dublin County Council will continue to promote the EPA app during 2023.

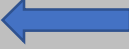
NEP Assessment Criteria		
A	For regulated / authorised sites, a compliance rate documented and compared over the previous years, and analysed or explained;	CORE
B	Demonstrate appropriate site selection methodology and inspection implementation and/or early interventions;	
C	Demonstration that non-compliances/unauthorised activities are being detected and are being followed up – and some progress in the NEP is shown;	
D	Clear example(s) of a positive environmental outcome(s) – something was achieved to improve the environment (not simply reached a target of inspections);	
E	Clear useful learning in a NEP area (positive or negative e.g. what to do, or what not to do, or identification of illegal sites or unauthorised operators);	Complementary
F	Collaborative work with WERLA, NTFSO, RWMPO, LAWPRO, EPA, Catchment Care Projects, inter-departmental within the local authority or with other local authorities; cross cutting NEP collaboration;	
G	Demonstration of a proactive approach , or innovation in dealing with a problem or demonstration of an enforcement curiosity ;	
H	Compliance promotion and awareness raising activities;	
I	Activities on data validation, data analysis, systems development, website development ;	
J	Significant enforcement actions/prosecutions and the outcomes such as remediation, sharing of lessons learnt to aid national consistency of enforcement;	
K	Case studies written up and shared that encompass any of the above properties.	


National Enforcement Priority: WATER – Pressures from Agriculture (slurry/soiled water collection and storage)	
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the ‘RMCEI data returns’ or your ‘RMCEI Plan’.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspections of farmyards in areas where agriculture is identified as a significant pressure, with a small percentage in other areas, as defined in the National Agricultural Inspection Programme for local authorities. • Undertake targeted agricultural inspections specific to the pollutants of concern (P, N and organics), using the EPA Pollution Impact Potential (PIP) maps and EPAs Targeting Agricultural Measures Map. • Take all necessary steps to ensure compliance, including follow up and close out of non-compliances. • Cross reporting of non-compliances to DAFM. • Document and report results for all farm inspections to the EPA. 	<p>South Dublin County Council carried out approximately 100 farm inspections across the county in the past 15 years and there are approximately 250 farms in the county and compliance rates have been high. This is a reflection on the farms in the county, which predominately comprises of low stocked sheep and beef farming – with only 5 known dairy farms in the county. While farming does have an impact on rivers and streams, urban pollution is the dominant river water quality pressure for South Dublin County.</p> <p>In 2022 three farm inspections were carried out in the Bohernabreena area of the county. Two of the farms were located on land identified as Pollution Impact Potential - Nitrate (PIP-N) PIPN – CSA Rank 4, and one farm from a CSA Rank 6 area. Most of the land CSA (Critical Source Area) in this area is ranked 5 or 6 [i.e. low risk]. The farm inspections were carried out at the end of the year during the closed period.</p> <p>The Bohernabreena area is categorised by the EPA as a White Flag sub-basin and agriculture is not considered a significant pressure and therefore, the aim is to protect the sub-basin. However, the lower Glenasmole lake currently has a Poor status [dropping from Good since the last cycle] and therefore, the aim is to restore it to Good status. The Council last assessed farms in the sub-basin in the 2008-2010 period and the Council considers the 27 farms in the sub-basin need to be revisited in 2023 & 2026 period.</p> <p>Two of the farms assessed were compliant [66% of the total inspections]. The non-compliant farm had one minor non-compliance with regards to soiled water storage [33% of the total inspections]. A compliance letter was issued to the farmer.</p> <p>The elderly non-compliant farmer was very receptive to information the Council provided about the farm inspection process at the time of making the appointment and the noncompliance explanation and discussion at the time of inspection. The Council advised the farmer to engage an agricultural advisor to assist him rectify the non-compliance. The farmer committed to making the necessary changes and the Council will work with</p>

him on these with an aim of works completion by the end of Q2 2023. The matter was not cross compliance reported as the non-compliance was deemed to be below the threshold.

It is likely the improvements will go towards the improvement of water quality in the lower Glenasmole lake and aid in its recovery to Good status.

National Enforcement Priority:		WATER – Pressures from Agriculture (slurry and fertiliser spreading)
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council		Activities
 Looking back at the year		<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the ‘RMCEI data returns’ or your ‘RMCEI Plan’.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the <u>previous reporting year</u> – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspections of farmlands in areas where agriculture is identified as a significant pressure, with a small percentage in other areas, as defined in the National Agricultural Inspection Programme for local authorities. • Undertake targeted agricultural inspections specific to the pollutants of concern (P, N and organics), using the EPA Pollution Impact Potential (PIP) maps and EPAs Targeting Agricultural Measures Map. • Take all necessary steps to ensure compliance, including follow up and close out of non-compliances. • Cross reporting of non-compliances to DAFM. • Document and report results for all farm inspections to the EPA. 		<p>South Dublin County Council carried out approximately 100 farm inspections across the county in the past 15 years and there are approximately 250 farms in the county and GAP compliance rates have been high. This is a reflection on the farms in the county, which predominately comprises of low stocked sheep and beef farming in the county – with only 5 known dairy farms in the county. While farming does have an impact on rivers and streams, urban pollution is the dominant river water quality pressure for South Dublin County.</p> <p>In 2022 three farm inspection were carried out in the Bohernabreena area of the county. Two of the farms were located on land identified as Pollution Impact Potential - Nitrate (PIP-N) PIPN – CSA Rank 4, and one farm from a CSA Rank 6 area. To note, most of the land CSA in this area is ranked 5 or 6. The farm inspections were carried out at the end of the year during the closed period.</p> <p>There was no evidence of landspreading of slurry or fertiliser on any of the farms assessed and therefore with regard to this NEP heading there was 100% compliance. Council staff also made specific drives to our rural areas during the closed period to monitor for landspreading. Such roadside assessments were carried out in Bohernabreena, Brittas, Newtown upper, Newcastle, Hazelhatch and Lucan areas during the closed period and no evidence of landspreading was observed. South Dublin County Council thinks this high compliance rate is due to our visibility in the area in 2022 and previous years, and low intensity farming in the county.</p>

National Enforcement Priority: WATER – Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems / Septic Tanks	
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the ‘RMCEI data returns’ or your ‘RMCEI Plan’.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the <u>previous reporting year</u> – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake the allocated number of DWWTS / Septic Tank inspections under the National Inspection Plan for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems 2022 - 2026. • Take all necessary steps to follow up and ensure advisory notices are closed out. • When selecting households for inspection, consider areas where LAWPRO have issued letters of grant eligibility and homeowners have not taken action. 	<p>In 2022, South Dublin County Council assessed 12 houses under the National Inspection plan for DWWTS. The requirement in the Plan for the Council was a minimum of 4 for 2022.</p> <p>Sites were selected for a zone 3 categorised area, which has a small public drinking water supply for the Brittas village [and national school] and surroundings. The reason for selecting 14 houses was due to the fact that all houses are sited very near the drinking water supply and are cottage style homes all side by side. Therefore, to carry out inspections on some and not others might have been seen as a biased approach. Therefore, all 12 were inspected. Note, there were no LAWPRO letters of grant eligibility issued in the county in 2022.</p> <p>When making the inspection appointment date, the Council allowed for plenty of one-to-one discussions with the homeowner on the purpose of the inspections and the Council’s experience of inspections at other properties. The purpose of this was to demonstrate it’s a fair process and provide real stories from nearby areas. This approach is well received by homeowners and takes the ‘scariness’ out of the process. At the time of making the appointment the Council provided the relevant NIP information leaflets.</p> <p>Of the 12 inspected, 7 were compliant 58% and the relevant certificates were issued. Five properties failed [42%] and Advisory notices were issued, and the matters resolved, confirmed by way re-inspection by the Council and closed out on the EDEN DWWTS portal. Homeowners were encouraged to observe each stage of the inspection process so they could take ownership of the system and repairs for now and in the future.</p> <p>Non-compliances in 2022 mainly consisted of desludging and fitting of T-pieces in septic tanks.</p> <p>This work will provide better environmental protection for the drinking water source in Brittas and ensure better drinking water compliance for Uisce Eireann’s distribution network. The work will also likely result in a discussion in the local area about septic tank inspections and what items the Council looks at when performing an inspection.</p> <p>There were not septic tank grant applications to the Council in 2022.</p>

National Enforcement Priority:		WATER – Discharge Licences / Misconnections
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council		Activities
 Looking back at the year		<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the ‘RMCEI data returns’ or your ‘RMCEI Plan’.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all Section 4 Discharge Licence conditions are consistent with the requirements of the Surface Waters and Groundwater regulations. • Undertake risk based inspections/monitoring of Section 4 Discharge Licences. Inspect all licences in areas where discharge licensing is a significant pressure. • Ensure that all licensable discharges are authorised by a Section 4 Discharge Licence. • Ensure compliance with discharge licence conditions and follow up and close out non-compliances and LAWPRO referrals on Section 4s and misconnections. • Follow up on misconnections that have been identified as impacting on water quality, to ensure that works are undertaken by property owners to remediate such misconnections. 		<p><u>Discharge Licences:</u></p> <p>There are 10 s.4 trade effluent discharge licences active in the county. An RMCEI type inspection was carried out at each facility once in 2022. Items covered in the inspections included condition of treatment and monitoring equipment, bunding, leaks, potential for pollution leaks, general housekeeping as per the conditions of their licence. Trade effluent samples were collected from each site amounting to a total of 74 samples collected from the discharge/upstream/downstream points.</p> <p>The 10 sites were substantially compliant with only a few minor items noted requiring attention by the licence holder and addressed within a week, e.g. removal of vegetation at sampling point for safe access. Rectified non-compliances were checked by Council staff by way of specific follow-up inspection or at the time of next trade effluent sample collection. This high compliance rate reflects the frequent and consistent presence of the Council on site each year and the positive interaction and engagement between Council staff and the licence holders. Such presence means receiving waters are not impacted by trade effluent discharges in the county, and in one noticeable case, the trade effluent discharge is of better quality than the receiving water.</p> <p>There were no s.4 licence LAWPRO catchment assessment referrals in 2022. Throughout the year, the Council monitors activities adjacent to our rivers and streams. Where discharges to rivers are observed the Council engages with the site owner and assesses the discharge to determine if it is a trade effluent, and if so, discusses the disposal option with the site operator. In most cases the trade effluent is routed to the foul sewer and licensed by Uisce Eireann, but in some cases, such as ground water pumping during civils construction, the discharge is licenced to discharge to the waters.</p>


Misconnections:

Urban pollution is the dominant river water quality pressure for South Dublin County. The majority of this pollution source is misconnections from houses, industrial and commercial properties. Therefore, there are many discrete polluting discharges of various volume and concentration intermittently discharged to the stormwater drainage network each day and sometime directly to a surface water body.

The Council ensures misconnections reported by the public or other sections of the Council are responded to within the week and the misconnections repaired as soon as practicable. Additional to this the Council in 2022 continued to assess housing estates eligible for the taking in charge process and any misconnections identified in this process we repaired by the homeowner or developer. The Council is also the lead for the Dublin Urban Rivers LIFE project which has identified over 160 misconnected properties out of over 3,000 properties assessed in the River Griffeen catchment in 2022. 80% have been repaired and the remaining are in progress. Project description and information can be viewed at www.dublinriverlife.ie .

The Council in 2022 also performed industrial and commercial assessments at properties in a segment of the River Poddle [Greenhills area]. This work was undertaken due to repeated reports from park users of pollution in this small stream. A thorough misconnection investigation of this portion of the catchment found 14 commercial sinks, 3 toilets, 1 dishwasher and 3 other appliances were misconnected to the stormwater drainage network and discharging to the River Poddle. Property owners were notified, and all misconnections were repaired in 2022.

The Council continued to grow its domestic misconnection information and awareness package in 2022 and made several social media posts in 2022 on the subject to engage with the public.

National Enforcement Priority: WATER – Local Priorities and Water Quality Monitoring	
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete statutory monitoring for WFD surveillance and operational monitoring, investigative monitoring and bathing water monitoring. • Inspect and follow up any local issues (not covered by other NEPs), including non-compliances with water quality standards and LAWPRO referrals. • Address any climate related water quality issues, e.g. impacts due to extreme weather events. • Registration and monitoring of all private drinking water supplies. Investigate supplies that fail to meet drinking water quality standards and take necessary enforcement action. • Engage with LAWPRO and Regional Committees on the implementation of RBMP Actions. 	<p><u>WFD Monitoring:</u></p> <p>The Council met all river and lake WFD OM [rivers and lakes] and SM [river] obligations/commitments for 2022 totalling 86 samples. There was continuous engagement and coordination between the Council and the EPA throughout the year in relation to sample identification/labelling, bottles, sample collection, and delivery to EPA labs. This excellent working relationship meant all samples were delivered on time and as planned.</p> <p>These samples inform river ecological status designation for water bodies in the county as prepared by the EPA.</p> <p><u>Investigative Monitoring:</u></p> <p>The Council collected 175 river monitoring samples additional to WFD in 2022. These are used to supplement and expand on the information about river water quality gathered through WFD monitoring. The extra monitoring provides historical data which can be used to provide realistic river water quality averages when processing s.4 discharge licences or applying trend analysis. The results also provide water quality information regarding sudden change of quality that would initiate a catchment assessment response.</p> <p>The Council also collected 105 water quality samples as investigative samples for the Dublin Urban Rivers LIFE project. These samples track progress of pollution reduction work in the upstream drainage catchment. The samples are a mix of river and stormwater outfall water. For example, the domestic misconnection pollution reduction work in one drainage catchment in 2022 has seen the stormwater outfall average MRP concentration reduce from 300 ug/l to 100 ug/l.</p>


Bathing Water Monitoring:

There are no bathing waters in South Dublin County.

Private Water Supplies:

The Council had six private drinking small supplies in the county in 2022. Five sites were sampled for two Group A samples and one Group B. The sixth site was a mobile food van operating from time-to-time and was only sampled for one Group A. Four sites had met the microbiological criteria and two sites exceeded - one exceedance of total coliform of 1 MPN, and the other 2 MPN. Sample results were discussed at each site during the annual site audit and results were forwarded to each operator at the end of the year. The Council worked collaboratively with the supply owners and with the HSE - Environmental Officers through the year regarding these non-compliances.

The compliance rate for microbiology is high in the county due to intensive engagement work carried out in 2020 & 2021 resulting in water treatment equipment upgrades in those years. The Council has also spent the time on site explaining groundwater protection to operators and in doing so the operators gain the confidence to take control of their water supply treatment and make the link between clean drinking water and their business success.

National Enforcement Priority: WASTE - Tackling significant illegal waste activities & Multi-Agency Sites/Operators of Concern	
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'. Note that Criteria A (to provide a compliance rate and comparison with previous years) is not specifically applicable under this NEP.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted inspections and follow up enforcement actions of unauthorised collectors and site operators using intelligence from waste data flows, complaints and other available data. • Co-ordination with, and input from Revenue/Social Protection/An Garda Síochána in relation to unauthorised activity and identified sites of concern. • Multi-agency investigations for sites of concern. • Roadside check points. • Relevant Anti-Dumping Initiatives implemented. • Traceability requirements to be enforced at Permitted/Licensed sites. • Focus on those who are facilitating the unauthorised treatment of waste. 	<p><u>Illegal Waste Activity</u></p> <p>Having found evidence pertaining to an individual contained within dumped waste to the north of the county subsequent contact with the individual revealed that she had allowed an unregistered collector to remove her waste. Details of this collector were provided to South Dublin and legal proceedings were initiated.</p> <p>Subsequently South Dublin was notified by Wicklow County Councils Environmental Warden in relation to a case they were investigating along similar lines and the owner of the waste under the Wicklow investigation was able to provide a vehicle registration to assist Wicklow with their case.</p> <p>Having checked with the Motor Vehicle Registration Office into the ownership of the vehicle, it transpired that it belonged to the same individual identified as removing waste in our investigations. Having arranged for the vehicle to be stopped by An Garda Síochána, a verbal Section 14 (5) direction was issued to the individual to immediately cease collecting waste until they had a valid Waste Collection Permit, this was followed up with a hand delivered Section 14 (5) Direction.</p> <p>No response was received to the direction and legal proceedings were initiated.</p> <p>In order to secure conviction, it was negotiated with Wicklow County Council that the original holder of the waste found in Wicklow would act as witness in the South Dublin case and their case against the witness would be dropped.</p> <p>In October of 2022 the illegal collector was convicted under Section 34 and Section 32 of the WMA, fined, and ordered to pay costs.</p> <p>Material dumped in both instances was cleared and paid for by the original holders of waste.</p>

Promotion of use of permitted collectors was carried on our social media streams throughout 2022. The mywaste.ie toolbox was invaluable in providing direction for these communications. The toolbox was also utilised in our environmental outreach pilot that we carried out in tandem with one of our Anti-Dumping Initiatives in 2022.

Our ever-popular mattress amnesty ran throughout September which is aimed at removing man in van collections and illegal disposal of this bulky waste stream. This year we introduced an environmental awareness element to our collection days with information on waste presentation and recycling, illegal waste collections, litter and the law as well as other environmental topics being handed out and having WEO's and Anti-Litter wardens on hand to answer any queries the public had.



The outreach was well attended, not just by those attending the amnesty but also by members of the general public.

Some 912 mattresses were recycled during the amnesty and diverted from potential illegal waste disposal.

2022 finally saw South Dublin County Council achieve Complex Organisation registration with the IAA (Irish Aviation Authority). The process took some 11 months to complete and was frustrating at every step. The application process is overly complex with multiple registrations along the way through various competency levels as opposed to being able to apply for the required pilot competency at first registration.

South Dublin is a registered entity with two sub-entities, our Planning Department and Waste & Litter Enforcement, with 8 fully licensed pilots operating drones in the enforcement area alone. Drones have been

used extensively in relation to investigating reported illegal waste activities and especially in covert reconnaissance.

Both the legal and judicial worlds were reluctant to use the drone captured evidence in the last number of years whilst awaiting clarifications on their admissibility. Whilst they are an invaluable tool, the evidence they recorded needed to be backed up actual eyewitness evidence which could be cross examined if required. We trust that the publication of the LGMA procedures following the enactment of the Circular Economy and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2022 will see greater clarity around and more reliance upon evidence gathered by drones.

Multi-Agency Sites of Interest

Throughout 2022 South Dublin continued working in close partnership with the PURE (Protecting Uplands and Rural Environments) project. A first of its kind partnership project incorporating 3 Local Authorities bordering the Dublin/Wicklow uplands, Coilte, National Parks & Wildlife Services and the Wicklow Uplands Council which combats illegal dumping/fly-tipping.

Having adopted our Household Waste GIS system to record other environmental complaints, we have set about developing a heat map of illegal dumping sites in the Dublin Uplands. We intend to use this data in 2023 to deploy covert CCTV upon publication of LGMA codes of practice for use of mobile recording equipment for waste enforcement as prescribed under the Circular Economy and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2022

PURE – No attribute data given. GPS for 5 locations supplied. Point data only.




Works continued throughout 2022 on cases relating to the Fingal County Councils 2021 investigation into Blancomet Recycling IE Ltd. Having received information from An Garda Síochána in late 2021, investigations into repeat customers from the South Dublin area concluded with just a single referral for prosecution, which will be before the courts in 2023.

Most customers were found to have had held materials ancillary to their normal work practices.

Of those who weren't due to the poor details captured by the ATF at time of sale South Dublin was unable to identify the persons of interest. Use of fake id, incomplete addresses, inconsistency of vehicle registration all led to investigations being dropped.

Learnings in relation to these records and their incompleteness have been disseminated amongst our Waste Enforcement team and are being applied during inspections/audits at South Dublin facilities.

A case study in relation to illegal holding of waste is included in 2022 Data Returns on NEMIS

National Enforcement Priority: WASTE - Construction and Demolition Activity	
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the ‘RMCEI data returns’ or your ‘RMCEI Plan’.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p><u>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk based inspections of construction sites using WERLA intelligence and inspection templates. • Inspection of Article 27 sites of origin and destination to include material notified under Article 27 being accepted at WFP/Licensed sites. • Inspection of soil recovery sites to ensure only appropriate materials accepted. • Validation and inspection of WCP/WFP and licensed sites dealing with C&D waste. • Take all necessary steps to resolve non-compliant issues including the selling of crushed concrete from WFPs/Licensed sites without EoW decision. • Incorporate proposed improvements to the Article 27 notification system. • Tracking of waste delivered to Licensed sites. • Based on researched data and local knowledge, identify authorised operators for further investigation and/or enforcement action. • Focused monitoring of the resources and systems available for gathering and reporting waste data to be carried out as part of site audits at waste facilities/waste collectors. 	<p><u>Risk based inspection of construction sites</u></p> <p>South Dublin developed its programme of C&D waste inspections, based primarily on commencement notices received from our Planning Department in March of 2022. Size, Duration, and review of submitted Waste Management Plans helped prioritise this programme in advance of the 2022 WERLA developed programme of works and its listing of Major Public Projects and Strategic Housing Developments for the Eastern Midlands Region being received in May.</p> <p>Of the 58 projects on the MPP list, only 3 were listed as at construction stage, however from review of the listing we were able to cross reference against commencement notices and were satisfied that an additional 12 sites of strategic housing development were on site and under construction and were already included in our works plan.</p> <p>Some 52 site inspections were carried out in 2022, inspections based upon the guidance contained within the WERLA Monitoring of Construction & Demolition Waste Activity document and were recorded using the 2021 updated WERLA inspection form and latterly the 2022 WERLA inspection form. The forms proved extremely beneficial to our new WEO’s who had little or no background in construction activities.</p> <p><u>Validation and inspection of Waste Collection Permit (WCP)/Waste Facility Permit (WFP) (including Soil Recovery Sites)</u></p> <p>Site Inspections and subsequent documentation collected in relation to disposal of C&D waste led to 15 subsequent WCP investigations. Notable sites included one in the Ballymount area which caused our WEO’s to contact the contractor tasked with disposing of construction waste from the site. Having checked that the contractor had a valid collection permit dockets were sought relating to the collection and disposal of C&D waste from the site.</p> <p>There is a requirement under Condition 4.4 of the contractors Waste Collection Permit to create a docket (electronic or written) for each load of waste and these dockets must be presented to the Local Authority upon request. Condition 4.6 stated what information is to be recorded on every docket and that these dockets are to be retained for “a period not less than “seven years”.</p>

Dockets were submitted but all post-dated the date of the site inspection. Further investigations were followed up with the waste facility mentioned on the dockets. From interview and inspection of the WFP records, no records of waste acceptance were recorded in and around the time of initial site inspection.

Subsequently fifteen fixed payment notices were issued to the contractor for various breaches of their WCP.

Section 14(5) Direction to seek the correct dockets and invite to interview under caution have gone unanswered and the case was subsequently referred for prosecution.


There were 31 WFPs and 11 COR's operating in South Dublin in 2022 with just the one operating as a soil recovery facility. All were visited on numerous occasions as set out under our developed risk register with a total of 96 inspections carried out. Audits were carried out in line with multi annual scheduling.

In relation to C&D waste no non-compliances were found during inspections in 2022, sites were well managed and operated

Article 27 Notifications Activity (Sites of Origin and destination)

South Dublin was the source of 23 Article 27 Notices, with just 3 determined so far as a by-product and the destination of 50 Notices of which 33 (road plannings) were determined as a by-product in 2022. Notifications of notices are received directly by the Waste Enforcement & Licensing Section and on foot of same 16 site inspections took place, and the observed material was consistent with that declared to the EPA in the main.

South Dublin WEO's, following a site inspection in January of 2022 using the WERLA template to document same, were dissatisfied by use of crushed concrete including rebar for use as a haul road. A submission was made to the EPA as the material could not be considered a by-product by South Dublin and advised that the application should have instead been under Article 28 for end of waste determination. It's noted that this determination has still to be made some 12 months after notification to the EPA and the material remains onsite.

National Enforcement Priority: WASTE - End-of Life Vehicles (ELV) & the Waste Metal sector	
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk based inspections of Authorised Treatment Facilities and other ELV sites using WERLA intelligence and inspection templates (at least one inspection per annum of permitted sites). • Validation and inspection of records for WCP/WFP and licensed operators dealing with ELV and metal waste. • Take all necessary steps to resolve non-compliant issues. 	<p>Inspections and audits were carried out on all ATFs based in South Dublin on the 2022 RMCEI risk register.</p> <p>Of all AERS reviewed in 2022, 8.8% were returned as inconclusive, compared with national average of 7.59%. One such ATF returned as inconclusive happened to have been previously returned as inconclusive in 2021.</p> <p>As onsite data audits had not been held during the course of the pandemic, although site inspections took place of the waste collection areas, 2022 saw the forensic audit of their 2020 returns. The course of the Audit, which was attended by both the WERLA and the NTFSO covered detailed examination of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrepancies between the ATFs WFP returns and their WCP returns. • Investigations in to correct application of LoW codes, particularly 16 01 16; 16 06 01*; 16 01 18 and 20 01 40. • Tracing that all WCP holders using the facility have the facility actually listed on their WCP. • Investigate waste on site based on previous inspections 16 01 03 held on site but not recorded as waste in or onsite in their AER. <p>And while some miscoding issues were identified, WCP permits were in order and a subsequent technical amendment was applied to the permit to cover LoW codes 16 01 21; 16 01 22; to cover previously omitted codes on their permit and bring them back into compliance.</p> <p>Records of top five repeat customers under high value waste streams were analysed off site and one particular company from the Southwest of the country who came to the Dublin facility, and bypassed all other ATFs between Kerry and Dublin are now under investigation in conjunction with Kerry County Council.</p> <p>Back-office audit of their 2021 AER is due to take place this coming April.</p>

South Dublin began investigations into an ATF site that was coming to the end of its permit in Q3 2022. The site, whilst well managed and had only a few non-compliances identified over the course of its permit, all of which were rectified, is subject to a planning issue.

Previously a permit application could reference a planning application number (not necessarily a grant of planning) and be compliant in its application. This has caused a number of issues of late as various permits have come to the end of their life. Having learned from this lesson on legacy permits, South Dublin will not engage in permit applications that do not hold relevant planning permission and permits shall only be issued subject to planning permission being granted for the activity and revoked if planning is not granted.

Early engagement was decided upon in this case and with communications sent well in advance of permit expiry outlining potential issues surrounding potential renewal. The facility has been instructed to cease operations whilst its permit has expired and waste held on site is being transferred to a neighbouring ATF.

Regular unannounced inspections of the site are ongoing ensuring compliance with our direction whilst the operator tries to resolve his planning issues.

National Enforcement Priority: WASTE - Waste Collection - Household & Commercial	
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the <u>previous reporting year</u> – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection of WCP operators for provision of 3 bin system. • Surveys of retail, hospitality and industrial sectors to ensure proper use of 3 bin system, segregation and use of authorised collectors. • Sampling/analysis of treated waste outputs • AER Validations on WCP and WFP priority lists. • Maintenance of register of households with/without a waste collection service and targeted inspections in areas with low compliance. • Focused monitoring of the resources and systems available for gathering and reporting waste data to be carried out as part of site audits at waste facilities/waste collectors. • Monitoring of waste acceptance criteria at authorised sites e.g. WFP, Waste Transfer Sites, Landfills and Waste to Energy Plant. 	<p><u>Household Waste</u></p> <p>Development of South Dublin’s Household and Commercial Waste Collectors GIS System was severely impacted due to personnel changes in 2022. Initial discussions took place with the WERLA on the potential to scale up our system and apply it nationally. These discussions proved fruitless, and we would expect to see further development in-house in 2023 with assignment of new staff.</p> <p>This did not deter us from compiling live a live register of household accounts based on quarterly returns from Waste Collectors operating in South Dublin. Based on these quarterly returns and upon complaints received by members of the public, the 2022 Household Waste surveys were concentrated on areas of high service penetration to try to determine cause of complaints. It was noted that of the 179 surveys carried out, over 93% of properties surveyed had a waste collection service, nearly 2% utilised the civic amenity for their waste disposal and the remaining 8 premises required follow up investigations. These figures are nearly identical to the results obtained from the 150 surveys carried out in 2021 in a different location in the county.</p> <p>636 inspections were also carried out following complaints relating to household waste which led to 42 fixed payment notices being issued under the 2018 Household and Commercial Waste Bye-Laws.</p> <p>Results of this year’s surveys showed an overwhelming compliance rate with SDCC’s household waste byelaws.</p> <p>AER validations were carried out on the 9 Household Waste Collectors operating in South Dublin as well as the single PTU. Surveys carried out on 8 household collectors in relation to provision of 3 bin system in December. All inspections returned a 100% compliance in the areas surveyed.</p> <p>No back-office audits were carried out in 2022, but we will see the start of detailed back-office audits commencing with one of the largest multi-region collectors in mid-April of 2023</p>

Commercial Waste

On foot of the 2021 AER returns and subsequent validation by SDCC in 2022, some 11 fines were issued for non-submission of data to commercial waste collection permit holders. Of these 4 fines were paid and the remaining 7, who were reminded of their outstanding debt but have still chosen to ignore it, have been referred for prosecution.


It came to SDCC's notice late in 2022 that one of the collectors of commercial waste was offering bag collections in areas close to the border with a sister LA. The sister LA allows for bag collections however they are not permitted in South Dublin. This led to a high-level audit of the other collectors operating in South Dublin and following investigations it was noted it was just the single operator providing bag collections. The collector has been warned and was given an appropriate timeframe to cease this practice and advise their customers of same.

2022 saw the nursing home and fast-food sector targeted for inspections in relation to waste segregation. While all 30 properties source segregated their wastes it was noted that

- 3 properties source segregated within the premise but combined their waste in communal MMW receptacles.
- Those properties part of a chain were unaware of the amount of waste they produced as contracts for waste collection went through either facilities management companies or directly with company had office and data held on site only recorded numbers of collections and not weights

As these were first time inspections for a number of years, no enforcement was taken however information letters detailing their obligations were sent to the managers of each site. The 12 owner/occupier sites showed an impressive depth of knowledge in relation to their obligations and were actively using data from their waste collector to assist in cost lowering activities. At a time of increasing utility costs, owner/occupiers had been able to lower their waste collection costs by increase adherence to segregation practices.

Those 18 chain/multi-occupancy sites will be inspected again in 2023 to determine if appropriate measure have been put in place or whether enforcement actions are appropriate.

National Enforcement Priority: WASTE - Producer Responsibility Initiatives and additional local priorities	
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p><u>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and inspection of all suspected producers who require registration. • Examination of potential for information exchange between Local Government Sector and other Agencies, where appropriate. • Relevant PRIs with local impact and local priorities, not covered by the other waste NEPS, should be reported (e.g. where suspected producers are not registered or are non-compliant). • (RMECI PRIs: WEEE Regs, Battery Regs, Suspected Vehicle Importers (ELV Regulations 2016), Farm Plastics, Plastic Bag Levy, Packaging Regs – Suspected Major Producers and Registered Self Compliers, Tyre Regs – Tyre Retailers). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Packaging 2022 saw South Dublin in cooperation with the WERLA and REPAK identify 4 suspected major producers in its functional area as well as progress outstanding engagement with previously identified companies. Our engagement with this years suspected major producers was fraught to say the least with all having to be issued with Regulation 25 notices. The threat of legal proceedings for non-compliance with the notice does not appear to have had the desired effect and all 4 have been referred to our Law Department to begin proceedings. There were better outcomes on some of our legacy suspected producers with 2 identified as not meeting the criteria to be a major producer, 3 registering with REPAK and 1 becoming a self-complier with South Dublin. Outstanding prosecutions in relation to Regulation 25 non compliances are due before the court in March. <p>2022 also saw the last year for self-compliance with the packaging regulations as the regulations were amended in December last. South Dublin wrote to all self-compliers and advised them of the changes and their impact on those registered. Q4 and 2022 Annual self-compliance reports will still be audited by South Dublin and any enforcements identified will be carried out.</p> • Mercury Regulations South Dublin as the competent authority to monitor compliance of regulation 4 (1) and 4(2) of the European Union (Mercury) Regulations 2018, contacted all 36 Irish Dental Association registered dental practices in relation to self-compliance with the regulations in June. This was the second year in which self-declaration forms were issued. The number being somewhat reduced on 2021, but as so many inaccuracies were identified in the IDA's register the year previously, data cleansing was carried out in

advance of issuing forms. 2022 saw a much-improved initial response rate of 55% compared to 25% the previous year.

Onsite inspections were carried out on non-responders in December following provision of training on the Mercury Regulations. All were found to be in compliance and could not offer explanation as to their non-response to self-declaration. As proposed previously, it would benefit not only South Dublin but all other local authorities if the WERLA or some other body would compile a definitive register of dental practices for the Local Authorities to monitor.

- Tyres

Along with routine inspections under the Tyre Regulations 2017, South Dublin ran a campaign in advance of Halloween and bonfire season in an effort to reduce the amount of material being left unattended for use as bonfire fuel. We communicated with 124 tyre retailers, suppliers and associated premises of Repak ELT/Circol members within South Dublin and reminded them of their obligations in relation to storage and disposal of waste under the 1996 Act, as amended. This action, along with other engagements, saw the fewest recorded bonfires over the Halloween season since 2019.

Inspections throughout the year did not identify any significant non-compliances.

- WEEE/Plastic Bag Levy/Batteries

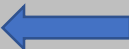
Inspections in 2022 centred around larger retailers. Again, it had been pre-pandemic since these multinationals had been targeted for inspections. No major non-compliances were noted.

2022 Local Priority – Traveller Accommodation Sites

Following ongoing joint inspections of waste accumulations between Waste Enforcement Section and SDCC's Traveller Accommodation Unit, a scheme to reach out to the traveller community and provide an education and awareness campaign surrounding waste and the potential health effects of improper storage was devised. The scheme would address disposal, enforcement, consequences of illegal activity, safety and health aspects at planned open days in order to open a discussion with the traveller community. Those who attended would be encouraged to identify areas near their residences that could benefit from clean ups.

One of the main pillars of the proposed scheme was to hold formal information days with a public health official in attendance to outline health issues associated with improper storage of and burning of wastes. Whilst speakers were initially penciled in, as the Ukrainian refugee crisis emerged, no public health officials were available, and we had to provide ad-hoc information sessions. The Chief Fire Officer was invited to a number of sites and talks on burning of waste and safety were given. Information was provided thru the Clondalkin Travelers Development group as well as Tallaght Travelers.

Multiple site inspections were undertaken and information on compliance with waste legislation given. Ultimately nearly 48tonnes of accumulated wastes was removed from accommodation site surroundings over the course of the summer. 2023 will see this area again as a priority, however this year having previously offered information and assistance, the focus will be on traceability and enforcement actions.


National Enforcement Priority: AIR - Solid Fuel Inspections	
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the ‘RMCEI data returns’ or your ‘RMCEI Plan’.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the <u>previous reporting year</u> – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackle the sale of non-compliant fuel and its use via compliance promotion, inspection and enforcement of fuel merchants and retailers. • Participate in multi-agency operations investigating the sale of non-compliant fuels. • Develop and implement a programme for the sampling and analysis of fuel types (this can be carried out per individual local authority or a joint approach can be adopted with other local authorities). • Carry out awareness programme to promote compliance by increasing the awareness of how the choices people make in heating their homes impacts on their air quality and health and legal obligations. • Establish and/or maintain a list, including the number and profile of solid-fuel merchants operating in each local authority area, including those using social medial platforms to market solids fuels. • Build capacity through engaging, collaborating and sharing with colleagues in other local authorities via networks and working groups and participating in training events. 	<p>Collaborative work regarding participation in the Air Pollution Act was demonstrated by Environmental Health Officers of South Dublin County Council (SDCC) attending Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) consultation event/s in 2022. This included collecting and sharing data with other local authorities and learning from the experiences of environmental health practitioners. This collaborative approach identified concerns and solutions that could support organisations responsible for air quality control such as the EPA and local authorities, improve environmental decision-making, and widen understanding of air quality legislation.</p> <p>In addition, the Environmental Health Officers Department has an established communication’s strategy for sharing relevant information with SDCC Communications Unit. For instance, the Communications Unit was updated and made aware of the new regulations on fuels for domestic heating – Air Pollution Act 1987 (Solid Fuels) Regulations 2021 (SI. No. 529 of 2022. This included guidance on the restricting the retail, online and commercial sale of smoky fuels including smoky coal, turf and wet wood. This shared information was specifically designed for public and other stakeholders and written in a concise and comprehensive manner.</p> <p>Accordingly, SDCC Communications Unit informed the public via local newspaper, SDCC Climate Change Newsletter and website. This information increased the publics’ knowledge about air quality and improves their response to it. The established communications strategy makes for improving performance in line with SDCC’s environmental policy.</p>


In 2022, The Environmental Health Department of South Dublin County Council planned and carried out 30 inspections of retailers selling solid fuel products within its boundary area. These retailers were selected for the following reasons:


- Located on busy road networks within the local authority area.
- Retailers are located where many people are likely to work such as commercial/industrial estates.
- Where solid fuels are sold with other products such as petrol/diesel, hardware and grocery.
- Where solid fuel products are sold and convenient for pick up and collection e.g. petrol filling stations and hardware stores.
- Where solid fuel retailers are located in areas of different socio-economic backgrounds within the council area.
- Where new retailers selling solid fuels have established trading.
- Where solid fuel retailers were not compliant in previous inspections.

The above activity also involved compliance building which entailed alerting (verbally) the owners and managers of the requirements of new solid fuel legislation. Each solid fuel retailer that was visited was subsequently written to advising them that an inspection had occurred at their retail premises and its outcome. Furthermore, this letter made the retailer aware of new regulations for domestic heating - Air Pollution Act 1987 (Solid Fuels) Regulations 2022 (S.I. No. 529 of 2022) including restricting the retail, online and commercial sale of smoky fuels, including smoky coal, turf and wet wood. Finally, the letter conveyed that South Dublin County Council will continue to carry out inspections of solid fuel retailers.


All retail outlets inspected were found to be compliant.

National Enforcement Priority:	AIR - Air Quality Monitoring Activities and Data Use
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the EPA to complete the expansion of the Ambient Air Monitoring Programme network including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist EPA to determine viable locations for air quality monitoring stations. 2. Assist EPA to progress the siting of air quality monitoring stations. 3. Assist EPA to troubleshoot issues at existing air quality monitoring stations including the nomination and notification to the EPA of a primary and secondary contact person. 4. Assist (where possible, to the best extent possible) EPA to maintain existing and new air quality monitoring stations. • Review local air quality data to identify hotspots and to prioritise sites/areas for action. • Ensure local air quality data, including a map, is made available to the general public as soon as technically possible for each local authority. As a minimum, a link to the relevant page(s) of the EPA site should be placed on each local authority website. 	<p>In February 2021 South Dublin County Council agreed to participate in a pilot scheme to monitor NO₂ levels (an indicator of car exhaust pollution) at various sites around County Dublin and the Environmental Health Section in SDCC continues to participate in this scheme. The Council worked with the EPA and Bureau Veritas to select 10 suitable sites for monitoring in both the Tallaght and Clondalkin areas. Sites were picked based on the close proximity of housing to a main or major roadway (M50, N7, R120 at Rathcoole, R136 Adamstown, R113 Clondalkin).</p> <p>Following site selection diffusion tubes were installed to passively monitor for four-week periods. The monitoring tubes are collected and replaced on a monthly basis and are dispatched to Gradko Laboratory for analysis. Gradko collated the analysis results in Excel and sent it back to our office for review. In 2022 we have noted that results ranged from 7 to 29 micrograms/ m³ which is noted to be indicative of low levels of atmospheric NO₂ and do not exceed EU NO₂ emission limit values. In the past year the sites have remained at these locations however it is noted that some NO₂ levels are recorded as consistently low in comparison to other sites so alternate sites (using the same selection criteria) are now being considered.</p> <p>Based on the results of the NO₂ levels it was decided to place a new permanent Air Quality Station at the location with the highest levels of NO₂ which was the Newcastle Road, Lucan. This is a road that leads on to the N4 and does get very congested. This air quality station is now fully operational, and data feeds the National EPA Network and results of air quality can be viewed by the public on www.airquality.ie</p> <p>The data collected is acknowledged by the EPA to be adding to their over-all picture of air quality and traffic activity in the greater Dublin area.</p> <p>This can be used to give the public some peace of mind when they have concerns about the quality of air in the county. We do however always endeavour to promote changes that will improve air quality further as part of a multiagency group and further educate the public on how to reduce emissions through our solid fuel and smokey coal education campaigns.</p>

National Enforcement Priority: AIR - Environmental Noise Directive (END) Activities/ Noise Plans	
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the previous reporting year – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the Round 4 Noise Mapping requirements as set out in the Environmental Noise Regulations of 2018. This includes the timely submission of any relevant datasets and information in the required format as requested by the RMO/Urban Agglomeration Project Team and/or any other specified body. Prepare and submit the Annual Noise Action Plan Progress Report to the EPA by 28th February. Annual Noise Action Plan Progress Report should demonstrate progress on the key issues and priority areas for action. 	<p>Submission of the local authority Noise Action Plan (NAP) Progress Report by the 28th of February 2022: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><u>Environmental Noise Directive (END):</u> With reference to SDCC's Noise Action Plan 2018-2023, consultation with TII took place in early 2022 regarding an identified noise hotspot (Brownsbarn Wood) in an effort to implement mitigation methods. Brownsbarn Wood comprises approx. 50 houses, of which a number of residents are impacted by traffic noise on the N7. Resurfacing of the N7, (a stretch of 8KM, both sides of the carriageway) from Newlands Cross to Rathcoole was completed in August 2022. Real time fixed noise monitors along the N7 (one located at Brownsbarn Wood) have recorded a significant drop in road traffic noise levels.</p> <p><u>Round 4 Strategic Noise Mapping:</u> A contract was awarded by the Agglomeration (SDCC, DCC, FCC, DLR, Wicklow, Kildare, Limerick, Cork City & County) in 2022 to Noise Consulting Limited (NCL) for completion of Phase 1 (Noise Modelling and Mapping) of the project. SDCC's Roads, Environmental Health and GIS departments worked collectively, collating SDCC Traffic Flow Data Sets, Road Infrastructure Data Sets and Topography and Building Data for the development of strategic noise maps. On the completion of noise model runs, SDCC met with NCL along with other local authorities in the Agglomeration for an evaluation and review of draft results and exposure statistics. Completed EEA Reports (a) Agglomeration, Major Road and Major Rail Source Datasets and (b) Contour and Noise Exposure Statistics were submitted by the Agglomeration to the EPA in December 2022.</p> <p><u>Noise Controls in Planning Assessments:</u> SDCC assesses the potential environmental impacts from noise emissions, as part of the planning process. This function is carried out by both the environmental health and planning department.</p>

National Enforcement Priority: AIR - Air & Noise Controls in Planning Assessments	
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting through the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the <u>previous reporting year</u> – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-planning assessments of air and noise impacts. • Environment staff assist in follow up of air and noise issues including use of Section 107 and 108 of the EPA Act, the Air Pollution Act and liaising with planners where planning enforcement is more appropriate. • Increased public awareness of noise induced health impacts. 	<p>Planning referrals received in 2022 were in the main urban with the main types of development being Industrial, Commercial and large-scale residential developments.</p> <p>The resources put in to the pre planning stage of urban development are of significant benefit when dealing with industrial applications. The developer and applicant can then be made aware of noise sensitive locations in the area where they are building as well as their legal obligations. The Environmental Health Service (EHS) will object if noise and air pollution exceedances are likely to occur as this will lead to an increase in pollution and therefore complaints. Any possible noise or air pollution or nuisance must be mitigated against in order to ensure that the environment and residents are not impacted in any adverse way by any development. When pre planning engagement takes place it leads to a much speedier process for all stakeholders.</p> <p>The EHS place conditions for construction phases of development where air and noise nuisance can be significant but also for the operational phase of the development. If we find the development breaches the conditions applied to their planning permission, we would then consult with our colleagues in planning enforcement and commence legal proceedings where necessary. We had no such breaches in 2022.</p> <p>It should be noted that in some cases additions to a development are built outside of the original planning permission. We became aware of such an addition to a commercial development when we received several noise complaints from residents in the area. The owner of the business has been advised to apply for retention but also that they must put in place mitigation measures to remove the noise nuisance if they are to be granted permission to retain the addition to their premises. If there are not sufficient mitigation measures included in their retention application to prevent noise nuisance, then the EHS will have to object to permission based on the complaints received.</p>

Specific screening has been introduced where EHS and planning monitor the applications for developments in heavily industrialised areas of the county. These areas will often border densely populated residential areas and also have some noise sensitive locations very close by. Each application has to be looked at from an air and noise point of view as part of the overall area because where the predicted levels of air and noise pollution emissions might be in compliance for an individual development, when added into an area where there are already developments operating the combined levels especially with noise give rise to exceedances. We have to ensure that collectively these industrial developments do not pose risk to the environment or the residents of the surrounding areas. Commercial noise complaints have increased since 2021 but are not significant in industrial areas which shows preplanning work is having a positive effect.

National Enforcement Priority:	AIR – Local Enforcement Issues
Local Authority: South Dublin County Council	Activities
 Looking back at the year	<p>Tell the story of what your council did on this priority in the reporting year using the assessment criteria detailed in Table 2 of the guidance document. This is an opportunity to capture the impacts of the work completed to drive compliance. You are not required to duplicate data that you are submitting though the 'RMCEI data returns' or your 'RMCEI Plan'.</p> <p><i>[Guideline of 500 words per priority area]</i></p>
<p>Describe what was carried out under this activity in the <u>previous reporting year</u> – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspect and carry out any required enforcement actions of facilities/activities as specified in the RMCEI template and/or as otherwise determined by the local authority. • Make available on their websites, the EPA vehicle refinishers video and use appropriate channels to promote it. • Inspect and carry out any required enforcement actions under Sections 107 and 108 of the EPA Act 1992, in order to limit noise nuisance. • Build capacity through engaging, collaborating and sharing with colleagues in other local authorities via networks and working groups and participating in training events. 	<p>While the overall number of air complaints in 2021 and 2022 is static the number of burning complaints has halved and there were very few for smoky coal. This shows that our work on smoky coals with the retailers and the education campaigns through newspapers etc in 2021 and 2022 is having an impact. We will continue to offer information and highlight the harmful effects of burning smoky coal and domestic refuse when we receive complaints and hopefully this will bring pollution incidence down even further.</p> <p>We have received only one complaint for DECO's and VOC's in the past two years. We have found the onus on the operator to prove compliance with the regulations in order to receive their respective licences has lead to a number of operators ceasing these pollution emitting activities and out sourcing this work to larger operators. This in turn has reduced the number of licenced operators in our area carrying out these activities, and therefore complaints, has significantly declined. The EHS carry out spot checks on those operators still in business and stating they are no longer carrying out emitting activities to ensure they remain compliant. The level of compliance remains high but further work on unlicensed operators including possible enforcement action will take place in 2023.</p>