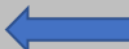
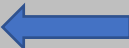


2022 National Enforcement Priorities Progress Report

National Enforcement Priority:	GOVERNANCE - RMCEI Review & Reporting
Local Authority: Sligo 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 <u>previous reporting year</u> – 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>The RMCEI Committee agreed a Plan at the start of the year based on discussions within teams and resources available in 2022. Regular informal team meetings were held where progress toward RMCEI was discussed. Technical and admin staff were keeping track of data that need to be gathered and if anything was raising a concern it was highlighted at the earliest opportunity. A formal meeting and review were carried out at mid-year - June. There were no concerns raised at the meeting and the progress being made was in accordance with the plan - no amendments were necessary. Going forward the team has highlighted some goals for gathering of data and how best to streamline it, but those changes will be made internally for 2023.</p>

National Enforcement Priority: GOVERNANCE - Environmental Complaint Handling	
Local Authority:	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. • Reporting of complaint numbers and investigation for each thematic area in the RMCEI Data Returns. 	<p>Sligo County Council received and responded to a wide variety of Environmental complaints and incidents during the year. If a member of the public wishes to send in a complaint they can do it via the general enviro@sligococo.ie, through calling the office, writing a letter into the offices or via the EPAs National Complaint System. The complaints are logged and tracked via a CRM system and then forwarded to the appropriate staff member for investigating.</p> <p>When a complaint is received, they are dealt with as per standard procedure with all parties, i.e. complainant, EPA and alleged offender informed and updated.</p> <p>Depending on the nature of the complaint, some of them can be dealt with quite quickly with very little follow up action whereas others can take a lot of time and resources to come to a resolution. Complaints such as these include site inspections, follow up site inspections, water sampling etc. Technical staff will take pictures and document the site evidence, reports, maps and any other data available for that particular site.</p> <p>There may be times when water pollution complaints require collaboration with other departments such as LAWPRO or neighbouring Local Authorities.</p> <p>For the 2022 year, all complaints received were addressed and dealt with in a timely fashion. Complaints are not closed off on our system until a compliance has been noted or evidence has been provided that the complaint is not a reportable issue.</p>

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:	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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022 the majority of the agricultural inspections carried out by Sligo County Council relating to enforcement of the European Union (Good Agricultural Practice For Protection of Waters) Regulations 2022, S.I. No. 113 of 2022, were in response to complaints received from members of the public and other issues noted by Catchment Management staff. All complaints received during 2022 were investigated as a priority. Some of these inspections were carried out in Priority Areas for Action, water bodies “at risk” and in areas not to be “at Risk” under WFD designations, with follow up action carried out as required. On review of the inspections carried out during 2022 it is difficult to apply a compliance percentage figure in terms of full compliance with the requirements of the GAP Regulations when the inspections carried out are geared towards addressing specific issues. <p>Agricultural inspections Sligo County Council 2022 (not planning application related)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Catchment</th> <th>Current EPA Status 2016-2021</th> <th>Protect/Restore under NRBMP 2022-2027</th> <th>Number of initial inspections/follow up inspections carried out.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Leaffoney 010</td> <td>Good</td> <td>Restore</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Boyle 020</td> <td>Moderate</td> <td>Restore</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Owenmore (Sligo) 060</td> <td>Poor</td> <td>Restore</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Catchment	Current EPA Status 2016-2021	Protect/Restore under NRBMP 2022-2027	Number of initial inspections/follow up inspections carried out.	Leaffoney 010	Good	Restore	7	Boyle 020	Moderate	Restore	3	Owenmore (Sligo) 060	Poor	Restore	6
Catchment	Current EPA Status 2016-2021	Protect/Restore under NRBMP 2022-2027	Number of initial inspections/follow up inspections carried out.														
Leaffoney 010	Good	Restore	7														
Boyle 020	Moderate	Restore	3														
Owenmore (Sligo) 060	Poor	Restore	6														

Barnabrack 010	Good	Protect	14
Owenaher 020	High	Protect	1
Gill SO	Poor	Restore	2
Owenmore 080	Poor	Restore	2
Willsborough Stream 010	Moderate	Restore	2
Doonowney 010	Good	Protect	1
Total			38

- A standard information leaflet on the protection of water quality with specific reference to agricultural activities and requirements of the European Union (Good Agricultural Practice For Protection of Waters) Regulations 2022, S.I. No. 113 of 2022, as amended, was prepared by the Environment Section and every effort was made to distribute it to agricultural stakeholders as the opportunity arose during the course of routine agricultural work carried out.

- A significant volume of work was carried out during 2022 relating to the assessment of agricultural planning applications submitted to Sligo County Council. Sligo County Council places considerable importance on the assessment of all agricultural planning applications received. Assessments carried out by the Environment Section involves both a site based, and desk-top inspection of all agricultural related applications received. All proposals are assessed in terms of compliance with the requirements of the European Union (Good Agricultural Practice For Protection of Waters) Regulations 2022, S.I. No. 113 of 2022.

During 2022, assessment of agricultural planning applications submitted related to a wide number of individual catchments throughout the County as based on the individual applications submitted and processed by Sligo

County Council during the year. 22 planning applications were assessed during 2022. This will assist in ensuring 100% compliance with the requirements of national good agricultural practice regulations. The catchments included are detailed below:

Owenbeg Coolaney 030 (currently Good Status 2016-2021) Protect Objective

Owenmore (Sligo) 080 (currently Poor Status 2016-2021) Restore Objective

Easky 040 (currently High Status 2016-2021) Protect Objective

Unshin 030 (currently Good Status 2016-2021) Protect Objective

Scurmore 010 (currently Moderate Status 2016-2021) Restore Objective

Finned 020 (currently Good Status 2016-2021) Protect Objective

Ballybeg (Sligo) 010 (currently Good Status 2016-2021) Protect Objective

Ballymote Stream 010 (currently Moderate Status 2016-2021) Restore Objective.

Eighnagh 030 (Currently Good Status 2016-2021) Restore Objective.

Kilrusheighter 10 (Currently Good Status) Protect Objective


Leaffoney 020 (Currently Good Status) Protect objective

Where non compliances with the GAP Regulations were detected during planning inspections, advice was given on site, followed up with an advice or warning letter being issued. Two Advice/warning letters and four Section 12 Notices were issued in 2022. Reinspection was undertaken to ensure the issues identified were resolved, some of which were carried into 2023.


No cross-compliance notifications were issued to the Department of Agriculture Food and Marine relating to the slurry/soiled water collection and storage during 2022.

- Compilation of the details of farm inspections for 2022 were commenced towards the end of 2022 for submission to the Environmental Protection Agency NAIP@epa.ie. The details compiled have been included with the RMCEI return for 2022.

- The Environment Section liaised with LAWPRO towards the end of 2022 in terms of compiling a list of farms to be excluded from the schedule of GAP inspections to be carried out by the DAFM during 2023.

National Enforcement Priority:		WATER – Pressures from Agriculture (slurry and fertiliser spreading)
Local Authority:	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"> • 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>Under the routine inspection of agricultural planning carried out during 2022; assessment of applications includes assessment of lands available for the spreading of organic fertilisers and appropriate planning conditions relating to the preparation and ongoing review of nutrient management plans are included in the schedule of planning conditions applied to developments. Eighteen planning applications for agricultural developments were received in 2022. Each of these applications was assessed for their potential impact on water quality, and for compliance with the Good Agricultural Practice Regulations & DAFM Farm Building Specifications. Any issues identified during site inspections were dealt with either through the planning process or by separate warning letter.</p> <p>During 2022 an application relating to the land-spreading of biosolids was received and assessed by Sligo County Council. The application relates to a landbank in West Sligo in the catchment area of the Barnabrack 010. Engagement with the company took place during 2022. A nutrient management plan was prepared for the proposals which will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis by the landowner/company. The application relates to the spreading of biosolids on individual land parcels.</p> <p>Inspections relating to the application were carried out by the Environment Section during 2022. The specific parcels relate to lands within the Barnabrack 010 Catchment which is currently classified at Good Status under the provisions of the Water Framework Directive. The objective under the third cycle of implementation of the National River Basin Management Plan is to protect the existing water quality status. Agriculture is one of the identified pressures in the catchment which also includes domestic wastewater and forestry.</p> <p>No cross-compliance notifications were issued to the Department of Agriculture Food and Marine relating to the land-spreading of organic fertilisers during 2022. It is noted that there appears to be reduced incidence of complaints received relating to land-spreading in the closed period.</p>	

	<p>Farm inspections were also undertaken on foot of complaints in relation to poor land-spreading practices, advice was provided to the farmer where appropriate. Reinspections were undertaken and files were closed where issues were remediated. Any outstanding issues will be carried over into 2023 with the aim of closing off existing open files.</p>
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National Enforcement Priority:		WATER – Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems / Septic Tanks
Local Authority:	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"> • 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, Sligo County Council was required to undertake seven domestic wastewater treatment system inspections under the National Inspection Plan. Sites were selected for inspection using the risk-based methodology set out in the National Inspection Plan and using local knowledge and taking account of local priorities such as ‘at-risk’ catchments.</p> <p>Prior to inspections a letter/awareness leaflet was issued to allow householders to gather documents necessary for production during the inspection and to advise householders on what to expect at such an inspection. In some cases, the advance notice of the need to produce desludging receipts prompted the householder to arrange desludging of the system ahead of the inspection.</p> <p>Sligo County Council’s Environment Section carried out in total 12 domestic wastewater treatment systems inspections during 2022 under and in accordance with the EPA National Inspection Plan 2018-2021. (100% compliance rate with the EPA National Inspection Plan). Based on the details contained within the EPA DWWTS database system 9 of the inspections carried out were found to be compliant with the requirements of the national regulations representing a compliance rate of 75% for the annual period 2022. Three inspections were found to be non-compliant and advisory notices were issued relating to the requirement to take remedial measures as required by national procedures for implementation of the regulations.</p> <p>In terms of historical implementation of the EPA National Inspection Plans published by the EPA to date, Sligo County Council has undertaken in total 240 inspections to date. Of these, 104 were deemed to be compliant with the requirements of national regulations representing a compliance rate of 43%. 136 were deemed to be non-compliant representing a non-compliance rate of 56%. In total, 198 (82.5%) inspections have been carried out at systems registered in accordance with the requirements of the national regulations. 42 (17.5%) inspections have been carried out at unregistered systems.</p> <p>Based on the details on the EPA DWWTS Database and our domestic wastewater treatment system register, 135 Advisory Notices have been issued by Sligo County Council under the national domestic wastewater</p>	

treatment system regulations to date. All existing open Advisory Notices were actively enforced and addressed as best practice during 2022 with Sligo County Council issuing numerous correspondence to homeowners regarding compliance with remedial works requested under the issued Advisory Notices. Follow up action by the local authority also entails calling out to residences with engagement with homeowners with a view to facilitating closure of existing open advisory notices. 9 specific verification inspections were carried out during 2022 as necessary to facilitate assessment of the completion of remedial works and to allow processing and payment of the national grant scheme under the regulations.

Emphasis was placed on closing off existing open advisory notices with a view to closing off files at the earliest possible opportunity. 12 files remain open representing 5% of the inspections carried out to date. The existing open files are difficult to resolve in terms of the issues involved, including:

(i) the financial costs of carrying out remedial works which may entail full replacement of a domestic wastewater treatment system. The associated grant may not be available or will not significantly cover the full proposed costs of the remedial works required.

(ii) separate civil proceedings relating to neighbouring properties.

(iii) Sale or transfer of ownership of properties.

(iv) Property that may potentially be impacted by a Compulsory Purchase Order for a road development project.

(v) Specific social or domestic circumstances.


● No referrals from the Local Authority Water Programme were received in 2022 regarding septic tank issues in County Sligo. LAWPRO did not refer any inspections under the Prior Area Action Grant Scheme during 2022. A referral/query relating to a potential issue with an onsite wastewater treatment on the Northern shoreline of Glencar Lake (Priority Area for Action under the second cycle of implementation of the Water Framework Directive) was acted upon and investigated by the local authority and the issue has been closed off following further investigation and clarification with the homeowner concerned.

● Sligo County Council received numerous enquires in 2022 regarding the High-Status Objective Grant Scheme but no grant applications were received during 2022. A single inspection was carried out under the scheme in 2022 relating to an upgrade of an existing domestic wastewater treatment system within the Lough Talt Public Water Supply Scheme Source Catchment (High Status Objective Area).

● Numerous queries were also received from members of the public regarding information relating to the grant schemes available for upgrading of domestic waste-water treatment systems. The Environment Section also

receive a significant number of queries relating to the registration of domestic wastewater treatment systems and these queries are dealt with as required by engaging with the homeowner concerned.

- A review of the information relating to domestic wastewater treatment systems on the Sligo County Council website was carried out to determine if any amendments were required and the information is still current and applicable in terms of informing members of the public of the requirements of the national domestic wastewater treatment regulations.

a WATER – Discharge Licences / Misconnections	
Local Authority:	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 were twenty active Section 4 licences in County Sligo in 2022. The Environment Section monitored and enforced the twenty Section 4 licences under the Local Government (Water pollution) Act 1977 as amended by the Local Government (Water Pollution) (Amendment) Act, 1990.</p> <p>The risk category of all Section 4 Licence was determined from the RMCEI Risk Rating Tool, the list of Section 4 licences and their risk rating has been submitted with the RMCEI. One premises were classified as high risk (Category A), Ten as Medium risk facilities (Category B) and nine low risk facilities (Category C). Site inspections and sampling of the discharge licences were carried out depending their risk classification.</p> <p>During 2022, there were 162 inspections carried out relating to discharge to waters licences issued by the Environment Section. Enforcement of Section 4 Licences involved site inspections and assessment of discharge licence results and reports submitted by the licensee, numerous correspondence with licensees regarding and addressing compliance matters. 18 Warning/Advice letters were issued as required and no Section 12 Notices were issued.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022, one of our Section 4 discharge licence facilities was the cause of serious environmental pollution on-site and was in serious breach of its Section 4 discharge licence conditions. Numerous site visits, site investigations and site sampling were carried out along with much correspondence and site meetings occurring to try and resolve the ongoing issues occurring on-site. Reports/recommendations were prepared and the file was referred to our legal representative to consider what further action can be taken. • Engagement and discussions with an existing licensee took place during 2022 relating to a one-off residence. The homeowner has expressed an interest in installing a new percolation area on his site with subsequent elimination of the need to discharge effluent to waters.


- No new discharge to waters licences were issued during 2022.

Misconnections:

- Sligo County Council has liaised with LAWPRO during 2022 in relation to our Priority Areas for Action. Tubbercurry 010 Priority Area for Action has been scheduled for Restore under the second cycle of implementation of the Water Framework Directive and is currently classified at Poor Status under the provisions of the WFD. Urban wastewater has been identified as the primary pressure and there are three storm overflows to Tubbercurry 010 in the Village. Sligo County Council has provided information regarding the sewerage network and the location of the storm overflows.

- In February 2022, Sligo County Council was informed via the regional office of Inland Fisheries Ireland of an unauthorized discharge of polluting matter to the Owenmore River downstream of the bridge in Collooney. This stretch of the Owenmore 080 forms part of the Priority Area for Action for The Unshin/Owenmore. The source of the discharge was a significant volume of polluting matter/oil and fuel residue present in a surface water drainage system in Collooney Village which discharges to the Owenmore River. The issue had significant potential to cause a serious issue in the Owenmore River and further downstream to the Ballisodare River and Ballisodare Bay. Sligo County Council carried out an in-depth investigation of the issue to identify the source and to devise measures for dealing with the issue. A subsequent Section 12 Notice was issued relating to measures to prevent and control pollution in the Owenmore River in addition to a request for information under the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977 as amended. Following the issue of the Section 12 Notice preventative measures were taken to prevent further discharges and a clean-up of the issue including removal and disposal of contaminated materials was carried out. Since the issue was addressed, further follow up inspections carried out by the Environment Section have not identified any further issue of concern to date.

There were no LAWPRO referrals in relation to section 4 discharge licences or misconnections in 2022

National Enforcement Priority: WATER – Local Priorities and Water Quality Monitoring	
Local Authority:	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"> • 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>A river and lake monitoring plan for Sligo was compiled based on the 2022 WFD national monitoring programme, all required river and lake site were sampled and the required sample aliquots were taken at each surveillance and operational sites. In 2022, 341 river sites and 142 lake sites were sampled in the county, 100% of the samples required were taken and delivered to the EPA labs as required in the national monitoring plan.</p> <p><u>Investigative Monitoring</u></p> <p>During 2022 investigative monitoring was carried out by Sligo County Council to supplement the work carried out under the implementation of the national Water Framework Directive monitoring programme. This work was focused within the Leaffoney River and Eignagh River Catchments.</p> <p>Based on the most recent national EPA monitoring data published for the period 2016-2021, the Leaffoney River (Leaffoney 010) is currently classified at Good Status under the provisions of the Water Framework Directive. In July 2022 the Environment Section carried out a channel survey in the upper reaches of the Leaffoney River to identify any issues of specific concern and sampling was carried out at 4 feeder stream sites in the Leaffoney 010 catchment area. On inspection of the results of monitoring carried out and associated dissolved oxygen levels, when compared with relevant water quality standards detailed in the European Union Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) (Amendment) Regulations 2019, S.I. No 77 of 2019, all sites were deemed to be in the category of high status/good status in terms of physio chemical analysis.</p> <p>The Eighnagh River is currently classified at High Status in the upper reaches downstream of Lough Talt, but there has been a dis-improvement in water quality in the middle and lower reaches in recent years to Good Status. In June 2022, the Environment Section carried out a channel survey in the middle to lower reaches of the Eighnagh River to identify any issues of specific concern and sampling was carried out at 2 feeder stream sites in the middle and lower reaches. On inspection of the results of monitoring carried out and associated</p>

dissolved oxygen levels, when compared with relevant water quality standards detailed in the European Union Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) (Amendment) Regulations 2019, S.I. No 77 of 2019, all sites were deemed to be in the category of high status/good status in terms of physio chemical analysis.

Both water bodies are programmed for more focussed action during the third cycle of implementation of the National River Basin Management Plan.

- Based on the limited resources available, the Environment Section did manage to undertake four additional extra inspections which were focussed in the Dunmorán River Catchment area. The Dunmorán River discharges to a Designated Bathing Water at Dunmorán Beach and significant importance is placed on the protection and improvement of bathing water quality in County Sligo.
- During 2022, staff from the Environment Section attended the management and implementation meetings for the National River Basin Management Plan. Staff also attended a preliminary meeting relating to the establishment of a Rivers Trust in County Sligo where the focus is on the establishment of a Rivers Trust for surface waters discharging to Sligo Bay.

Source Inspections

Particular importance is placed on the protection of public water supply sources in County Sligo. During 2022, source inspections were carried out within the source catchments of Lough Talt, Lough Easkey and North Sligo Public Water Supply Scheme catchments with a view to identification issues of concern and protection of the raw water sources. These inspections are carried out on a monthly basis within the source catchments of Lough Easkey and Lough Talt with a reduced frequency of 5 times per year for the North Sligo public Water Supply Scheme. 27 source inspections were carried out in 2022 within the catchment areas of public water supply schemes.

Bathing Water Monitoring:

Sligo County Council designated five bathing waters and received one Blue Flag in 2022. Our bathing waters were sampled by a contract lab on our behalf. In 2022, 47 bathing water samples were taken during the bathing season at our designated beaches, in compliance with the Bathing Water Regulations, 2008. 46 of these samples were compliant, a 98% compliance rate.

Two non-designated bathing waters were monitored monthly during the bathing season, 11 samples were taken at the non-designated beaches. Ten Investigated samples were taken from the Bellawaddy river which discharges to one of our designated bathing waters which was classified as sufficient in 2022.

One of our designated beaches exceeded the HSE action limits and consultation with the HSE took place, to ensure bathers were protected. A prohibition notice was erected at the beach, a press release issued to local radio and social media and follow up samples were taken to ensure bacteria numbers had returned to acceptable levels.

Water quality issues were identified at one of the non designated beaches in May and two of the non designated beaches in September. Investigation samples were taken until the water quality had improved. Notices were erected at the two beaches and press release issued.

The bathing water results were uploaded to EDEN for display on beaches.ie and were also posted at the beaches and our website.

Private Water Supplies:

There are 17 Group Water Schemes and 7 Small Private Supplies registered in the county. All private supplies were monitored in accordance with the frequency detailed in the Drinking Water Regulations 2014. A total of 84 compliance (check and audit) samples were completed in 2022. Twenty non-compliant results were detected as part of the compliance monitoring.

Where non-compliances with drinking water standards were detected, the water suppliers were notified and requested they investigated the cause of the non-compliances and take remedial works where necessary. The Environment section risk assessed the non-compliant results and the HSE were notified of the non-compliances where necessary.

41 follow up investigative samples were undertaken after the private supplies carried out remedial works.

Two Boiled Water Notices were issued to private drinking water supplies in 2022 following consultation and agreement with the HSE. Following the consultation with HSE the environment section liaised with the water suppliers and made recommendations to support them in taking the appropriate remedial actions in order to return their supplies to the required standards. At the end of 2022 one of these Boil Water Notices remained in place with the hope of it being lifted in early 2023.

The Environment Section liaised with the water suppliers, water services section and the HSE to ensure the standards set out in the regulations were met. We have also attended the NFGWS conference and spoken to their representatives and our counterparts in relation to non-compliances detected on GWS in 2022.

The small private supplies were not inspected in full in 2021 and so Sligo County Council completed 12 audits on the small private supplies in the county in 2022. The audits were undertaken by staff members on site and

included a review of the treatment system in place and maintenance of same. Advice and guidance was provided to water suppliers in relation to drinking water quality and treatment.

A register of private water supplies for the county is maintained/updated annually.

In 2022 we drafted and ran a social media and print media advice note in relation to private water supplies and the requirements of suppliers under the regulations. We also ran a social media and print media advice press release in relation to roadside wells.

Assessment of Planning applications with respect to protection of the Environment

Sligo County Council places significant importance on the assessment of the environmental impact of new development in terms of compliance with development plan policies, protection of the environment and achievement of national objectives relating to the protection of water quality detailed in the Water Framework Directive.

The Environment Section works closely with the Planning Section of the local authority in terms of the development of policies for the protection of the environment. A new County Development Plan and Local Area Plans are currently in the process of being prepared by the Planning Section of Sligo County Council. During 2022, the Environment Section were actively involved in the process in terms of policy development in addition to ensuring that the plan takes due account of national requirements detailed in the River Basin District Management Plan 2022-2027 and environmental legislation in general.

The Environment Section also takes an active role in the direct assessment of planning applications submitted to the planning authority in terms of commercial, domestic, agricultural and forestry related applications with a view to assessing potential impacts on the environment. Application and enforcement of appropriate planning conditions relating to the protection of the environment and water quality are considered essential in terms of alleviating the potential negative impacts of development on water quality.

Assessment of planning applications and assessments of planning compliance places a considerable demand on resources. During 2022, the number of individual planning applications assessed and reported on by the Environment Section is detailed in the table below:


Planning application and compliance assessments 2022

Planning application assessment of files and compliance assessment/Development type	No of inspections
Agricultural	18
Commercial	150
Domestic	355
Forestry	3
Preplanning/planning compliance related queries	99

All proposals for one-off houses are assessed in terms of relevant requirements detailed in the EPA Wastewater Treatment Manual: Code of Practice Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤ 10) (EPA 2021).

All proposals for developments utilising onsite wastewater treatment above a population equivalent of ≥ 10 are assessed in terms of compliance with the requirements of the EPA wastewater treatment manual: **waste water treatment manuals treatment systems for small communities, business, leisure centres and hotels**. This work programme strives to ensure all proposals involving the use of an onsite wastewater treatment will be designed, sited, installed, and certified in accordance with the requirements of the above manuals and with a view that legacy issues relating to the installation of onsite wastewater treatment are not repeated.

In 2022, Sligo County Council received an event licence application relating to a music festival which was held in the Summer 2022, the venue is within the catchment area of Lough Gill. The Environment Section of Sligo County Council were actively involved in the assessment of the licence application and in determining suitable environmental controls relating to provision of potable water supply, waste collection and disposal and recycling on site, litter control, wastewater disposal, and control of noise.


National Enforcement Priority: WASTE - Tackling significant illegal waste activities & Multi-Agency Sites/Operators of Concern	
Local Authority:	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 <u>previous reporting year</u> – 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>Three sites of significant illegal activity were identified through a number of means in County Sligo in 2022 including complaints, local intelligence and from information obtained from inspections of authorised facilities. One of the sites was an unauthorised ELV facility which was brought to the attention of the LA through a combination of complaints and from records obtained from a backroom inspection of an authorised facility focusing on high value waste streams, which was conducted in conjunction with the CU-WERLA. The site was located adjacent to a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and deemed to be high-risk. Due to the profile of the site operator, consultation was also undertaken with the local Garda's office prior to visiting the site. An initial inspection of the site was undertaken by WEO's and subsequently followed up by means of a Section 55 Notice. A number of follow up inspections of the site were undertaken which included liaising with the site owner. The site owner fully complied with the requirements of the Section 55 Notice and this was also confirmed through a further site inspection. In addition to this action preventing further illegal waste activities taking place, the obvious risk of pollution to the adjacent SAC was also removed.</p> <p>A second ELV site was brought to the attention of Sligo County Council by means of a complaint. During inspections of the site, WEO's met and engaged with the owner. The investigation of the site involved liaising with the Planning Enforcement Section of the LA to explore potential planning irregularities associated with the site. The site owner was subsequently issued with a Section 55 Notice which resulted in the removal of waste materials. A final site inspection is due to be undertaken to verify compliance.</p> <p>The third site of significant illegal activity was brought to the attention of the LA through a complaint. The complaint involved the unauthorised holding of a substantial quantity of household and bulky waste which the operator had been intending to reuse. A number of inspections took place at the premises and the operator</p>

was served with a Section 55 Notice. The operator initially part complied with the requirements of the Section 55 Notice and although the LA attempted to work with the operator by providing an extended compliance date, no meaningful removal of the waste materials had been undertaken. The case was then referred to the legal agent of Sligo County Council who is considering the matter.

A notable project undertaken as part of the Anti-Dumping Initiative (ADI) to assist with tackling significant illegal waste activities was the appointing of an external consultant to assist Sligo County Council gaining organisational consent to operate drones in line with the new EU Drone Regulations. This work activity is in progress and builds upon previous ADI initiatives involving the initial purchase of drones and subsequent training and licencing of LA staff as drone pilots. Other ADI projects undertaken include the clean-ups of certain dumping blackspots and running bulky waste collection events, which proved to be very successful. Please see attached Case Study for further information on ADI projects.

Multi-Agency Sites of Interest

One multi-agency site of interest was identified in County Sligo in 2022. The site was identified by the CU WERLA and involved one joint inspection of the site. The site was an Authorised Treatment Facility and the operation related to High-Value Waste Streams. A back-room inspection was undertaken with support from the CU WERLA. The inspection involved both parties accessing the operators database to highlight suspect transactions. This resulted in the collection of data relating to individuals potentially involved in illegally dealing with high-value waste streams. One of the individuals who was identified was then also inspected by Sligo County Council (the details of which are contained above). Follow up actions are planned in 2023 to further investigate other individuals identified as part of this joint operation.

National Enforcement Priority: WASTE - Construction and Demolition Activity	
Local Authority:	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>In 2022 17 inspections took place over eight development sites. Five sites were chosen as they related to major infrastructural projects which were taking place in the county including extensions to third level educational facilities, large scale public housing developments, waste water treatment works & public realm enhancement works.</p> <p>They were deemed to be high risk as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Largest construction projects in the county 2. Previous non-compliances by contractors 3. Significant public investment <p>The remaining three sites were selected based on complaints which were received from the public. No follow up actions were required from any of the inspections. Cradle to grave analysis was carried out on 1 of the inspections relating to waste water treatment network improvement works which was generating a significant quantity of soil and stone waste material. A sample of loads which had left the site were checked to ensure that they arrived at the destination site. The operator was found to be compliant.</p> <p>Sligo County Council received 9 complaints in relation to unauthorised fill sites. As a result of this, 2 Section 14 directions were issued to two site owners, both were complied with. 2 Section 55 notices were issued to two further land owners, one of which has been complied with and one which remains open. A further two warning letters were issued to two construction companies who were burning construction material at their construction sites.</p> <p>Planning files for large construction projects continue to be referred to the Waste Enforcement Team. A total of 15 planning applications were referred for comment in 2022. Recommendations and conditions were applied to all files. The new EPA Best Practice Guidelines for the preparation of resource & waste management plans</p>

for construction & demolition projects is now in use and sample conditions from this guidance is now being applied to planning permissions.


Validation and inspection of Waste Collection Permit (WCP)/Waste Facility Permit (WFP) (including Soil Recovery Sites)

A total of three sites were permitted to accept soil and stone in County Sligo in 2022. Of these two were active and one was not active during the reporting year. A total of 8 inspections occurred at these sites in 2022. No non-compliances were noted at any of the sites during 2021. Two sites made an annual return in 2021 for waste acceptance. Both returns were deemed satisfactory and required no further follow up.


17 Waste Collection Permit Holders who are known to transport construction & demolition waste within the county had their waste collection permit returns for 2021 validated in 2022. Minor discrepancies, where noted, were followed up with the permit holder and corrective actions taken. Discrepancies found related to incorrect tonnages being reported & incorrect destinations been selected. Following follow up with collectors, 16 were deemed validated and one was marked as inconclusive. Additional monitoring will be undertaken of the collector marked inconclusive.

Article 27 Notifications Activity (Sites of Origin and destination)

2 article 27 notifications were received in 2022. One of these related to soil and stone, while the other related to road plannings. Source and destination sites were inspected in both cases. In both instances it was determined that the material being declared as a by-product was suitable for re-use and prevented the material from ending up as a waste.

National Enforcement Priority: WASTE - End-of Life Vehicles (ELV) & the Waste Metal sector	
Local Authority:	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 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>During 2022 there was 2 authorised treatment facilities operating within Sligo one of which also accepts scrap metal. In addition to this there is two additional facilities which accepts scrap metal but not ELV's. Requirements relating to traceability was checked at all facilities, with an emphasis on traceability requirements at the ATF's. Three inspections were carried out at the 2 ATF's. One ATF was compliant for traceability requirements upon first inspection. The second ATF was non-compliant on the first inspection and was subsequently required to put in place corrective actions. A follow up inspection was completed at this facility and compliance was achieved. Waste purchasing requirements were also checked at waste metal sites and found to be compliant.</p> <p>A validation process occurred on the 2021 annual return data. One ATF was selected for validation by the Regional Waste Management Planning Offices. This validation was marked as inconclusive due to discrepancies in the return and non-reporting of waste stocks on site. Additional monitoring of this site will be undertaken going forward. The second ATF had its annual return data validated with no issues noted.</p> <p>Both ATF's operating in Sligo had their permit reviews completed in 2022. Both facilities were issued with the new standardised waste facility permits for ATF's. One scrap metal facility had its ownership transferred and has subsequently applied for a reviewed permit with the intention of accepting end of life vehicles. A decision on this will be due in early 2023.</p> <p>All waste facilities managing end of life vehicles and/ or scrap metal are inspected annually for compliance with permit conditions with reference on record management, environmental monitoring & waste acceptance. Per risk ratings 1 site is High Risk, 3 sites are medium risk. High risk site had 4 inspections, while the medium risk sites were inspected on average 3 times during 2022. One facility was issued a non-compliance for accepting waste not specified on their permit and were issued a warning letter regarding same. Subsequent inspections of the site noted no further occurrences of this non-compliance.</p> <p>No unauthorised end of life vehicle sites was notified by the NTFSO in 2022. 3 unauthorised ELV Sites were investigated in 2022. 2 of these were investigated on foot of complaints and 1 remaining site was investigated</p>

	<p>on foot of evidence gathered during a high value waste stream audit of an authorised ATF combined with complaints from members of the public. Of the three sites investigated, two were closed out in 2022, one was issued with a warning letter which was complied with, the other was issued with a section 55 notice which was also complied with and both sites have been reinspected to confirm compliance. The third site was also served with a section 55 notice, but the investigation remained open at the end of the reporting year.</p>
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National Enforcement Priority: WASTE - Waste Collection - Household & Commercial	
Local Authority:	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"> • 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>Four kerbside waste collectors operate in County Sligo. Information regarding the progress of the roll out of the brown bin is collected via Regulation 10 Notices served on each collector for each quarter of the year. Data received back from the operators would indicate that there is an approximate uptake of 95% in the brown bins in agglomerations throughout the county. When compared to data from the previous two years, this would indicate that the uptake has generally plateaued. Although the uptake of brown bins is high, just under half of those provided with brown bins are availing of the service.</p> <p>Section 18 Notices are also served on kerbside waste collectors to gather data on weights of materials collected and numbers using each service. Analysis on the data for 2022 suggests that the volumes of household domestic waste that is sent for landfill/incineration has only slightly decreased from 1,980 tonnes in Q1 to 1,783 tonnes in Q4. Whereas there was a significant upward trend in the volume of household organic waste collected going from 194 tonnes in Q1 to 294 tonnes in Q4. A similar pattern is noted in relation to commercial waste collections; waste collected which is destined for landfill/incineration has slightly decreased (from 1,295 tonnes in Q1 to 1,099 tonnes in Q4), while there has been a significant increase in the volume of organic waste collected from 128 tonnes in Q1 going up to 222 tonnes in Q4. This would suggest an improvement in the separation of organics from domestic/municipal waste and a greater awareness of the use of the brown bin.</p> <p>The Green Waste Composting facility (Civic Amenity Site) continues to be an important facility for residents to be able to dispose of green waste. Every quarter of 2022 recorded an increase in volumes accepted compared to the same quarter in 2021 with a total of 425 tonnes accepted in 2021 compared to 519 tonnes accepted in 2022.</p> <p>The 2 other Civic Amenity Sites within the county also remain very popular with household customers, however, it has been observed that there has been a gradual decline in volumes of material deposited since 2020. This</p>

could, in part, be due to high use of the facilities during the height of the pandemic when a majority of the population was at home for an extended period.

Commercial Waste

Planned commercial food waste inspections were focused on the retail sector this year (i.e. large retailers) and looked at use of the brown bin, segregation and use of authorised collectors. 8 inspections were undertaken with only one premises requiring to undertake better segregation of packaging from food waste. Only one inspection was complaint driven. Follow up investigations on the complaint were undertaken including a site inspection, liaison with the business owner and the issuing of a warning letter. The case currently remains open awaiting the provision of information from the business owner.

AER validation inspections of waste collection permit holders and waste facility permit holders took place throughout the year. 28 WCP validation inspections took place relating to 25 WCP holders. Of these, 23 were validated while 2 were recorded as being inconclusive. 8 WFP AER validation inspections were also undertaken, with each of them being validated. It has been observed that the overall quality of data being provided to the NWCPO/LA through the AER's has improved from previous years. This would be due to the availability of the NWCPO online reporting tool and ongoing liaison with Sligo County Council WEO's during the validation process.

National Enforcement Priority: WASTE - Producer Responsibility Initiatives and additional local priorities	
Local Authority:	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"> • 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). 	<p><u>WEEE & Batteries</u></p> <p>WEEE & Battery inspections this year focused on the large grocery retailers. These were selected for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEEE or batteries is not their primary business, but they are involved in the sale of large quantities of WEEE • SCC had not previously focused on this sector <p>Sligo County Council carried out 5 Inspections under the WEEE regulations and 5 inspections under the Battery Regulations. All retailers inspected were compliant with the WEEE & Battery Regulations. No additional enforcement actions were required.</p> <p><u>Plastic Bag Levy</u></p> <p>5 No retail inspections were carried out at larger retail stores. These were selected on a risk-based approach given that they were the largest retailers in Sligo. All retailers inspected were determined to be compliant with the plastic bag regulations.</p> <p><u>Packaging</u></p> <p>At the start of 2022, there was 10 open Suspected Major Producers, with one additional suspected producer added to the Packaging List in 2022. 2 Suspected major producers were closed out in 2022. One major producer joined the approved compliance scheme- Repak. The second producer was deemed not to be obligated as they did not produce greater than 10 tonnes of packaging. The local authority is also engaging with remaining 9 suspected major producers.</p>

In 2022 Sligo County Council had 1 Major producer who was registered for self-compliance. All records were received from this self-complier and the business was deemed to be compliant with the packaging regulations. The business was advised in November 2023 that they would be required to register with Repak for 2023.

Tyre Regulations


Six inspections were carried out at four premises. Three of these premises were identified as having been previously registered with Circol ELT but their registration had lapsed. Of these three, two were confirmed to be no longer in business and the remaining retailer was inspected and issued with a warning letter for non-compliance with the regulations. This retailer subsequently registered with Circol ELT and the case was closed. The fourth premises was identified based on local knowledge and inspected as part of a routine compliance inspection. The premises was found to be compliant at the time of the inspection.

Local Priorities- Finisklin Landfill


An Bord Pleanála granted permission in 2022 for Sligo County Council to proceed with remediation works at Finisklin landfill. Further meetings were held with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications to secure funding to remediate the site and develop a public park. Works on tender documents was commenced with a view of tendering being completed early 2023 with works to be completed once bird nesting season has completed in 2023. Ongoing monitoring was conducted at the landfill in 2023 per the licence requirements for Landfill Gas, Leachate & Groundwater. No elevated results were noted, and results were broadly in line with those achieved in 2021. All monitoring results were returned to the agency. There were no notifiable incidents to the agency in 2022.

Local Priorities- Wild Roots Festival


The Wild Roots Performing Arts & music festival took place in Sligo during the summer of 2022. Sligo County Council Waste Enforcement Officers worked closely with the event organisers to ensure waste generation was minimised at the festival. This was particularly important as the site was located adjacent to the Lough Gill SAC. Advice was provided around the segregation of waste and placement of waste infrastructure at the site. Over 27,000 people attended the four-day event which produced almost 7 tonne of waste or 0.25kgs/ person. This is significantly lower than other music festivals which take place in other parts of the country (Electric Picnic 2018: 10kg/ person). Waste Enforcement staff inspected the site prior to, during and after the event to assess waste management at the event. No complaints were received by Sligo County Council in relation to waste management at the festival.


National Enforcement Priority: AIR - Solid Fuel Inspections	
Local Authority:	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"> • 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 media platforms to market solid 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>Sligo County Council undertook 29 inspections under the Solid Fuel Regulations. The majority of these were planned, however 5 were complaint driven. Of these 5, 2 were undertaken using intelligence provided by a neighbouring county where a mobile operator was based in Sligo but operated in Mayo. Each of these complaints were closed out by discussing the matter with the site owners. In relation to the planned inspections, the majority of these focused on locations outside of the (now void) Low Smoke Zone of Sligo and took place after the new Solid Fuel Regulations came into effect. The rationale behind this was that the majority of retailers within the town were known to be compliant and those retailers outside the town would likely require some guidance in relation to complying with the new regulations. Of the planned inspections which were undertaken, one remains open. The open case is due to the retailer having stocks of specified fuel which were compliant under the previous regulatory regime.</p> <p>Sligo County Council sit on the Sulphur Testing Working Group, which is a DECC chaired working group involving Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal County Councils. As a member of this group, the LA are involved in progressing best practice relating to the sampling regime under the Solid Fuel Regulations, as this is an evolving area. 10 samples of coal were sampled in 2022, with the results indicating that 2 of the samples were deemed to be over the legal limit for sulphur. On the back of this, both producers were issued with letters requesting information. Only one of the producers engaged with the LA.</p> <p>The LA was actively involved in raising awareness of the issues surrounding the use of specified fuels within the (now void) Low Smoke Zone of Sligo. A residential area consisting of circa 550 properties, in which complaints relating to the burning of specified fuels historically emanated, was issued with a letter and leaflet reminding residents of their obligations under the (then) current regime. When the new Solid Fuel Regulations were effected and the DECC made available funding for pilot projects, the LA successfully applied for funding to run a door to door awareness campaign in the same residential area which had been targeted earlier in the year. The awareness campaign ran for a number of weeks and in addition to providing information to the residents, residents were also asked to complete a questionnaire regarding solid fuels and their beliefs, practices and</p>


	<p>habits in relation to solid fuel use. Some of the key takeaway points from the campaign were that cost has a big impact on the type of fuels that are used, and although the majority of respondents were aware of the impact of smoke on respiratory health, there was a complacency regarding the impact of smoke on health within the home and in their community, largely driven by the fact the residential area is located adjacent to the sea. A case study on the awareness campaign has been submitted as part of this return.</p> <p>The LA has also been raising awareness of the dangers of smoky coal by placing posters and video content, produced by the DECC, on our social media pages.</p>
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National Enforcement Priority:	AIR - Air Quality Monitoring Activities and Data Use
Local Authority:	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"> • 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. 	<p>Due to unforeseen circumstances the EPA's air quality monitoring unit in Sligo Town was not operational during 2022 and after discussions with the Agency it was decided to relocate it to a more suitable and representative location. The work required to identify & survey an alternative location commenced in late 2022, and the re-installation is expected to be completed, and for the unit to be up & running again, in early 2023.</p> <p>Sligo County Council also has a number of other simpler air quality monitoring units (BlueSky), but due to resource issues was unable to deploy these during 2022. However we do expect to have them operational in a number of locations during 2023.</p> <p>We also worked with ATU Sligo, as well as UCD, in relation to air quality monitoring projects (iSCAPE & WeCount) and are also considering how to possibly incorporate these into the SCORE climate resilience project. This included engagement with local secondary schools and exploring the possibility of installing air quality monitoring units on their grounds so that students could become involved in this work.</p> <p>The data collected from each of these activities will be used to inform local air quality awareness activities, as well as being a very useful way to engage with local citizens on understanding air quality.</p>

<p>4. Assist (where possible, to the best extent possible) EPA to maintain existing and new air quality monitoring stations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.	
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National Enforcement Priority: AIR - Environmental Noise Directive (END) Activities/ Noise Plans	
Local Authority:	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"> • 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:</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Staff changes within department later in the returns year. The person who took over the relevant role did not have the skills or knowledge required to develop a Noise Action Plan. Training was required and so is ongoing. Unfortunately, timeframes for submission for RMCEI mean this document is working in progress but not finalised for this return but it will be submitted to the EPA as soon as practically possible.</p>

National Enforcement Priority: AIR - Air & Noise Controls in Planning Assessments	
Local Authority:	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 <u>in the 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>The planning department refers planning applications to the Environment Department for report and recommendations with respect to Air and Noise Control, typically such applications are for commercial premises, quarries, and wind farm applications.</p> <p>During 2022, The Environment Section of Sligo County Council addressed air and noise control measures via all the planning applications /assessments which were received under domestic, agricultural, and commercial planning applications.</p> <p>The Environment Section have complied standard planning condition templates which aims to control noise and air emissions. Noise and air issues are actively considered in all planning applications assessment by the Environment Section and Planning Conditions relating to noise and air are added/applied to all applications submitted to the Section as applicable. During 2022, two significant wind farm applications were received and assessed by the Environment Section.</p> <p>A music festival application was received by Sligo County Council in 2022 and the Environment Section were involved in planning meetings, assessed the application and applied conditions to the application and carried out site inspections during the festival.</p>

National Enforcement Priority:		AIR – Local Enforcement Issues
Local Authority:	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><u>Deco Paints Regulations:</u></p> <p>In 2022, there were ten garages in operation in Sligo. Four warning letters were issues to Car finishers whose certificates expired under the Deco Paint regulations in 2022. Four garages have licences in force and one garage no longer operates as a vehicle finisher so will no longer come under the Deco Paint regulations.</p> <p><u>Solvents Regulations:</u></p> <p>In 2022, there are four dry cleaning business (Solvent sites) operating in County Sligo. Three warning letters issues to Dry Cleaners registered by Sligo County Council in 2022. One site's business had changed their practice and installed eco-friendly machines called "Wet Cleaning Chemicals", therefore they are no longer obligated under the Solvents Regulations. One business is new, and we await registrations details under the Solvent Regulations from that site in 2023.</p> <p><u>Petroleum Vapour Regulations:</u></p> <p>In 2022, there was one site approved and registered with Sligo County Council under the Petroleum Vapor Regulations.</p> <p><u>Licensed sites under the Air Pollution Act:</u></p> <p>At the present time there is one active Air Pollution Act Licence in operation in County Sligo. This licence relates to the operation of an Asphalt Plant at a Quarry site within the Ballisodare area. Monitoring reports relating to the operation of the site are submitted on a quarterly basis by the licensee. 6 inspections were carried out by</p>	

the Environment Section during 2022 with associated correspondence issued to the company concerned. There was a 100% compliance rate with the emission limit values specified in the licence conditions during 2022.

Local air and noise issues:

All noise complaints received in 2022 were assessed/investigated. During 2022, fourteen inspections were carried out relating to noise complaints received, with associated correspondence issued to both the complainant and the premises which was the source of the complaint. On review of the complaints received, the nature of the noise complaints received during 2022 related to issues such as:

- Noise associated with music being played at commercial premises/public houses
- Noise complaint associated with rehearsal for a music festival
- Noise complaint associated with music from a residential premises.
- Noise associated with the operation of a wind farm.

Eleven advice letters were issued outlining the steps open to any person under the law when they are experiencing nuisance caused by noise. The main advice included in all noise compliant correspondence is to direct the complainant that Under Section 108 of the EPA Act, 1992, they can make a formal complaint to the District Court seeking an order to deal with noise nuisance.

Four odour complaints were received in 2022, the complaints were assessed, and six inspections were undertaken. Four advice letters were issued in 2022. All complaints were resolved, and the files closed in 2022.