

Good afternoon,

I thank you for your correspondence dated 29th November 2023 from Kilkenny County Council.

The Multi-annual Rural Water Programme (MARWP) is the main funding stream providing capital funding to address key challenges faced by the Rural Water Sector and specifically those of the Group Water Schemes in maintaining, renewing and developing their systems and networks. The core purpose of the MARWP is to provide the necessary funding to address infrastructure deficits that are having an impact on the provision of safe and secure drinking water supplies.

I can confirm that the MARWP does not provide for funding of the provision or installation of new Group Sewerage Schemes. The objectives of the programme include ensuring that projects funded provide maximum value for money for the State, in line with the requirements of the Public Spending Code.

However, funding of €175m has been committed under the MARWP under the National Development Plan 2021-2030 for the period from 2021-2025. This includes €50m for demonstration projects to address the requirements for villages and similar settlements without access to public water infrastructure. In April 2022, local authorities were invited to submit applications for priority projects in their areas under this new measure.

As you are aware, the Department also provides capital funding, through local authorities, for individual householders under a demand-led grant scheme for improvements to domestic waste water treatment systems (DWWTS). This grant is available to assist householders with the cost of works for the remediation, repair, upgrade or replacement of a DWWTS serving a house, where either:

1. the householder receives an Advisory Notice, following a failed local authority inspection carried out under the National Inspection Plan;
2. the house is situated in a Prioritised Area for Action, as detailed under the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021; or
3. the house is situated in a High Status Objective Catchment Area, as under the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021.

The Minister recently announced significant changes to these grants which comes into effect on the 1st January 2024. These changes are:

- an increase to the maximum grant level available to €12,000 (up from €5,000) and
- the removal of the qualifying condition that the septic tank must be registered with the local authority.

Further information on the revised grants is available at the following link:

<https://scanner.topsec.com/?d=1342&r=show&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.ie%2Fen%2Fpublication%2F6cc1e-domestic-waste-water-treatment-systems-septic-tanks%2F&t=ac3a5126e49a5036d478a0af9c58e5cc11c6eac6>

I hope this provides you with further clarity on the issues you have raised and if you require any further information in relation to this, do not hesitate to contact rural.water@housing.gov.ie

Regards

Áine Lavin
Executive Officer

Rural Water Unit