



2023 Highlights

Highlights

KEY FIGURES EPA Activity

2,332

Environmental queries from the public

1,200+

Inspections of licensed Industrial and Waste facilities



205 urban waste water and 154 drinking water inspections

19



Convictions for environmental offences

Over €1bn

Financial provision set aside for the clean-up of an incident or abandonment at a licensed site

127

Environmental Authorisations issued

300+

Citizen scientists helped measure air quality in Galway City



2,500+

Lakes, rivers, estuaries, and other waterbodies monitored by the EPA

418

EPA datasets on data.gov.ie



€18.9 Million

Awarded for new environmental research

113

Ambient air quality stations providing real-time data

Up to
3 Days

New EPA service forecasts air quality up to 3 days in advance

Highlights

KEY FIGURES
EPA Activity

1,200,000

Visits to epa.ie

86,000+

Social media followers

LEAP

New EPA online portal providing transparency and easier public access to environmental enforcement information

New

National **End-of-Waste Criteria** for Recycled Aggregates announced

New

National **By-Product Criteria** for road planings published

KEY FIGURES Reported in 2023

1.9%

Drop in Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions in 2022



29%

Drop in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 projected by EPA - compared to a target of 51%.

1/3

Households had no access to an organic waste bin collection service*

Less than 28%

of plastic packaging waste recycled†

79%

of bathing waters had excellent water quality*

99.7%

Compliance of public drinking water supplies*



170,000

Homes predicted to have high radon levels

Letter from the Director General

2023 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the EPA's establishment. Three decades on, the EPA's role to protect, improve and restore Ireland's environment, through regulation, scientific knowledge and working with others, is more relevant than ever.

While our remit has grown, the core of what we do remains the same – we regulate activities that have the potential for significant pollution. We produce timely, reliable, trustworthy data on Ireland's environment. We work with others to protect and preserve our environment.

It is essential that economic growth is based on effective regulation that supports the protection and improvement of our environment. The EPA is committed to the enforcement of environmental and radiological legislation in a fair, proportionate and transparent manner.

Since its establishment, the EPA has assessed thousands of licence applications and each year performs over 1200 inspections of licensed sites. The vast majority have operated well and in accordance with their licence. However, a small number haven't, and when that happens, the EPA exercises its full range of enforcement powers. In 2023, the EPA launched LEAP online, enabling the public to access licence, inspection, and licensee information like never before.

The EPA provides independent environmental data, assessments, and evidence to inform decision making. With regard to water quality, the EPA has monitored Ireland's rivers, lakes and estuaries for decades, with our latest data showing no significant improvement nationally in the biological quality of rivers and lakes, which is largely attributable to excess nitrogen and phosphorous.

On Climate, our research shows the Irish public overwhelmingly support action and believe climate change is already affecting Ireland. Our data shows a small reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in 2022, but emissions aren't declining fast enough to meet Ireland's commitments for 2030 and beyond. On waste, EPA data shows that waste generation continues to rise and recycling rates are not keeping pace. Ireland remains overly reliant on unpredictable export markets for significant quantities of waste.

In 2023 the EPA partnered with a range of organisations to support the protection of Ireland's environment, and in particular worked with Cork and Galway City Councils, as well as An Taisce on citizen science projects looking to improve air quality.

In this year's Annual Highlights we not only look back but are also looking forward to key activities and events in 2024. I hope you find these dates for the diary helpful as we work together towards the EPA's vision of living sustainably in a healthy environment that is valued and protected by all.

Laura Burke
Director General EPA



Dates for the Diary



JANUARY

Ireland's Climate Change Assessment Report



FEBRUARY

Climate Change in the Irish Mind report – 'Wave Two'
Clean Air Together Galway Results



MARCH

1st National Stop Food Waste Day



APRIL

Reporting of annual EU Emissions Trading System results
Launch of 2024 EPA Research Call



MAY

Bathing Water Report
Ireland's Air Pollutant Emissions 2022
EPA Climate Conference
Environment, Health and Wellbeing Conference
Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems Report



JUNE

Water Quality Indicators
National Water Conference
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections
Public Drinking Water Supplies Report



JULY

Provisional Greenhouse Gas Emissions 2023
Private Drinking Water Report



AUGUST

Clean Air Together – Limerick City



SEPTEMBER

Air Quality in Ireland Report
State of the Environment Report 2024 Conference
EPA Circular Economy Conference



OCTOBER

Urban Waste Water Treatment Report



NOVEMBER

National Air Event
Local Authority Enforcement Performance Report



DECEMBER

2024 Annual Highlights



Environmental Protection Agency
An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

