

INFORMATION REGARDING LIST OF APPROVED SITE ASSESSORS

WHY SET UP A LIST OF APPROVED SITE ASSESSORS?

The Council considers that the setting up such a List will bring the following important benefits:

FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY:

Poorly designed, inadequate or inappropriately sited wastewater treatment systems pose an unacceptable risk to surface water, ground water and public health generally. By setting up a List of Suitably Qualified Site Assessors the Council aims to ensure that such systems are professionally sited, designed, and installed on the basis of an expert site suitability assessment and so afford the highest level of protection to the environment and public health.

FOR THE PLANNING APPLICANT:

The List will provide applicants with a certified choice of persons suitably qualified to carry out site suitability assessments, who have demonstrated their competence to identify better designed wastewater solutions specifically tailored to the site and development in question.

FOR SITE ASSESSORS:

The list will help to raise the profile of suitably qualified site assessors, reward their competence and diligence and open up additional business opportunities in such areas as supervision and certification.

WHAT WILL SITE ASSESSORS ON THE LIST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR?

- Conducting **Site Suitability Assessments** in accordance with the EPA “Code of Practice on Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems serving Single Houses” (October, 2009)
- Identifying and **recommending** suitable types of effluent disposal routes to meet specific development/site requirements including, if appropriate satisfactory treatment plants/systems.
- **Supervising** installation of the proposed system.
- Design, testing and **certification** to ensure that the treatment system and percolation area/polishing filter are fit for purpose and comply with relevant standards/guidelines and conditions of planning.

WHAT DO I NEED TO GET ON THE LIST OF APPROVED SITE ASSESSORS?

Candidates will need to demonstrate Competence to carry out site assessments, soil testing and treatment system design/specification in accordance with the EPA guidelines and in particular:

- Hold a **FAS Certificate** in “Site Suitability Assessments for On-site Wastewater Management” or suitable alternative of equal or higher standard.
- Pass a **Multiple Choice Exam**.
- Undergo an **Interview**.

- Produce evidence of Professional Indemnity **Insurance** (€1 million minimum)
- Submit a **Completed Site Assessment** to EPA Standards
- **Sign a Contract** with Donegal County Council consenting to their removal from the list in the event of reporting irregularities.
- Have detailed knowledge of:
 - The EPA “Code of Practice on Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems serving Single Houses” (October, 2009)
 - Relevant local, regional, national and EU legislation and policy frameworks in relation to water and wastewater and objectives for the role of these in pursuit of sustainable development.
 - The County Donegal Development Plan, Groundwater Protection Plan, source protection and surface water protection etc.

Once initiated, the panel will be reviewed annually.

WHEN WILL THE INTERVIEWS/MULTIPLE CHOICE EXAMS BE HELD?

It is hoped to hold the next round of Interviews and Multiple Choice Exams for entry onto the List of Approved Site Assessors in the first half of 2010.

HOW WILL THE LIST BE REGULATED?

Approved assessors will be required to sign up to a number of conditions, which include submitting results of all site assessments to the County Council and agreeing to be excluded from the list if they are found to have misrepresented or made inappropriate recommendations.

This exclusion process shall take the form of warning, right of response, followed, if appropriate, by suspension and exclusion. Initiation of the process will be at the discretion of Donegal County Council.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Planning applicants are advised that the assessors will be employed directly by them and not by Donegal County Council. As such the Council cannot take responsibility for the service provided by such assessors and the price charged is not set by the Council.

In setting up the List of Approved Assessors the Council is not endorsing the work of any one Site Assessor but rather providing information to Planning Applicants as to who the Council considers to be suitably competent to conduct site suitability assessments and ancillary services. All applicants should satisfy themselves that the contract they undertake with any assessor is appropriately and adequately fulfilled.