

Non-Domestic Water Charges

Prior to the establishment of Irish Water, Government policy required local authorities to recover the cost of providing water services from the users of these services, with the exception of households using the services for domestic purposes. This is in accordance with the polluter pays principle and the requirements of Article 9 of the EU Water Framework Directive. Therefore, historically, water charges for the non-domestic sector were set by individual local authorities with the rates being charged varying significantly between local authorities (from €1.59 per m³ in Kildare to €3.04 per m³ in Wicklow in 2013). A standing charge is also a feature of the non-domestic charging structures.

During 2015 the local authorities will commence migrating non-domestic billing information from Local Authority databases to Irish Water billing systems. This will allow Irish Water to commence billing directly (since 2014 Local Authorities have been billing as agent for Irish Water) and gain a deeper insight into non-domestic water users and their consumption patterns. It is proposed (as decided upon by the CER) to retain non-domestic tariffs in accordance with current structures and arrangements for an interim period until an enduring framework for the non-domestic sector has been established based on more up to date data.

Public Authorities as Non-Domestic customers

Public authorities pay non-domestic water charges at the prevailing rate set by the Local Authority (i.e. there are no preferential tariffs for public sector bodies). Details of the current volumetric tariffs applied by Local Authorities are set out in Appendix I. There is currently no detailed data available to distinguish between different categories of non-domestic customers (i.e. commercial/industrial vs public sector) and therefore the amount billed to public sector bodies cannot be readily ascertained. It is estimated that the maximum amount of non-domestic water charges that is billed to public sector customers totals some €21.2m per annum. This is based on actual expenditure in the health sector and estimated spend in the education sector and the remainder of the public sector. It should be noted that this is a maximum estimate. It does not take account of reduced consumption that may arise due to water conservation initiatives in the public sector. For example, there are likely to be rain water harvesting systems in some schools/public buildings which would reduce water usage below normal consumption levels for such buildings/organisations.

Appendix I – Local Authority Non-Domestic Tariff Structures

LOCAL AUTHORITY	2013			
	WATER	WASTEWATER	COMBINED CHARGE	ANNUAL STANDING CHARGE(€)
Carlow	1.00	1.30	2.30	100
Cavan	1.10	1.41	2.51	110-260
Clare	1.65	1.24	2.89	145-275
Cork City	0.98	1.17	2.15	104
Cork	0.94	1.19	2.13	95
Donegal	1.50	1.01	2.51	150
Dublin City	1.16	0.83	1.99	80 -150
Dun Laogh/Rath.	1.04	1.24	2.28	159
Fingal	1.02	1.19	2.21	32 +
South Dublin	1.45	0.48	1.93	118
Galway City	1.10	1.00	2.10	28-640
Galway	1.19	1.26	2.45	88+
Kerry	1.10	0.83	1.93	193
Kildare	0.80	0.79	1.59	120
Kilkenny	0.96	1.93	2.89	77 to 270
Laois	0.96	1.45	2.41	60
Leitrim	1.10	1.18	2.28	60
Limerick City	1.25	1.45	2.70	100
Limerick	1.25	1.45	2.70	200
Longford	1.25	1.15	2.40	100
Louth	1.00	1.10	2.10	75
Mayo	0.97	1.43	2.40	125
Meath	1.42	1.23	2.65	93
Monaghan	1.01	1.10	2.11	50
Offaly	1.16	1.24	2.40	150
Roscommon	1.22	1.50	2.72	100
Sligo	1.26	1.23	2.49	80 - 100
North Tipp.	1.20	1.20	2.40	100
South Tipp.	1.10	1.20	2.30	150
Waterford City	1.15	1.20	2.35	110
Waterford	1.06	1.60	2.66	100
Westmeath	1.00	1.07	2.07	59.86
Wexford	1.21	1.45	2.66	150
Wicklow	1.41	1.63	3.04	260
Average	1.15	1.23	2.37	