

€100 Water Conservation Grant

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the grant for?

The grant is to enable households to adopt a more environmentally friendly approach to their use of water and wastewater services. Households are encouraged to spend the grant on conservation measures in the home such as water saving devices, fixing leakage or improving a plumbing system, testing or improving water quality if a household has a private well, or towards servicing or de-sludging a septic tank.

There will be no audit of how households use the grant (receipts will not be required to be submitted).

2. Who will pay the grant?

The Department of Social Protection will pay the grant. It is administering the grant on behalf of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

3. How much is the grant?

The Water Conservation Grant is an annual, once-off payment of €100 per principal private residence registered with Irish Water on 30 June 2015.

4. Who is entitled to the grant?

Anyone who registered his/her principal private residence with Irish Water on or before 30 June 2015 and was living in that principal private residence on 30 June 2015 is eligible to apply for the grant. See questions 35, 36 and 37 in relation to temporary absences from home.

5. Why would I not be entitled to the grant?

You are not entitled to the grant if you did not register your principal private residence (as of 30 June 2015) with Irish Water on or before 30 June 2015.

6. What happened to the proposed tax credits and household benefits package regarding water charges?

The Water Conservation Grant replaces the tax rebate and social protection measures previously announced, as it is a more straightforward means of addressing water issues for all households on equal terms and will reduce households' outlay on water services, both now and in the future.

7. What do I have to do to get my Water Conservation Grant?

Between late August and the end of September, all households that registered with Irish Water by 30 June 2015 will receive a letter on how to apply for the Water Conservation Grant.

8. When can I expect to receive a letter from the Department of Social Protection?

Households should have received their letters by the end of September inviting them to apply for the grant.

9. What is the closing date for making an application for the 2015 Water Conservation Grant?

The closing date for 2015 applications for the Water Conservation Grant is 8 October 2015.

10. When can I expect to receive my €100 Water Conservation Grant?

The first payments are expected to issue to customers' nominated bank accounts in mid-September. All payments are expected to be made by the end of October.

11. I am not an Irish Water customer – I have my own well and septic tank/sewerage system or I am on a group water scheme– can I avail of the grant?

You will be eligible to apply for the grant as long as you registered your principal private residence (as on 30 June 2015) with Irish Water on or before the 30 June 2015.

12. I didn't register with Irish Water by 30 June 2015. Can I apply for the grant?

No. Those who registered with Irish Water after 30 June 2015 are not eligible for the 2015 grant, but are not precluded from being eligible to apply for the 2016 Water Conservation Grant. The 30 June 2015 deadline was extensively advertised in print and radio media.

13. What if a household registers with Irish Water after 30 June 2015?

Households that register with Irish Water after 30 June 2015 (either late registrants or registrants for newly built houses) will not be eligible for the 2015 Water Conservation Grant. However, to be eligible for the 2016 Water Conservation Grant and subsequent years, households that use Irish Water services must register with Irish Water. Non-customers (i.e. households that do not use Irish Water services) should wait for details of the 2016 grant, which will be announced in due course.

14. Last year I was informed by the Department of Social Protection that I would receive the water support payment in the form of 4 x €25 payments but to date I have not received anything.

The Water Conservation Grant replaces the tax rebate and Social Protection measures previously announced. The Water Conservation Grant will be issued as a €100 annual payment to householders who registered their principal private residence with Irish Water on or before 30 June 2015, and have applied for the Water Conservation Grant either online or through support from the Water Conservation Grant Support Team.

15. Is the grant income taxable?

No.

HOW TO APPLY

16. What do I have to do to get my Water Conservation Grant?

Between late August and the end of September, all households that registered with Irish Water by 30 June 2015 will receive a letter on how to apply for the Water Conservation Grant. You will be able to apply online for the grant (www.watergrant.ie) or through calling the Water Conservation Grant Support Team (0761 - 087 890 / 1890 100 043) from late August 2015 to 8 October 2015 once you have received your letter from the Department of Social Protection (which should arrive between 19 August and the end of September). You will not be able to complete the application process without the information contained in the Department of Social Protection letter.

17. When will I receive my letter from the Department of Social Protection?

Households should receive a letter between 19 August and the end of September. The order of letters sent was random. Receipt of a letter by a neighbour does not automatically mean a household is due to receive a letter or due to receive one around the same time.

18. What do I do if I don't receive a letter?

If a household does not receive a letter from the Department of Social Protection by the end of September, please contact the Water Conservation Grant Support Team on 0761 087 890 or 1890 100 043.

19. What will I need when applying online for the grant?

You will need the following information:

(i) Water Point Reference Number (WPRN) – this is found on the letter sent by the Department of Social Protection in August/September explaining the application process.

(ii) Irish Water Account/Registration Number – Your Irish Water Account Number can be found on your bill if you are an Irish Water Customer. If you are not a customer of Irish Water (if you have your own water and waste water services, or are a member of a group water scheme and have a septic tank) your registration number is on the letter received from Irish Water.

(iii) PPSN number – (formerly known as your RSI No.) This is your unique reference number for all transactions with Government Departments and Public Bodies (for example, social welfare offices, Revenue). It appears on a Public Services Card, Drugs Payment Card you use, as well as on a P60, P45, PAYE notice of tax credits, a tax assessment or letters from this Department or Revenue.

(iv) TIN number – This number (Transaction Identification Number) is found on the letter sent by the Department of Social Protection to you in August/September inviting you to apply for the water conservation grant.

(v) The details of your bank account (IBAN and BIC code) into which the grant is to be paid.

20. How long does it take to complete the application process?

It should take approximately 5 minutes provided you have your PPSN, TIN number, the two water reference numbers (WPRN and your Irish Water customer Account number/ non-customer registration number) and payment details to hand.

21. What are the contact numbers for the Water Conservation Grant Support team?

The Water Conservation Grant Support team can be contacted on either 0761 087 890 or 1890 100 043

22. What are the opening hours for contacting the Water Conservation Grant Support team?

The opening hours are 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

23. I have lost the letter sent to me by the Department of Social Protection, what do I do now?

On the online application system (www.watergrant.ie) you may request that a new letter be issued to you. This can be done by using the 'Request new TIN' option. You can also request a new TIN by calling the Water Conservation Grant Support Team on 0761 - 087 890 or 1890 100 043. Irish Water can provide you with your WPRN and customer account/registration number if you cannot find correspondence from Irish Water with these details. Please call its customer contact centre on 1890 448 448.

24. What if I can't apply online for some reason?

If you are having problems applying online, please contact the Water Conservation Grant Support Team on 0761 - 087 890 or 1890 100 043.

25. Is there an application form that can be posted out to me to apply for the Grant?

No, the application process for the Water Conservation Grant is an online one. Applications will be possible online at the www.watergrant.ie website. Alternatively, if you do not have access to the internet you will be able to phone 0761 -087 890 or 1890 100 043 and a Water Conservation Grant Support Team member will be able to make the application for you on your behalf.

HOW WILL THE GRANT BE PAID

26. When can I expect to receive my €100 Water Conservation Grant?

Payment will normally be made into a nominated bank account. The first payments are expected to issue to customers' nominated bank accounts in mid-September. All payments are expected to be made by the end of October. If an applicant does not have a bank account, they can contact the Water Conservation Grant Support Team on 0761 087 890 /1890 100 043, between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday

27. I do not have a bank account, can I have my payment made to a nominated post office?

No, a post office is not a designated method of payment for the Water Conservation Grant. However, payment can be made by cheque to a customer who does not have a bank account. Cheque payments will be included in the final payments that are due to issue to customers in late October.

CUSTOMER DATA

28. Why did I receive a letter inviting me to apply for the Water Conservation Grant?

All those who registered their principal private residence with Irish Water on or before 30 June 2015 are being invited to apply for the grant.

29. Why am I being asked for details including my bank account and contact details and what will happen to the details?

The Department of Social Protection requires these details in order to ensure that the Water Conservation Grant is paid directly to your account. The details you are providing will only be used by the Department of Social Protection for the purpose of processing the Water Conservation Grant, and will not be shared with other organisations or used for any other purpose. When details are no longer required they will be destroyed.

30. Will email and phone numbers provided during the application process be used for any other purposes?

No. They will only be used to provide applicants with confirmation of the grant application and may be used for future communications regarding the Water Conservation Grant.

31. Last year I was asked by the Department of Social Protection to provide bank details for the water support payment which I subsequently did. What happened to the information I provided at that time?

As the information supplied was provided for social protection measures that are not now proceeding, this information, in compliance with data protection requirements, has been destroyed.

32. What data will be transferred from Irish Water to the Department of Social Protection?

Irish Water is providing the Department of Social Protection with households' registration details necessary for administration of the Water Conservation Grant in 2015 and beyond. Only details necessary for administering the grant will be provided.

33. Will data be transferred to any other organisation?

No. All data will be destroyed once it is no longer required.

34. Will data transferred by Irish Water to the Department of Social Protection be used for any other purposes?

No.

OTHER QUERIES:

35. Are people who do not live in their principal private residence because of physical or intellectual disability (e.g. people in nursing homes) eligible to apply for the Water Conservation Grant?

If you do not live in your principal private residence but elsewhere because of physical or intellectual disability, and your dwelling is not rented to another person, you are eligible to apply for the grant.

36. I was away on holidays/living away from home temporarily on 30 June 2015 - am I eligible for the Water Conservation Grant?

If the dwelling you registered with Irish Water on or before 30 June 2015 was your principal private residence on 30 June 2015, that is, the residence where you normally live, then you may be eligible to claim the Water Conservation Grant.

37. I was living in a hospital temporarily on 30 June 2015 – am I eligible for the Water Conservation Grant?

If you were not living in your principal private residence on 30 June 2015 but elsewhere due to physical or intellectual disability, and your principal private residence was not rented to someone else, you may be eligible to claim the Water Conservation Grant if you registered your principal private residence with Irish Water on or before 30 June 2015.