

From: localrepsupport <localrepsupport@water.ie>
Sent: 05 November 2020 11:49
To: Anne Maria Walsh <annemaria.walsh@kilkennycoco.ie>
Subject: Irish Water

Dear Ms Walsh,

Thank you for your recent queries at a Kilkenny County Council meeting, the original letter is attached above.

I have received an update advising in relation to our Funding Model:

Irish Water's funding model is made up by way of Exchequer funding through the voted expenditure of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, exchequer sourced debt and also through commercial water charges. There is also a charge for connecting to the water and wastewater networks which funds the associated costs to connect and provide water and/or wastewater capacity. The allocation of these funds are overseen by Irish Water's financial regulator, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities ('CRU'). The funds are split between the operational allowance (to cover operations and maintenance costs) and the Capital Investment Plan allowance (to cover capital investment).

Irish Water's Capital Investment Plan is reviewed, approved and monitored by Irish Water's financial regulator, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities in line with agreed periods. The latest capital investment plan that has been recently approved covers the period from 2020-2024 and has completed an extensive consultation process with public and private stakeholders during 2018-2019. The building, repair and upgrading of Irish Water's water treatment plants, wastewater treatment plants, water and sewer network requires a multi-billion euro investment programme over many years.

Irish Water is committed to providing a safe and reliable water supply, protecting the environment and supporting the growth of homes and businesses. Irish Water's investment plan prioritises key outcomes such as leakage, water supply zones removed from the EPA's Remedial Action List, areas where there is raw sewage entering the rivers, lakes and the sea (untreated agglomerations), and areas identified by the European Court of Justice under the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive. In preparing the Investment Plan, Irish Water has optimised investment decisions by prioritising the best possible service improvements, while maximising value-for-money.

The list of projects and programmes is continuously being refined based on new and emerging needs and is subject to funding, technical and environmental constraints, as well as statutory approvals.

During the last investment period, Irish Water removed 81 water supplies from the EPA's Remedial Action list, replaced or rehabilitated 949km of watermains; provided wastewater treatment for nine locations that were previously discharging raw sewage; and replaced 5,390 'backyard' lead service pipes and 24,166 individual lead service pipes.

Irish Water has invested €3.8 billion in water and wastewater infrastructure to the end of 2019 and plans to invest a further €5.2 billion under its Capital Investment Programme from 2020 to 2024 in drinking water and wastewater quality and capacity and new infrastructure. Significant capital investment is needed over a sustained period of several decades to address the poor condition of Ireland's water and wastewater infrastructure.

As an update on your letter querying lime in the water supply, this supply scheme was removed from the RAL through a €10m investment which also eliminated trihalomethane from the supply.

Irish Water is required to supply water for all public water supplies in compliance with The European Communities Drinking Water Regulations.

The Regulations set out limit values for all relevant water quality parameters. There are no limits set in the regulations for water hardness / lime / calcium carbonate. The issue of Hard Water is related to the mineral content, particularly Calcium Carbonate derived from limestone catchments. This does not create any health issues for customers.

Limescale can be treated by using the following tips:

1. Try to boil only what you need and don't leave the surplus boiled water lying in the kettle. Kettles can be descaled by half filling with half water / half vinegar, leaving overnight, rinsing, refill and boil water, then discard water and kettle is ready for use. Descaling kits (such as a scale collector placed in the kettle) are also widely available in supermarkets. In some types of plastic kettles, the scale may not stick to the sides but float on the surface of the water. This can be avoided by regularly rinsing the kettle.
2. A wide range of products are commercially available to prevent the deposition of lime scale during the heating of water in washing machines. Varying the dosage of washing powder may also work.
3. Indirect heating systems where water is re-circulated are generally not affected by lime scale. Direct heating systems, where fresh water replaces heated boiler water, may experience some deposition in pipes and reduced boiler efficiency. Symptoms of this would be rattling in the pipes when the water is heated, and gradually longer heating times.
4. Dishwashers generally have built-in water softeners. Householders should ensure these are set according to manufacturer's instructions. In general, reducing the temperature of your hot water to 60 degrees Celsius or lower can decrease scale deposition.
5. If lime scale has built up in your shower, you can soak the shower head in half vinegar / half water solution for three hours or overnight to remove the lime scale.

We apologise that we cannot be of further assistance on this occasion. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us again.

For more information please refer to our website. <https://www.water.ie/water-supply/water-quality/water-hardness/>

I trust you find the above information useful. Thank you for contacting Irish Water.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Butler

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