Guidance: Water companies: water treatment works discharge limits for environmental permits

This guide is for operators of water treatment works (WTW).

The Environment Agency regulates WTW by assessing the quality of the effluent they discharge against set compliance limits.

This guide explains how we control and set limits at WTW for:

- chlorine
- aluminium
- polyelectrolytes
- suspended solids – including granulated activated carbon fines
- iron

Guidance: Domestic sewage: discharges to surface water and groundwater

This guide is for applicants for environmental permits and operators of septic tanks or small sewage treatment plants that meet the general binding rules.

News story: Design and trial smart energy systems: apply for funding

Innovate UK has up to £41.5 million to invest in both the design and practical demonstration of new business models that intelligently link supply, storage and demand in heating, power and transport.

There are 2 parts to this competition. Up to £40 million is available for 3 smart energy system demonstrators, while up to £1.5 million is available for studies into new, smarter approaches to local energy.

Supporting the smart energy revolution

The funding is part of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund programme, prospering from the energy revolution.

Demand to meet carbon reduction targets and the emergence of new technologies including artificial intelligence, internet of things and sensing and machine learning are creating new opportunities for smart energy systems.

This competition will help businesses to develop local energy approaches at scale that will create better outcomes for consumers and promote economic growth for the UK. By the early 2020s, it aims to prove that smarter local energy systems can deliver cleaner and cheaper energy services.

Successful projects will be supported by an energy integration network including the Energy Systems Catapult leading researchers and government and independent regulatory bodies.

Demonstrator projects

Demonstration projects must be based in a large UK location such as a medium-sized town. They should:

- optimise energy across a range of supplies, infrastructure and demands
- deliver lower costs, lower emissions and economic benefit
- intelligently link energy supply and demand
- develop processes and skills for designing, financing, building and operating smart local energy systems
- encourage private investment to replicate these impacts across the UK

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline for applications is at midday on 25 July 2018
- projects can be led by a business, university, public sector organisation or a research and technology organisation working with others. They must include at least one SME, one academic organisation and a local authority or equivalent organisation
- you must carry out at least 90% of your project work in the UK and exploit the results here
- grant funding for each project is expected to be £13 million or higher, with total project costs between £26 million and £160 million. We expect them to last between 24 and 26 months
- business could attract up to 45% of their project costs
- a briefing event will be held on 15 May 2018

Concepts and design

Studies into new smart, energy systems should show how they could improve future energy services in a UK location at least the size of a medium-sized town.

They should show how implementation by the early 2020s could:

- reduce energy bills by at least 25% and reduce carbon emissions in line with targets
- produce high-value local jobs and local and export business opportunities
- improve energy security and make the UK more resilient to environmental, technological, social and economic change
- improve energy efficiency and infrastructure productivity
- meet air quality targets
- create ways to test and scale new technologies and business, consumer and regulatory models to speed up industry growth

The best projects will be invited to develop their ideas further in a future competition.

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline for applications is at midday on 25 July 2018
- projects can be led by a business, academic organisation, charity, public sector organisation or local authority, research council institute or a research and technology organisation. At least one SME must be included
- you must carry out at least 90% of your project work in the UK and exploit the results here
- we expect total project costs to be between £100,000 and £200,000 and for projects to last up to 6 months
- businesses could attract up to 70% of their project costs
- a briefing event will be held on 15 May 2018

Open consultation: Slowing the flow in the Ouse and Foss; a long-term plan for York

The Environment Agency completed a study in 2017 called ‘Slowing the Flow in the Rivers Ouse and Foss’, and published a summary in the York Press inviting comments from partners and the public. We have discussed the study with partners and other groups since.

We are progressing the recommendations that fall within the Environment Agency remit. However, there are further recommendations that we cannot progress alone. We are now seeking views from partners, landowners, the public and other bodies on the general principles of the study and on our proposal for how to progress.

We are also asking if you have any current or future work proposed that might be aligned with our objectives and could be developed in partnership.

News story: SACN publishes consultation on saturated fats and health

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) has today, Tuesday 8 May 2018, published a consultation on its draft review of saturated fats and their effects on health.

The last review was undertaken by SACN's predecessor Committee on Medical Aspects of Food Policy (COMA) in 1994 and concluded that saturated fat intake should be no more than 10% of total calories for adults and children aged 5 years and older.

SACN's draft review has concluded that new evidence supports and strengthens the original COMA conclusion and is, therefore, recommending no changes to current government advice.

Based on the total evidence considered, SACN's draft recommendations are:

- the population average contribution of saturated fat to total calorie intake should be no more than 10%. (This means no more than 30g of saturated fat for men, no more than 20g for women and less for children)
- dietary saturated fats should be substituted with unsaturated fats. [Foods like fish (especially oily fish such as mackerel, salmon and trout), unsalted nuts, seeds and avocado are sources of unsaturated fat].

Too much fat in the diet, especially saturated fats, can raise blood cholesterol levels, which can increase the risk of heart disease. Most of our saturated fat intake comes from milk products (such as whole milk and cheese), cereal products and meat products.

Currently, average saturated fat intake is around 12% of daily calories, however, this is still too high and should be reduced to 10% to avoid preventable illnesses and premature death.

The draft SACN report concludes that reducing saturated fat lowers the risk of cardiovascular disease. It also improves blood lipids and measures of blood glucose control. There is no evidence that reducing intake of saturated fat increases risk of any of the health outcomes considered (cardiovascular disease, blood lipids, blood pressure, diabetes, dementia and some cancers).

Dr Alison Tedstone, chief nutritionist at Public Health England, said:

> Consuming too much saturated fat leads to higher cholesterol levels and heart disease. Current advice is to consume no more than 10% of calories each day from saturated fat and this remains unchanged until we have considered all the responses to our consultation.

Once all responses have been received, SACN will publish its final report and will make recommendations to government.

The consultation opens today, Tuesday 8 May 2018, and closes 3 July 2018.