

Northern Ireland Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (NI RHI)

Northern Ireland Guide to Applicants

Background to the RHI

The Northern Ireland Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) is a government financial incentive to encourage a switch to renewable heating systems. If you join and comply with the scheme rules, you'll receive an initial upfront payment and after 12 months annual payments for seven years. It's a way to help the UK reduce its carbon emissions. The scheme is available for households both off and on the gas grid. Those without mains gas have the most potential to save on fuel bills and decrease carbon emissions.

Before you apply

Understand the technology

Whilst DETI is supporting renewable heat technologies and wishes to see a significant increase in their utilisation consumers must be content that renewable heat is the right choice for them, both in terms of their properties and the costs associated. Some technologies can be quite different to conventional heating and therefore those wishing to install renewable heat are encouraged to research the technology before installing.

Speak to different installers

As with any expensive purchase, DETI encourages all potential applicants to speak to a number of installers and receive different quotes for the work. To qualify for the NI domestic RHI installations should be carried out by MCS installers and requires MCS Installation Certificates to be provided for installations. When receiving quotes, applicants should be aware of what work will be carried out, the length of time the installation might take and receive instructions on how the technology should be used and maintained.

Check you are eligible for the scheme

If you intend to apply for the scheme you should check all eligibility standards before installing. Application for accreditation under the Domestic RHI is made after the installation is complete and therefore it is important that you are fully aware of eligibility standards. Some of the key issues for you to consider are;

- Your property is domestic.
- You are the owner of the equipment.
- The technology is eligible.
- The installation has been commissioned by a MCS accredited installer.
- You have all relevant documentation (MCS Installation Certificate, Building Control, invoices, EPC etc).
- You have not received any other public funding for the installation other than the RHPP grant.

You should, of course, consider this entire guidance document before installing your technology and applying for support.

Requirements for heating systems and installations

The eligible heating systems for the Domestic RHI are:

- Biomass boilers
- Air source heat pumps
- Ground source and water source heat pumps
- Flat plate and evacuated tube solar thermal systems

Eligible products

There is no limit on capacity, i.e. the size of your system in kilowatts, but systems must be certified under the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) or an equivalent scheme. MCS only certifies renewable heat products with a capacity less than 45kW.

If your property requires heat demand in excess of the 45kW threshold you are able to install 2 (or more) renewable technologies to cover the heat load. The technology for which you seek accreditation under the RHI must be MCS and then payments will be based on the metered heat output but capped at the deemed heat level (as per the metering procedures).

You can check the MCS product eligibility list at www.microgenerationcertification.org/ to find out whether your product will be eligible. Your installer may also be able to provide guidance.

Emissions Certificates

Biomass Products - After April 2016 all biomass boilers will require an Emissions Certificate to enter the NI Domestic RHI. Up until that date certain boilers will be accepted without Emissions Certificates. Most MCS accredited biomass boilers will already hold Emissions Certificates but those that do hold them by April 2016 will cease to be eligible to join the NI Domestic RHI

Eligible heat uses

There are restrictions on what the heat produced can be used for. Biomass and heat pumps must provide space heating (heating rooms in a house) or space and water heating. Space heating must be delivered via a liquid medium, such as a radiator.

Hot water heating is where heat is generated to supply hot water for domestic purposes.

Where a domestic property has a swimming pool, the renewable technology installed must be the primary heating system for the domestic residence and the EPC provided must account for heat delivered to the swimming pool.

Solar thermal systems must produce heat solely for domestic hot water.

For solar thermal system the estimated annual generation figure must cover domestic hot water only.

The following table shows a summary of the key eligibility requirements, eligible uses and ineligible uses for the different heating systems types. The eligible and ineligible uses will usually correspond to a design feature of the heating system. In these cases, your heating system must not be designed to allow ineligible uses.

Please note that all heating systems must meet the relevant EN standards.

Heating System Type	System Eligibility Requirements	Eligible Uses	Ineligible Uses
Biomass boiler	<p>Must use a liquid to provide space heating</p> <p>Must be designed and installed to use solid biomass fuel.</p>	Space heating or space and domestic hot water heating for a domestic property.	Designed to generate heat to cook food.
Biomass stove	<p>Must be designed and installed to use solid biomass fuel..</p> <p>Must use a liquid filled heat exchanger, enclosed within the system.</p>	Space heating or space and domestic hot water heating for a domestic property.	Designed to generate heat to cook food.
Air source heat pump.	<p>Must use a compressor driven by electricity.</p> <p>Must use a liquid to provide space heating.</p> <p>Must have a minimum SPF of 2.5.</p>	Space heating or space and hot water heating for a domestic property. Heat pumps do not have to provide water heating to be eligible but may do so.	Designed to use heat from air expelled from an appliance or building when generating heat.
Ground source heat pump	<p>Must use a compressor driven by electricity.</p> <p>Must use a liquid to provide space heating.</p> <p>Must have a</p>	Space heating or space and hot water heating for a domestic property. Heat pumps do not have to provide water heating to be eligible but may do so.	

	minimum SPF of 2.5.		
Solar thermal	Must be flat plate or evacuated tube	Domestic hot water heating for a domestic property	Space heating or heating a swimming pool. Any use which is not domestic hot water heating. Generating electricity.

Requirements for properties

Obtain a domestic Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)

The domestic RHI scheme is designed to promote the uptake of renewable heat systems in domestic homes in Northern Ireland. The scheme is for domestic properties only. Non-domestic properties can be supported under the non-domestic RHI administered by Ofgem.

To be eligible for the RHI the renewable heating system must only heat a single domestic property which has, or is able to get, a domestic Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). In circumstances where a single technology provides heat for two or more domestic units the application for support should be made to Ofgem under the non-domestic RHI.

Where the technology installed is a primary heat technology (i.e. anything other than solar) the EPC must state this technology as the primary heating system. The EPC provides important information about a property's energy use and efficiency levels. They are required if you wish to buy, sell or rent a property. The EPC should be current, that is carried out after your renewable heating system was installed.

The EPC will demonstrate to DETI that the property is domestic and provide information used to calculate payment levels. Where the use of the property is ambiguous DETI may request copies of the rates bill.

If you already have an EPC you can tell whether or not it's a domestic EPC by checking if the "dwelling type" (house, bungalow, maisonette or flat) is listed. If you do not have a copy of your EPC you might be able to access a copy online at www.epbniregister.com.

If you do not currently have an EPC you must obtain one from an accredited assessor before applying to the scheme.

Other property eligibility criteria

The applicant must either own or occupy the property the heating system heats.

The heating system must be installed after the property is first occupied, unless the property is an eligible new build (self-build).

The RHI scheme is designed to help people make the switch to a new renewable heating system when replacing an existing heating system. Where a heating system is installed as part of the building of a property (known as a 'new build') the heating system won't be eligible for the scheme. These heating systems are not eligible because the heating system was first commissioned before the property was first occupied.

The only exceptions to the rule are 'self-builds' (known as 'eligible new builds'). This is where the property was constructed using the labour or resources of the first owner (including any loans that the first owner was liable to repay), and where the first owner and all subsequent owners are individuals.

If you have a property in which a heating system was commissioned during the construction of the property, but this heating system is then replaced by an eligible technology after the property was first occupied, then this is not a new build.

Other eligibility standards

MCS certification

The renewable heating system you install must be certified under MCS (or equivalent) at the time of installation and commissioning. All systems must be commissioned by a MCS certified installer. A list of certified MCS products and installers can be found at <http://www.microgenerationcertification.org/>

Installed and commissioned after 1 September 2010

All heating systems must be first commissioned on or after 1 September 2010. Any systems commissioned before this date will not be eligible for the domestic RHI. All relevant parts of the heating system must have the same commissioning date, and this must be on or after 1 September 2010. No relevant part of the heating system can be second hand.

You must apply for support within 12 months of commissioning. For systems installed and commissioned before the launch of the scheme (and after 1 September 2010) must apply to the RHI scheme within a year of the start of this scheme – this includes those supported under the RHPP.

“Commissioning” is when your installer tested and signed off your renewable heat technology. The commission date will be on the MCS certificate and is normally the same day as when the technology was installed.

No other public grants or support

The domestic RHI is compatible with the RHPP scheme but not with any other public grant or support. The receipt of other public grant or support for the purchase / installation of your renewable heating equipment are likely to make you ineligible for the domestic RHI.

Support under the domestic RHI scheme is under two elements, an upfront payment and an ongoing incentive. Those applicants that have already received support under the RHPP will receive the second element (ongoing incentive) only.

Making a financial contribution

All applicants must have made some financial contribution towards the cost of the purchase and installation of the renewable heating technology.

A bank or other loan you are liable to repay will be viewed as if it is your own resources. Therefore systems paid for wholly or partly in this way are eligible.

Not approved under the non-domestic RHI

You cannot apply to the domestic RHI for a heating technology that has been accredited under the non-domestic scheme and vice-versa. If you have submitted an application to

the non-domestic RHI but it has not been approved you can withdraw it and apply to the domestic scheme.

If your application to the non-domestic RHI is rejected on grounds that your premises is primarily domestic you can apply to the domestic scheme.

Do I need metering?

Why is metering needed?

Metering is required when DETI is unsure either of the use of the installed technology or the occupancy of the premises. The default position for payments is the deeming methodology, where it is assumed the technology is used for all primary heating needs and the house is occupied all year round, where there is doubt about over use or occupancy metering is required.

Why most don't need metering

Most people joining the scheme live in the same home all year round and have one renewable heating system that supplies the whole property. We will base their payments on the property's estimated annual heat use. It's straightforward and makes the scheme more efficient. For biomass we get this figure from your Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). Likewise for heat pumps, although it's design efficiency (seasonal performance factor) is factored in to calculate payments. For solar thermal we get the figure from the MCS certificate, which is based on a calculation by your installer.

Why some do need metering

Some people won't live in their properties permanently. Others have back-up heating systems installed. Some have a heating system that doesn't supply the entire property. In these instances and others, the equipment is likely to be generating less heat than specified on the EPC. It means these properties will have to be metered and submit regular readings, so we can allocate payments appropriately.

What does need metering?

You need metering if you have back-up heating

Your system must be metered if:

- you have a renewable system eligible for the Domestic RHI, like a biomass boiler and also another system that isn't, like an oil boiler. (Solar thermal for heating hot water doesn't count).
- your heat pump is capable of using another fuel as well as the renewable source. For example, if it's a heat pump with a fossil-fuel system like a gas boiler.
- you have more than one renewable heating system for space (e.g. room) heating.

Back-up heating that doesn't count

You don't need metering if your back-up heating is only designed and installed to heat a single room, such as an open fire or a plug-in electric heater. Similarly, immersion heaters

and supplementary electric heaters (that some heat pumps have) don't count. There are some other exemptions. Please refer to our NI Guide to Metering which will be published when the scheme opens.

You need metering if your home is only partially occupied

Homes that are occupied for less than 183 days in the year must be metered. This includes second homes or tenanted properties, which a landlord expects to be empty for six months in a year.

You need metering if the property is the subject of a tenancy agreement

Where the heating system is installed in a domestic property which is rented under a tenancy agreement, it will need to be metered. For rented homes, in the vast majority of cases the decision to install the renewable heat equipment will be taken by the landlord rather than the inhabitant. For these reasons, all second homes (anything that is not a primary place of residence) will be required to be metered.

You need metering if your biomass boiler or stove doesn't heat your entire property

If your biomass boiler is not sized to meet all of your heating needs, then we can't pay you the same amount as if it did and your heating system must be metered. Check with your installer to see if this applies to you.

What your installer should do

- Inform you if metering is required.
- Label the meter clearly (there could be more than one meter and more than one type – ie heat, electricity, gas or oil) and teach you how to take meter readings.
- Take the initial reading. You can submit this one if you apply to the scheme within two weeks. If later, you'll have to take a new reading and submit it when you apply. After that you'll submit readings to us quarterly.
- Your installer will be responsible for providing the answers to the metering questions that you submit as part of your application. They'll complete a paper copy of these and hand to you when they design your renewable heating system.

How should it be installed?

You must use an MCS-certified installer to install all meters¹. This could be the person who installed your heating system, or someone different. If you choose someone different, they must be MCS certified to install the type of heating system that you have.

Further information on metering

You should check the [NI Guide to Metering](#) for specific information on meters and how they should be installed and also the [MCS Domestic RHI Metering Guidance](#).

How ongoing payments are calculated

Upfront payments and ongoing incentives

The domestic RHI payments have two elements, an upfront payment paid on accreditation and an ongoing incentive payment paid annually. The upfront payment is a set amount based on your technology and the ongoing payment is variable depending on the heat requirements / use in your property.

The upfront payments are as follows;

- Biomass: £2500
- Air Source Heat Pump: £1700
- Ground Source Heat Pump: £3500
- Solar thermal: £320

If you have already received support under the RHPP you will receive the ongoing payment only.

The ongoing payments are calculated multiplying a tariff with the heat demand / use in your home.

The ongoing tariff rates in pence per kilo watt hour (p/kWh) are as follows;

- Biomass: 5.7 p/kWh
- Air Source Heat Pump: 3.6 p/kWh
- Ground Source Heat Pump: 8.3 p/kWh
- Solar thermal: 13.7p/kWh

Calculating payments

Payments are calculated differently depending on whether the technology is solar thermal, a primary technology that is deemed or a primary technology that requires metering.

Solar thermal

For solar thermal installations the methodology for making payments is straightforward. The tariff rate is multiplied by the estimated annual generation figure (as detailed on the MCS certificate).

The estimated annual generation figure is calculated by your MCS installer, taking into account MCS guidance.

For example, a solar thermal installation with an estimated generation figure of 2,000 kWh would receive £262 per annum.

Biomass and Heat Pumps

As biomass and heat pumps are primary technologies the annual incentive payments will be calculated using the EPC provided for the property. The EPC data provides DETI with an estimate of what the heat requirements of the property would be if it carried out all reasonable energy efficiency measures. This figure is used, rather than actual or current heat demand, to encourage home owners to become more efficient.

The final calculation is used to determine annual payment, as below;

$$\text{Annual payment} = \text{Potential annual heat demand} \times \text{relevant tariff}$$

Payments for homes that are metered

Where a property has required metering then the payments will be made based on the heat meter readings but capped at the deemed level.

Cap on payments

To protect the scheme and to guard against instances where larger or less efficient homes could be over-incentivised there will be a cap on payments of £2500 per annum. No property will receive more than £2500 per annum for the ongoing incentive payments.

If you installed before launch

First movers

Many people installed a renewable heating system after the plan to introduce the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) in Northern Ireland was first announced on the 1 September 2010. If you installed a system with a first commissioning date between then and the launch of the Northern Ireland Domestic RHI scheme, you count as a 'legacy' applicant. (Check the commissioning date on your MCS certificate).

You can apply to the scheme but there are some differences compared to other applicants that only affect you. This factsheet is designed to help explain these.

What is a legacy applicant?

There are two types:

- people that received the Renewable Heat Premium Payment (RHPP), a one-off grant that helped cover some of the upfront cost of installing a renewable heating system
- people that financed the cost of their renewable heating system by other means.

What difference does it make?

If you received RHPP, to avoid a double subsidy, no further upfront payments towards installation costs will be available, but successful applicants will be entitled to Domestic RHI payments over the seven years' payment lifetime of the scheme. The first annual RHI payment will be due to households 12 months after joining the scheme.

If you received a grant from public funds from another source, to avoid a double subsidy, we will deduct the amount you received in grant from your Domestic RHI payments.

Timing for applying

All legacy applicants must apply to the Domestic RHI scheme within the first 12 months of its opening, i.e. before 30 November 2015. Because of the large volume of RHPP recipients, we've staggered when you can apply to ensure you get the best level of service.

It works like this:

- if you did not receive RHPP, you can apply now
- if you received but did not use the RHPP vouchers, you can apply now
- if you applied for and received payment under the RHPP we will make contact with you.

If, during the first year of the scheme, Government has to reduce tariffs for the Domestic RHI due to high uptake, you will not be affected and will continue to receive the original rate.

Preparing to apply

Just having installed the heating system isn't enough. To be able to apply within the 12 month deadline of the scheme opening, make sure you also do the following:

Get insulated:

We recommend loft insulation or cavity wall insulation, is installed before you apply to the Domestic RHI. Ideally you need an EPC that does not show loft or cavity wall insulation as recommendations. If it's not possible to install it, you can still apply for the scheme, if you can show that one of the 'permitted exemptions' applies to you. See insulation exemptions¹ in our Guide to Applicants.

Check if you need metering:

Read the "Do I Need Metering?" section of this guide. If you think you do, contact your installer about getting meter(s) installed.

Other differences for legacy applicants

Although you must meet the eligibility requirements for the Domestic RHI, special provisions have been made for you. See the Guide to Applicants to find out more about each point:

- your renewable heating system doesn't have to meet current MCS standards, only the MCS standards that applied on the date when it was first commissioned
- biomass systems don't need to meet the air-quality requirements that will apply to other applicants
- heat pump systems will be assigned a seasonal performance factor of 2.5

¹ Insulation Exemptions advice and templates will be available at the scheme launch.

How to apply

This list is a summary of the key eligibility criteria to join the scheme;

- The property must have a domestic Energy Performance Certificate
- Applicants must be the owner of the heating system and either own or occupy the property it is in.
- The eligible heating systems are biomass boilers; biomass pellet stoves with liquid filled heat exchangers enclosed within; air source and ground source (to water) heat pumps; flat plate and evacuated tube solar thermal panels systems.
- All heating systems must provide heat via a liquid medium.
- The heat generated by the heating system must be for an eligible use – all biomass heating systems and heat pumps must provide space (room) heating and solar thermal systems must provide heating for domestic hot water only.
- The heating system must not provide heat for any ineligible uses. Biomass systems must not be designed to generate heat to cook food. Air source heat pumps must not be designed to use heat that was expelled from the building to generate heat. Solar thermal systems must not provide space heating. Heat used for a domestic swimming pool will not be supported.
- The renewable heating system must be MCS certified (or equivalent) and commissioned by a MCS certified installer.
- The heating system must have been first commissioned on or after 1 September 2010.
- No public funding (other than the RHPP) can be used for the purchase or the installation of the technology.
- Applicants must have made some financial contribution to the heating system.
- The heating system must have been installed after the property was first occupied, unless the heating system was installed in a new property which was built using the labour or resources of the individual who first owned the property.
- Applicants must apply within 12 months of the commissioning date of the heating system. Where the commissioning date is before the launch of the scheme applicants must apply within 12 months of the scheme opening.
- Applicants that have a heating system that requires metering must install an eligible meter or meters.

Who can apply?

Anyone who owns an eligible renewable heating system or resides in the property where it is installed can apply for the domestic RHI. The property must have a Northern Ireland post code.

When applying you will be asked to describe which type of owner you are, this could be owner-occupier, registered social landlord, private landlord or tenant with landlord's permission.

The application form is designed to be as user-friendly as possible.

If the heating system has multiple owners, one person should be nominated to act on behalf of all – this person should complete all documentation and act as the point of contact for DETI.

Your responsibilities

Changes to your heating system

There is a duty on applicants to notify DETI in any circumstances where there have been significant changes to the heating system. This may include if the technology is removed or replaced or if it becomes in disrepair and no longer used. Applicants must notify DETI as soon as there is a change to the heating system.

Keep your system in good working order

It is strongly recommended that you keep your new heating system in good working order, maintaining and servicing it as per the manufacturer's instructions. Applicants should ensure that they receive all appropriate guidance documents from their installers on how the technology should be used and maintained.

If the system stops generating heat payments may be adjusted to account for the disruption in service.

For further information on heating system maintenance you should contact your installer. In cases where your systems stops working you should contact your installer who commissioned the system.

Changes in ownership

It is permissible for ownership of the technology to change – the most likely scenario is where the property where the technology provides heating is sold to another party. If ownership does change, the original owner and the new owner must both inform DETI. The new owner will need to provide proof of ownership, confirm eligibility and adhere to the ongoing obligations.

Changes in eligibility

If any changes occur that might affect your eligibility or your status within the domestic RHI scheme you must contact DETI and provide appropriate explanation. Examples of these changes might be the occupancy levels of your home (i.e. it is no longer occupied for the majority of the year or becomes privately rented / second home), the status of the building (i.e. becomes a commercial premises) or receipt of other public funds for the technology.

Ongoing checks and monitoring

As payments continue for 7 years after the date of accreditation there will be range of ongoing check and monitoring to ensure the condition of the scheme are adhered to. The applicant is responsible for retaining copies of all relevant documentation (invoices, commission certificate, building control) including records of fuel purchases for systems requiring an input fuel.

In addition, applicants must adhere to monitoring and audit checks. This will include site visits so DETI can confirm the technology is in place, in working order and that details provided as part of the application were accurate. Applicants will also be required to provide any additional information or clarification as requested by DETI. If selected for site visit or paper audit, applicants must comply.

In circumstances where applicants are overpaid, DETI can ask for the money to be repaid or offset against payments.

Annual declaration of compliance

Every year, applicants will be asked to confirm a number of key eligibility statements relating to themselves, their technology and the premises the technology is located. These annual declarations of compliance will be to demonstrate that the conditions of the scheme are being met and must be completed before payments are made.

Applicants will receive the declarations from DETI via email or post (as requested) up to 2 months prior to their date of payment. They must be returned 14 days before the date of payment (if the payment is to be made on time).

If you break the rules

If it is discovered that an applicant has provided false information or is not complying with the rules payments can be withheld whilst an investigation is carried out. In such cases applicants will be informed in writing of the nature of the investigation.

If it is confirmed that there has been a case of non-compliance the accreditation can be withdrawn and payments revoked. DETI also retains the power to claw back funding.

Evaluation

DETI may, from time to time, wish to carry out surveys on both the domestic RHI and the consumer's experience of renewables. Therefore participants may be contacted with a short survey to support DETI as they seek to improve the scheme.

Insulation Exemption and Energy Efficiency

The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) presented should not highlight any “Recommendations” on insulation thus demonstrating that the dwelling is insulated to the current recommended levels. Qualifying exemptions will be accepted with contemporaneous proof.

What is it?

A requirement of the Domestic RHI scheme is that you must install loft and/or cavity wall insulation. If it's not possible, you may still be able to apply for the scheme, if you can provide evidence from a relevant body that one of the permitted insulation exemptions applies to you.

This document includes

- A table showing the permitted reasons for exemption and the evidence requirements. No other reasons will be accepted.
- Letter templates for each of the permitted reasons for exemption that can be given to the appropriate professional from one of the relevant bodies stipulated in the table. They must complete the letter, expressing their opinion that it isn't feasible to install the insulation and explaining why.

Without this evidence you won't be able to join the scheme, unless you install the insulation. See the website for more information.

Send to

Send the completed letter to:

By email: NI.RHI@detini.gov.uk

By post: Domestic RHI, Energy Division, DETI, Netherleigh, Massey Avenue, BELFAST, BT4 2JP

Ordinarily you will be required to have loft and cavity wall insulation installed and to be up to the latest recommended standards to be eligible for the Domestic RHI. If you haven't got loft and or cavity wall insulation installed up to the recommended standards then this will show as a recommendation on your EPC. In some specific circumstances you will be able to apply for an exemption from this requirement. The valid exemptions are listed below. If one applies to you then you'll need to submit the required evidence for us to be able to approve your application.

Insulation Exemptions		
Why is the property exempt?	Which body must confirm this?	What evidence is required?
Due to your property being a listed building	Your property must be listed on the NI Environment Agency (NIEA) Buildings Database which contains records of buildings which are considered to be of architectural or historic interest. Written evidence from NIEA will be needed to support this.	A completed Insulation Exemption Template stating that it is unfeasible to install cavity/loft insulation due to the building being a listed property.
Due to your property being located in a Conservation Area	These are defined as areas of 'special architectural or historical interest' in Article 53 of the Planning Order (1991). Your inclusion must be confirmed by your Local Area Planning Office,	A completed Insulation Exemption Template stating that it is unfeasible to install cavity/loft insulation due to the building being located in a Conservation Area.
Due to your property housing a protected species that would be harmed by insulation (most likely bats)	NIEA Natural Heritage recommends that all works comply with British Standard 42020:2013 which came into effect on 31 August 2013. You can contact NIEA for further advice at http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/land-home/plan/advice_and_information.htm	The completed Insulation Exemption Template needs to confirm which protected species is housed at your property and that installing cavity/loft insulation would be harmful to that species.
Due to local environmental conditions (e.g. regular exposure to driving rain)	A member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). Please visit the RICS website to find a local chartered surveyor. http://www.rics.org/uk/	You will need to arrange for a chartered surveyor to visit your property and prepare a report. The completed Insulation Exemption Template will need to state their RICS membership number.

<p>Due to structural conditions</p>	<p>A member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). Please visit the RICS website to find a local chartered surveyor. http://www.rics.org/uk/ Corrigendum</p>	<p>You will need to arrange for a chartered surveyor to visit your property and prepare a report. The completed Insulation Exemption Template will need to state their RICS membership number.</p>
<p>Because it would be otherwise unlawful</p>	<p>A representative from your Local Area Planning Office, or NIEA, or a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).</p>	<p>The completed Insulation Exemption Template will need to state which law prevents the installation of cavity/loft insulation at the property.</p>

Exempt properties will still need to submit a copy of the EPC that was produced as a result of this. Applicants that wish to apply for an insulation exemption will need to provide a filled-out copy of the Insulation exemption template (or a letter including the information requested in this template) completed by a member of an appropriate body in support of their claim.

Seeking advice from chartered surveyors: if required, you can arrange for a chartered surveyor or ecologist to visit your property and provide a report to evidence any of these situations (except for where the property houses a protected species) and provide a completed Insulation Exemption Template. Note that there is likely to be a fee for such a service.

If your scenario is not listed above or we do not accept the evidence you have provided: Only the scenarios listed above are valid exemptions. In all other scenarios, you will be required to install loft and cavity wall insulation if recommended on your EPC. If it will be difficult or expensive for you to install cavity wall insulation because your property has hard-to-treat cavities and will require non-standard products, you may wish to see whether you can get for funding via the Energy Companies Obligation scheme. If we do not consider the scenario or evidence provided to be valid, you will be asked to provide a new Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) that does not recommend the installation of loft and/or cavity wall insulation. You will have three months from your date of application to provide the updated EPC.

If your EPC incorrectly shows outstanding loft and/or cavity wall insulation recommendations: If your EPC incorrectly recommends that you install loft and/or cavity wall insulation (eg, it recommends cavity wall insulation when you have solid walls), you will need to contact your EPC assessor, who should produce an updated EPC. If your EPC recommends that you install loft and/or cavity wall insulation, and you are not covered by one of the above exemptions, we will not be able to accept you on to the scheme. If you have a complaint about your EPC assessor, you should contact the accreditation scheme to which they belong.

Letter Templates

The individual or body is requested to use whichever of the following templates as appropriate:

For listed properties

[Date]

Dear Domestic RHI team,

I am writing to confirm that the following property is a listed property [please insert Grade].

[Full address]

I declare that, due to its listed status, it is not possible to install loft/ cavity wall insulation (delete if inapplicable) in the property, as recommended in the property's domestic Energy Performance Certificate.

[Please provide any extra detail here.]

Yours sincerely,

[Please sign]

Full name:

Organisation:

Job title:

If chartered surveyor, RICS member number:

N.B. In order for this letter to be acceptable evidence, you must be a representative from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), or be a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and have provided your RICS member number.

For properties located in a Conservation Area

[Date]

Dear Domestic RHI team,

I am writing to confirm that the following property is located in [please state name of Conservation Area] which is a Conservation Area.

[Full address]

I declare that, due to the fact that it is located in a conservation area, it is not possible to install loft/cavity wall insulation (delete if inapplicable) in the property, as recommended in the property's domestic Energy Performance Certificate.

[Please provide any extra detail here.]

Yours sincerely,

[Please sign]

Full name:

Organisation:

Job title:

If chartered surveyor, RICS member number:

N.B. In order for this letter to be acceptable evidence, you must be a representative from the Local Area Planning Officer of the property owner, or from NIEA, or be a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and have provided your RICS member number.

For protected species

[Date]

Dear Domestic RHI team,

I am writing to confirm that [insert name of protected species] is present at the following property.

[Full address]

I declare that in my opinion the installation in the property (as recommended in the property's domestic energy Performance Certificate) of loft/cavity wall insulation (delete if inapplicable) would have a material impact on the above species.

[Please provide extra detail here, or attach a report.]

Yours sincerely,

[Please sign]

Full name:

Organisation:

Job title:

N.B. In order for this letter to be acceptable evidence, you must be a representative from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency or a chartered ecologist. We expect a chartered ecologist to be a member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Managers. If this is not the case but you nevertheless believe you are a suitable professional, please contact DETI Domestic RHI directly.

For environmental/structural reasons:

[Date]

Dear Domestic RHI team,

I am writing to confirm that in my opinion the presence of atypical environmental conditions at the following property mean/the structure of the following property means (delete if inapplicable) that the installation at the property (as recommended in the property's domestic Energy Performance Certificate) of loft/cavity wall insulation (delete if inapplicable) is not feasible.

[Full address]

[Please provide extra detail here.]

Yours sincerely,

[Please sign]

Full name:

Organisation name, or self-employed:

RICS member number:

N.B. In order for this letter to be acceptable evidence, you must be a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and have provided your RICS member number. If this is not the case but you nevertheless believe you are a suitable professional, please contact DETI, Domestic RHI directly.

If it's unlawful

[Date]

Dear Domestic RHI team,

I am writing to confirm that in my opinion the installation in the following property, as recommended in the property's domestic Energy Performance Certificate, of loft/cavity wall insulation (delete if inapplicable) would be unlawful for the reason(s) set out below.

[Full address]

[Please provide details as to the law that would be contravened and the way in which it would be contravened..]

Yours sincerely,

[Please sign]

Full name:

Organisation name, or self-employed:

RICS member number:

N.B. In order for this letter to be acceptable evidence, you must be a representative from the Local Area Planning Office of the property owner, or from NIEA, or be a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and have provided your RICS member number.

Audit

To continue to receive payments, you'll have to complete an annual declaration confirming that you've kept to the rules. To help protect the public purse, we carry out a system of desk and site audits to verify that declarations are accurate. They're randomly chosen, so anyone may be selected at any time during the process of application, accreditation or annual payment.

Queries and complaints

The scheme

If you have any queries regarding the Domestic RHI policy, the administration or eligibility you can check www.nidirect.gov.uk/energywise or contact DETI at 028 9052 9219 or ni.rhi@detini.gov.uk.

Please note, however, DETI cannot give pre-accreditation or advise in advance whether you will be accredited under the scheme. Each application is considered on its own merits, therefore, before applying you should make yourself familiar with this guidance document and the eligibility standards. DETI can give general advice and guidance if required.

Installers

If you have a complaint about your installer, you should raise it with them in the first instance. If you do not feel it has been satisfactorily resolved you may be able to take the complaint to MCS or RECC.

MCS is a quality assurance scheme that certifies installers and products and ensures that certified products have been installed and commissioned to agreed standards. If you do have a complaint regarding an MCS installer or product you should contact MCS on 0207 090 1082 or at

<http://www.microgenerationcertification.org/consumers/complaints>

The Renewable Energy Consumer Code (RECC) is a body set to promote renewables and protect consumers. Its members are from the renewable industry and they have to adhere to the code which is backed by the Trading Standards Institute. All domestic RHI heating systems must be MCS-certified and commissioned by a MCS installer. A condition of MCS certification is membership to RECC.

RECC can help with complaints regarding breaches of the consumer code, such as:

- Where misleading information has been provided regarding the scheme or the heating system installed.
- Where the heating system is underperforming.

Where the information in the contract and the actual service provided do not match up.

RECC cannot deal with complaints about faulty equipment, repairs or matters regarding the safety of the heating system.