

Information Notice on the appointment of a Panel of Approved Assessors as required under the Solvents Regulations (S.I. no. 565 of 2012)

The revised regulations for solvents activities (including dry cleaning) required the EPA to set up a panel of approved assessors to replace the existing AIC inspection body system. These Approved Assessors will, from September 26th 2013 be the inspection bodies for the purposes of carrying out inspections under the regulations. Inspections prior to this date must continue to be carried out by the current interim approved assessor (Certification Europe). The details of the panel of Approved Assessors are as follows:

- Certification Europe – Phone: 01 6429300 – Web: www.certificationeurope.com
- EnviroGuide Consulting – Phone: 01 2711896 – Web: www.enviroguide.ie

Regulated operators are free to use either of these assessors for the purposes of getting their premises inspected, and as with the previous AIC system the operator should engage the services of an assessor and pay them directly. In order to obtain your certificate of compliance from your local authority you must then send a compliant Approved Assessor report along with the application fee to your local authority.

The EPA would also like to remind you of some of the new aspects of the regulations:

- Local Authorities can now issue certificates of compliance for up to 3 years rather than the previous 1 year period. However, certificates of a shorter duration may be issued if a Local Authority has concerns about a specific installation (including failure to renew certificates in time).
- Regardless of the duration of certificates, all operators are required to submit an annual self-assessment compliance report to their local authority, commencing with a report for the year 2014 (to be submitted in 2015). Templates for these reports will be issued to you in advance of the reporting period. If you fail to submit a self-assessment annual report you may not be allowed to renew your certificate until such time as any outstanding reports are submitted.
- The application fee payable by operators to their Local Authority has increased from €50 to €70 for new applications (but remains €50 for renewals). If an operator does not renew their certificate of compliance prior to its expiry date, they must then apply for a new certificate.
- The fine for uncertified operators has increased from €3,000 to €5,000 or imprisonment for up to six months, or both.
- A copy of your certificate of compliance must be displayed in a prominent position at your premises.

It is illegal for any uncertified operator to carry out an activity for which a certificate of compliance is required under these Regulations. Any such operators should arrange for an inspection immediately. The EPA in conjunction with the Local Authorities will be carrying out enforcement activities during 2013/14. It is also expected that new legislation will be introduced shortly which will allow for fixed payment notices (i.e. 'on-the-spot fines') to be issued for any offences specified in the regulations.

Further news, updates and information can be obtained at the following website www.solvents.ie and by contacting your Local Authority.