



**Date: 30 April 2014**

Dear Consultee

**Consultation on reform of the regulatory system to control small sewage discharges from septic tanks and small sewage treatment plants in England**

The Defra Water Quality Team would like to invite views on a proposed new approach to simplify the control of small domestic sewage discharges from septic tanks and small sewage treatment plants and to enable a more risk-based approach to permitting such discharges in England. The proposals would remove administrative burdens on over 400,000 people with rural properties not connected to the main sewerage network, whilst keeping the necessary controls to prevent pollution, protect public health, improve drinking water supplies and protect sensitive habitats.

The consultation seeks views on the Government's proposals to:

1. Simplify the existing regulations (for example by removing the need for households and businesses to register their septic tank) while maintaining and focussing effort on preventing pollution.
2. Rationalise the number of sensitive areas where households and businesses will be required to have a permit for their small sewage discharge so that permits are only required in the most sensitive areas where a higher level of protection is needed.

The consultation opens on 30 April and closes on 10 June.

Your views and comments on the proposals are essential to the decision making process. Responses to the consultation will help shape the proposed new approach. If agreed the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs will take forward the necessary amendments to legislation.

If you think that other people or organisations will be interested in this consultation and may also wish to respond, please forward the link to the consultation to them.

[Reform of the regulatory system to control small sewage discharges](#)



## Responses

The consultation is principally being conducted as an online survey. The online survey, consultation document and supporting information may be found on [www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

If you prefer, you can also respond by email to [SSDs Reform](mailto:SSDs_Reform) or by writing to us at the address below:

Defra  
Water Quality Team  
Area 3E, Nobel House  
17 Smith Square  
London SW1P 2RJ

Responses need to be made by 10 June.

If you wish to obtain a copy of the consultation document, please contact us as above.

## Consultation Criteria

This consultation is in line with the Consultations Principles. These can be found at <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/consultation-principles-guidance>

Copies of responses will be made available to the public on request. If you do not want your response – including your name, contact details and any other personal information – to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation. Please note, if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, that won't count as a confidentiality request.

Please explain why you need to keep details confidential. We will take your reasons into account if someone asks for this information under freedom of information legislation. But, because of the law, we cannot promise that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

We will summarise all responses and place this summary on our website at: [www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra). This summary will include a list of names of organisations that responded but not people's personal names, addresses or other contact details.

If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please address them to Defra Consultation Co-ordinator, 629 Milbank, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR or email [consultation.coordinator@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.coordinator@defra.gsi.gov.uk).

Thank you in advance for taking the time to consider and respond to this consultation. If you have any queries about the consultation please email us at [SSDs Reform](mailto:SSDs_Reform)

## Water Quality Team

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs