

Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)

www.ofgem.gov.uk

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Factsheet



An introduction to the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive scheme

For people considering or intending to apply

Advance information

The Domestic RHI is not yet open but is due to launch in spring. This factsheet provides some basic information in advance. It's only designed as a snapshot. For the full picture, you will definitely need to read our Essential Guide to Applicants, which we'll publish on scheme launch.

What is it?

The 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 quarterly 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.

Is it for me?

Broadly speaking the Domestic RHI scheme is for heating systems for single homes. The starting point is that your renewable heating system is in a property that is capable of getting a domestic Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). The EPC is the proof we need that your property is assessed as a domestic 'dwelling'. Without one, you can't apply and won't be able to join the scheme.

Depending on meeting the eligibility criteria, anyone can apply. That includes people who own the homes they live in, people who don't own the property but do own the renewable heating system, private and registered social landlords and self-builders.

If those categories don't apply to you, you may want to find out more about the [Non-Domestic RHI scheme](#). Generally speaking, it's for renewable heating systems that are fitted in industrial, commercial, or public premises.

The Non-Domestic scheme also covers heating systems that heat more than one home, such as two houses or a block of flats. It has different eligibility requirements and a separate application process. See our factsheet, [The Renewable Heat Incentive – Domestic or Non-Domestic?](#)



Heating systems

It's not enough just to have one of the types of renewable heating systems that are eligible for the scheme. The make and model must also meet specific technical requirements. When the scheme opens, we'll publish a list of products that you can check against.

The eligible heating system types are:

- **biomass only boilers.**
- **biomass pellet stoves with integrated boilers.**
- **air source heat pumps.**
- **ground source heat pumps.**
- **solar thermal panels**
- flat plate or evacuated tube only.

Solar thermal panels eligible for the scheme must **only** provide hot water for your home.

All the others provide space heating (such as heating rooms in a house via central heating) or space heating and hot water. Under the scheme rules, they have to heat the home using a 'wet' central heating system like radiators. Also, hot water doesn't include water used to heat a swimming pool.

You can only apply for one space heating system per property. But you can make two applications if one system (biomass or heat pump) is used for space heating or space heating and hot water, and the other is solar thermal panels for water heating.

Tariffs will be shown on our website when the scheme opens.

Domestic RHI and the Green Deal

Because renewable heating systems work best in a well insulated home, the Domestic RHI works alongside the Green Deal. It's a government backed initiative to help people make their homes more energy efficient.

Before applying to the Domestic RHI, you must first:

- **have a Green Deal Assessment carried out for your property* If you've already got one, you don't need another, provided you can supply the Green Deal Advice Report number**
- **install loft or cavity wall insulation if it's recommended in the Green Deal Advice Report. If it is not possible to do this, then you could submit evidence to us as part of your application. We'll provide links to 'insulation exemptions' in our reference document, which we'll publish when the scheme opens.**
- **get an updated EPC to verify you've installed the loft or cavity wall insulation.**

**The only people exempt from having to carry out a Green Deal Assessment are those who build their own homes incorporating an eligible heating system. This is because these houses would be built to recent building regulation standards. We'll provide links to 'self-build exemptions' in our reference document when the scheme opens.*



If you intend to apply

- You must be the owner of an eligible heating system.
- You must own or occupy the property the renewable heating system is in.
- Your renewable heating system must be certified under Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS). Check with your installer.
- No part of the heating system used to produce heat may have been used before the first commissioning date (when your installer tested and signed off your system). The date's on the MCS certificate. Some parts of the system are exempt from this requirement. We'll provide links to the relevant part in our reference document which we'll publish when the scheme opens.
- All parts of your heating system must have a commissioning date **on or after 15 July 2009** (when the scheme was first announced).
- If the first commissioning date of your heating system was **on or after** the scheme opening date (date to be confirmed) you must apply within 12 months of the commissioning date. It's shown on the MCS certificate.
- If you installed your heating system **before** the scheme opening date (date to be confirmed) you have until the end of twelve months from that opening date to apply.
- If you received the Renewable Heat Premium Payment (RHPP), we've staggered application dates because of the potentially large numbers. That way we can handle your application efficiently and make sure you get the best level of service. See our factsheet, [Already installed before Domestic RHI opening?](#)
- If you received a grant from public funds, including the RHPP, towards the purchase or installation costs of your heating system, we'll deduct the amount from your Domestic RHI payments over the course of seven years' payment lifetime. We won't deduct Green Deal funding or any loan for which you're liable for the payments. To be eligible, you or a former owner must also have made a personal financial contribution to the purchase or installation costs. In these circumstances, Green Deal funding counts.

The list above is only an overview. For more detail you must read our Essential Guide for Applicants, which we'll publish as soon as the scheme goes live.

Supplying proof

Your installer will register your renewable heating system and give you the MCS certificate for it.

To apply, you complete an online application form and supply:

- an MCS certificate (or equivalent) number. This is at the top of the certificate and looks like: MCS 01234567-A
- an EPC number. This is at the top of your certificate and looks like: 12345-5678-9012-3456
- a Green Deal Advice Report number. This is at the top of your report and looks like: 12345-6789-0123-4567.

We will ask you to complete declarations as evidence for some of the joining requirements and terms and conditions. We'll also need you to provide personal information and bank details, so we can pay you.

Some people may need to supply more information, depending on their circumstances. See our Essential Guide for Applicants when its published.

About payments

For most, payments are based on an estimation of your heating system's annual heat use. For biomass we get this figure from your EPC. Likewise for heat pumps, although its 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.

Some people will have to install meters and submit regular readings on which payments will be based. This includes, but isn't limited to, those with a back-up heating system such as an oil boiler and those with a property which is occupied for less than half the year.

Your responsibilities

As we're dealing with public money, a condition of joining is that you agree to keep to the scheme rules. They include, but aren't limited to:

- ✓ **keeping the heating system and metering equipment (if you have it) in good working order**
- ✓ **telling us if the equipment breaks down and isn't working while awaiting repair**
- ✓ **telling us if you sell your house (with the heating system in it), in which case payments to you will stop and switch to the new owner, should they apply to the scheme and satisfy certain other conditions**
- ✓ **telling us if you make any changes to your heating system, for example if you replace part of the heating system**
- ✓ **telling us if there are changes that mean your property needs to be metered under the rules of the scheme, for example if you expect it to be occupied for less than half the year.**
- ✓ **telling us if there is ANY change in circumstances that may affect your eligibility to receive payments.**

Audit checks

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 desktop and site audits to verify that declarations are accurate. They're randomly chosen, so anyone may be selected at any time.



Guide material

Our factsheets are ready, but the rest of our material will only be published when the scheme opens.

Domestic RHI factsheets

- [An introduction to the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive](#)
- [The Renewable Heat Incentive – Domestic or Non-Domestic?](#)
- [Already installed before Domestic RHI opening?](#)
- [Do I need metering for the Domestic RHI?](#)
- [A metering and monitoring service package for the Domestic RHI](#)

Domestic RHI essential guides

- Essential guide for applicants
- Essential guide for installers
- Essential guide to metering for applicants
- Essential guide to metering for installers

Domestic RHI reference document

Domestic RHI reference document

Find out more

Next steps

See our Essential guide for applicants

See our websites:

- [Domestic RHI](#) * web holding page until the scheme opens
- [Non-Domestic RHI](#)

For information about the Green Deal

The [gov.uk](#) website explains simply what the Green Deal is and how it works. It also has a list of approved Green Deal assessors.

For help

For all general queries about the Domestic RHI contact:

The Energy Saving Advice Service,
if you live in **England or Wales:**

- Call **0300 123 1234**.
Calls are charged at the standard national rate.
- Email energy-advice@est.org.uk

Home Energy Scotland, if you live in **Scotland:**

- Call **0808 808 2282**. Calls are free from landlines and most mobile networks.
- [Online email form](#)