

Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)

www.ofgem.gov.uk

Domestic



Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

Application questions	3
1. How do I apply for the Domestic RHI?.....	3
2. Can I apply for the Domestic RHI if I live in Northern Ireland or Channel Islands?	3
3. Why do I need a Green Deal Assessment?	3
Joining requirements questions	3
4. Can I apply to the scheme for a new build property?	3
5. Is second hand or refurbished equipment eligible?.....	4
6. Can I apply for more than one heating system?	4
7. If I send in a copy of my specifications for my installation, can you tell me if I will be able to join?.....	4
8. Which scheme should I apply to – Domestic or Non-Domestic RHI?	4
9. Do I need a Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) certified renewable heating system and installer?	4
10. Can I still apply join the Domestic RHI if I can't install the required loft and/or cavity wall insulation recommended in my Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)?	5
11. What does 'commissioning date' mean?	5
12. I've recently heard about the introduction of air quality emission standards for biomass boilers. What does this mean for me?	5
13. I've heard about the sustainability requirements for biomass. When will these be introduced and what do they mean for me?	5
14. Are rental properties or holiday homes eligible?	5
15. What does 'public funding' mean?	6
16. What happens if I move home?	6
17. How long will it take you to approve my application?	6
Metering questions	6
18. Will I need to install metering, and will the cost of installing it be compensated? ..	6

19. Can I choose to be metered for payment?7

20. How do I submit meter readings?7

Payment questions7

21. How much can I expect to get paid?7

22. How will I get paid?7

23. When will I receive my first payment?.....7

24. If my renewable heating system is faulty and I decide to return it and revert back to my old heating system, do I need to return payments I’ve already received?7

Consumer protection questions7

Questions for installers8

25. What is MCS?8

26. How do I get MCS accreditation?8

27. How do I maintain and prove MCS accreditation?8

28. How can I check if an installation is MCS certified?8

29. Who can I contact if I have questions about the Domestic RHI scheme?8

30. Who can I refer householders to if they have questions about the scheme I can’t answer?9

31. What are my responsibilities under the scheme?9

32. What is the responsibility of the customer?9

33. And what are the responsibilities of the manufacturer?9

34. What if I have concerns about another installer? 10

35. What are the requirements on installers associated with heat metering? 10

36. Is a heating system eligible for the Domestic RHI scheme if a conventional boiler provides a back up to a Domestic RHI eligible heating device? 10

37. What happens when a dwelling has multiple Domestic RHI eligible products? 10

If you need help

Telephone: 0300 0030 744 **Email:** DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk
(RHI enquiry line open Monday to Friday 8am-7pm and Saturdays 9am-2pm)

Application questions

1. How do I apply for the Domestic RHI?

You apply using the [online application form](#) on the Domestic RHI website. Before starting, make sure you're fully familiar with the joining requirements for the scheme and the documents you need to hand to be able to complete the application form. All information is in our [Essential guide for applicants](#).

If you can't apply online, call us on 0300 003 0744 and we'll talk you through the application, filling out the form for you.

2. Can I apply for the Domestic RHI if I live in Northern Ireland or Channel Islands?

No. It's for people with an eligible renewable heating system in England, Wales or Scotland. Those in Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands aren't covered by the scheme.

3. Why do I need a Green Deal Assessment?

A Green Deal Assessment is required to assess the energy efficiency of your home. If loft and cavity wall insulation are recommended as improvement measures, you must install them in order to be eligible for the Domestic RHI, unless you are an eligible self build new build. The Green Deal framework offers the option of providing financial support for installation of both renewable heating and insulation if it's needed. Furthermore, the Assessment provides a good opportunity for you to assess the wider energy efficiency of your property, understand what further action you can take on it and, if you wish, install additional insulation measures beyond what the Domestic RHI requires.

Joining requirements questions

4. Can I apply to the scheme for a new build property?

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.

If you need help

Telephone: 0300 0030 744 **Email:** DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk
(RHI enquiry line open Monday to Friday 8am-7pm and Saturdays 9am-2pm)

For more information, see the [Essential guide for applicants, section 4](#).

5. Is second hand or refurbished equipment eligible?

The Domestic RHI is designed to pay for 20 years of renewable heat generation during the 7 year tariff payment period. Using a second-hand system increases the risk that the heating system will break down or require replacement before 20 years has passed. In addition, the tariffs are set based on the cost of a new system: as second hand equipment is likely to be cheaper, allowing it on the scheme would tend to result in over-compensation. As such it was decided equipment previously used to generate heat should not be eligible for the scheme.

Equipment not required for generating heat (such as fixings, some piping, storage units etc) do not have to meet this requirement. For further information on which equipment is considered to be generating heat, please see installation boundaries in the [reference document](#).

6. Can I apply for more than one heating system?

You can apply for one space heating system or one solar thermal system, or, you can apply for one space heating system and one solar thermal system. The rules are slightly more complicated where you have a more than one product installed at your property, or one heating system that is made up of multiple products. For further information on this, please see multiple products in the [reference document](#).

7. If I send in a copy of my specifications for my installation, can you tell me if I will be able to join?

No. We can't confirm eligibility before receiving your full application. See our [Essential guide for applicants](#) for detailed information about the joining requirements for the Domestic RHI. For general advice on eligibility before you apply, call the Energy Saving Advice Service on 0300 123 1234, if you live in England or Wales. If you live in Scotland, call Home Energy Scotland on 0808 808 2282.

8. Which scheme should I apply to – Domestic or Non-Domestic RHI?

The Domestic RHI is designed for heating systems supplying a single domestic property which must have, or be capable of obtaining, a domestic Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). For other situations, including where the heating system provides heat to multiple homes (eg, flats), you may instead be eligible for the Non-Domestic RHI. If you're uncertain which to apply to, you'll need to read through the guidance for both schemes to help you make a decision. To get started, see our factsheet, [The Renewable Heat Incentive – Domestic or Non-Domestic?](#) or 'Domestic' in the [reference document](#).

9. Do I need a Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) certified renewable heating system and installer?

Yes. Your heating system must be certified under MCS or an equivalent scheme (see [reference document](#) for equivalent schemes), and you will have to provide your MCS number when you apply. MCS certified heating systems can only be installed by an MCS installer.

For further information on MCS, see their website, www.microgenerationcertification.org.uk.

If you need help

Telephone: 0300 0030 744 **Email:** DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk
(RHI enquiry line open Monday to Friday 8am-7pm and Saturdays 9am-2pm)

Ofgem.gov.uk/domestic-rhi

10. Can I still apply join the Domestic RHI if I can't install the required loft and/or cavity wall insulation recommended in my Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)?

If loft and/or cavity wall insulation are recommended in your EPC you must install them before you to apply to the Domestic RHI. There are some circumstances in which it may not be possible and if these apply you could fall within an exemption. For example, if your property is in a conservation area.

In those cases you'll need to provide us with evidence from an appropriate body, or arrange for a chartered surveyor to carry out an assessment. For more information on what to do if you can't install loft and/or cavity wall insulation, see insulation exemptions in the [reference document](#).

11. What does 'commissioning date' mean?

The commissioning date of the heating system is the date on which any tests and procedures that amount to the usual industry practices for that type of system were completed. This date can be found on your MCS certificate. Your commissioning date is important because it will go towards determining when you can apply to the scheme, the tariff rate that you will receive and deciding whether you are a legacy or standard applicant.

12. I've recently heard about the introduction of air quality emission standards for biomass boilers. What does this mean for me?

All biomass systems first commissioned on or after the launch of the Domestic RHI scheme will be required to meet air quality emission requirements. In order to confirm that your biomass system meets these requirements we check to see whether it has an RHI emission certificate. You can check to see if your biomass system has an emissions certificate by searching on the [Product eligibility list](#). If your system is not on this list, or does not have an emission certificate, you should talk to your installer about your next steps. If the first commissioning date for your biomass system was before the Domestic RHI scheme opened, it doesn't have to meet this requirement.

13. I've heard about the sustainability requirements for biomass. When will these be introduced and what do they mean for me?

DECC expect these to come in to force in autumn 2014. From then on, it's anticipated that you'll have to buy your fuel from an approved supplier list (known as the Biomass Suppliers List). This will apply to everyone, so think carefully about entering into a long-term contract with a fuel supplier before the list is available.

14. Are rental properties or holiday homes eligible?

Yes, so long as they meet all the joining requirements. This includes the property having a **domestic** energy performance certificate (EPC). Any property that's occupied for less than six months a year (183 days) will have to have a meter installed, and payments will be made on meter readings.

If you need help

Telephone: 0300 0030 744 **Email:** DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk
(RHI enquiry line open Monday to Friday 8am-7pm and Saturdays 9am-2pm)

15. What does 'public funding' mean?

Public funding relates to grants given to applicants by public bodies or any person distributing funds on behalf of public bodies. On the application form you have to declare any funding you've received which you don't need to repay. We review it and decide whether or not it's from a public source. If it is the amount will be deducted in equal amounts over the 7 year life of the scheme (i.e. 28 payments).

16. What happens if I move home?

Domestic RHI payments can only be made to the owner of the heating system. If you sell your home and, as part of that, you sell the heating system, you'll no longer be eligible to receive payments. If you sell your property, the new owner may be eligible to claim payments for the remainder of the seven years. You must notify us within 28 days if you plan to sell or have sold your heating system.

17. How long will it take you to approve my application?

If your application is straightforward and we don't need you to supply additional evidence, you'll receive an immediate onscreen message confirming whether or not you've been successful.

If we do need to ask you for more information, approval takes longer and depends on how quickly you supply it. Also we may need to conduct a review and can't approve your application until it's complete.

Metering questions

18. Will I need to install metering, and will the cost of installing it be compensated?

Generally, you will need to install metering if you fit one of the following scenarios:

- if you have another heating system installed at the property (renewable or fossil fuelled)
- if your property is occupied for less than six months a year (183 days)
- if you have a biomass boiler and it does not meet all of the heat demand for your property.

For more information on these scenarios, please see the [Essential guide for applicants](#), section 7.

You won't receive any extra money over and above your scheme payments to install metering.

If you require metering, you may also wish to look into the [Metering and monitoring service package](#) which offers a small additional payment to participants interested in monitoring their heating system.

If you need help

Telephone: 0300 0030 744 **Email:** DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk
(RHI enquiry line open Monday to Friday 8am-7pm and Saturdays 9am-2pm)

19. Can I choose to be metered for payment?

No. Your payment will only be based on renewable metered heat under a set of specific circumstances. See the [Essential guide for applicants](#), section 7. Most people will receive payments based on their property's estimated heat use, for which we use a figure on their Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). Those that have to be metered don't receive higher tariff payments than they would have otherwise (i.e. if they were paid instead on the estimated heat use basis).

20. How do I submit meter readings?

If your application is approved you have access to MyRHI, which you use to submit meter readings. You sign in on the Domestic RHI website, using your email address and the password you created during application. If you can't submit meter readings online, you'll have the option to provide them over the phone. Call our Applicant Support Centre on 0300 003 0744.

Payment questions

21. How much can I expect to get paid?

If you qualify for the scheme and continue to meet the rules throughout, you'll get quarterly payments for seven years. There are some worked examples of payments in [Essential guide for applicants](#), section 11.

22. How will I get paid?

We'll pay your quarterly payment directly into your bank account by BACS transfer. We can only do this for bank accounts which accept pound sterling deposits.

23. When will I receive my first payment?

Once you've been approved for the scheme, the date of your first payment will be three months from the date you submitted a complete application to us. You'll receive payments on a quarterly basis from this point.

24. If my renewable heating system is faulty and I decide to return it and revert back to my old heating system, do I need to return payments I've already received?

No, in these circumstances, you won't have to return payments for the period when the heating system was still working. You must notify us when the heating system stops heating your home.

Consumer protection questions

Please visit the Renewable Energy Consumer Code's website for consumer protection related issues including complaints regarding installers and mis-selling.

<http://www.recc.org.uk/consumers/how-to-complain>

If you need help

Telephone: 0300 0030 744 **Email:** DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk
(RHI enquiry line open Monday to Friday 8am-7pm and Saturdays 9am-2pm)

Questions for installers

25. What is MCS?

The Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) is an industry-led and internationally recognised quality assurance scheme. MCS itself is an EN 45011 Scheme and was launched in 2008.

MCS certifies microgeneration products used to produce electricity and heat from renewable sources. MCS also certifies installation companies to ensure the microgeneration products have been installed and commissioned to the highest standard for the consumer. The certification is based on a set of installer standards and product scheme requirements which are available in the [MCS Standards](#) section of the MCS website.

<http://www.microgenerationcertification.org/mcs-standards/mcs-standards>

26. How do I get MCS accreditation?

Those wishing to become a MCS certified installer, or to have their products certified under the scheme, must do so by applying to a [MCS Certification Body](#). Installers and product manufacturers may select which MCS Certification Body they apply to, to become certified.

More information can be found in the [installer certification](#) and [product certification](#) sections of the MCS website.

<http://www.microgenerationcertification.org/mcs-standards/mcs-standards>

27. How do I maintain and prove MCS accreditation?

Each product or installer is issued with a unique registration number which can be used to prove certification. Ongoing certification of installers is through an (at least) annual audit and surveillance visit (or visits) to inspect their work. Assuming everything conforms then certification continues. If any non-compliance issues are found, or a complaint raised against an installer, then they are investigated by their Certification Body who may suspend them or, in the worst case, terminate their certification status.

<http://www.microgenerationcertification.org/mcs-standards/mcs-standards>

28. How can I check if an installation is MCS certified?

Since August 2010 all MCS installations must be registered on the MCS Installer Database. Every registered installation has at least one MCS Certificate issued containing a unique certification number relevant to that address. This MCS certification number is required for the Domestic RHI scheme.

29. Who can I contact if I have questions about the Domestic RHI scheme?

In the first instance please refer to our [Essential guide for installers](#). For industry specific questions, please contact your Trade Association, manufacturers or The Heating and Hot water Industry Council (HHIC) <http://www.centralheating.co.uk>

If you need help

Telephone: 0300 0030 744 **Email:** DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk
(RHI enquiry line open Monday to Friday 8am-7pm and Saturdays 9am-2pm)

30. Who can I refer householders to if they have questions about the scheme I can't answer?

General enquiries about the Domestic RHI can be directed to the Energy Saving Advice Service on 0300 123 1234 for people living in England or Wales or Home Energy Scotland on 0808 808 2282 for people living in Scotland.

Also tell householders about our [Essential guide for applicants](#) which is downloadable from our website.

If your customer has already started to apply and has an application specific question they can call our Applicant Support Centre on 0300 003 0744, or email the Domestic RHI team at domesticrhi@ofgem.gov.uk.

31. What are my responsibilities under the scheme?

As an installer, it's your responsibility to keep up to date and comply with MCS standards. You will also need to provide your customer with the following information:

1. MCS certificate
2. MCS compliance certificate
3. Answers to the questions in the Installer Metering Questions template for [biomass](#) or [heat pump](#) systems (if your customer has a meter installed)
4. Ofgem installer checklist
5. Ofgem SPF template for heat pumps

We may also ask you for additional information from time to time.

Please see our [Essential guide for installers](#) and [Essential guide to metering](#) for further best practice guidance.

32. What is the responsibility of the customer?

It's your customer's responsibility to make sure that they have met the relevant eligibility criteria in order to apply for the scheme. For example, that they have had a Green Deal Assessment if required, have a domestic EPC, have bought an MCS certified renewable heating system. Your customer will also need to be aware of their responsibilities to comply with the scheme rules throughout the seven year payment lifetime. All of this information is in our [Essential guide for applicants](#).

33. And what are the responsibilities of the manufacturer?

The manufacturers have no direct responsibilities under the scheme. They will be producing renewable heating technologies that comply with MCS standards. These in turn can be selected by us as eligible products in line with the Department for Energy and Climate Change regulations. These are listed on the [Product eligibility list](#), although this is not a fully comprehensive list, it gives you a very good guide as to which products are eligible.

If you need help

Telephone: 0300 0030 744 **Email:** DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk
(RHI enquiry line open Monday to Friday 8am-7pm and Saturdays 9am-2pm)

34. What if I have concerns about another installer?

You can inform MCS and/or RECC of any concerns regarding another installer. You can submit a complaint about another installer to MCS at:

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

You can submit a complaint about another installer to RECC at:

<http://www.recc.org.uk/consumers/how-to-complain>

35. What are the requirements on installers associated with heat metering?

You must comply with the MCS Domestic RHI guidance. Also see our [Essential guide to metering](#).

36. Is a heating system eligible for the Domestic RHI scheme if a conventional boiler provides a back up to a Domestic RHI eligible heating device?

Yes, but it will have to have meters installed and scheme payments will be based on meter readings that the owner has to submit. There are some exemptions to this rule such as electric meters. Please see our [Essential guide to metering](#).

37. What happens when a dwelling has multiple Domestic RHI eligible products?

Where more than one product is installed in a property, it gets more complex. Eligibility depends on the nature of the products and their commissioning dates. For further information, please see multiple products in the [reference document](#).

If you need help

Telephone: 0300 0030 744 **Email:** DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk
(RHI enquiry line open Monday to Friday 8am-7pm and Saturdays 9am-2pm)