

Water Charges Expected To Come Into Force In 2014

WATER METERS WILL BE INSTALLED FROM JULY OF NEXT YEAR

By Kevin Kिरrane

IT IS envisaged that water meters will be installed in 1.1 million households across the State from July 2013 next, and that water charges will come into affect by the end of 2014, Director of Services with Waterford County Council, Michael Quinn revealed in a presentation at the local authority's December meeting.

A further 400,000 households, whose connections are deemed unsuitable for the immediate installation of water meters, will be charged an average tariff for a similar sized home.

Local authority households will not escape either.

Mr. Quinn said Irish Water – a new standalone semi-state company that is in the process of being established – will bill for water in the same way as the ESB and Bord Gais bills for electricity and gas supplies.

However, those with private supplies will not be charged, Mr. Quinn said.

A Regulator will be established to determine the price of the water.

SURVEY

Mr. Quinn said, "The local authorities will have to do a survey of all domestic premises that are connected to a public water supply to identify what the situation is in relation to their connection.

"We will have to establish where their connection is. We will have to establish what type of box it sits in, and we will have to identify what type of surface the connection is in, is it in a footpath, under concrete or is it in a verge."

The survey must be finished by June 2013, he said.

INSTALLATION

Mr. Quinn said that it is envisaged that 1.1 million meters

will be installed in the space of six months, starting from July of 2013. The Department of Environment and Irish Water have already been tendering for services in relation to this, including a tender for a supply of meters.

"It is envisaged that there will be approximately 400,000

households where it won't be possible to install meters immediately. That could relate to a number of issues. It could be shared properties where you have apartments, or it could be that we simply can't identify where the connection is. Or it could be where you have backyard services, which is where the

water supply goes up through the garden out the back of houses rather than up the front.

"But from Irish Waters point of view they are going to move ahead with installing meters from July, and the process needs to be completed by the end of 2013, so the billing process can start at the end of 2014," Mr. Quinn said.

AVOID WATER CHARGES AND DRILL YOUR OWN INDEPENDENT WATER SUPPLY