

Non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive

www.ofgem.gov.uk/ndrhi

31 March 2021

Easy guide to eligibility

Introduction

The Non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) is a government environmental programme that provides financial incentives to increase the uptake of renewable heat. The Non-Domestic RHI makes regular payments for 20 years to scheme participants that generate and use renewable energy.

The Non Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive will close to all new applications for accreditation, registrations of biomethane producers, additional capacity and additional biomethane as of midnight at the end of 31 March 2021. The scheme will also be closed to all applications for preliminary accreditation and registration. There are some limited circumstances under which an application for accreditation or registration can be made post- scheme closure.

This guide is intended only as an overview. For more detailed information on eligibility and the closure of the Non-Domestic RHI scheme please refer to our main guidance.

[RHI Guidance Volume 1: Eligibility and How to Apply](#)

[RHI Guidance Volume 2: Ongoing obligations and payments](#)

Summary of eligibility requirements

Overall eligibility checklist

A summary of the key eligibility requirements is set out below. You can find more detail in [RHI Guidance Volume 1](#), Chapter 3. The key requirements are as follows:

- Your installation was completed and the plant was first commissioned on or after 15 July 2009.
- As the applicant, you must be the owner of the installation (we have to verify identity and validate bank details). If there are multiple owners, you must have permission to act for them.
- Air-to-water source heat pumps, biogas installations with a capacity of more than 200kW, and solid biomass CHP systems must have been commissioned on or after 4 December 2013.
- The plant was new at the time of installation.
- Your equipment must be used for an eligible heat use, which include space, water or process heating within a building. There are additional heat uses, and exclusions to the uses listed above, see the guidance for more detail.
- Your equipment must use liquid or steam to deliver the heat (no direct air heating).
- The equipment must be MCS certified (or equivalent) if the installation capacity is 45kW or under – for biomass, heat pumps and solar thermal.
- You can't use a public grant to buy or install the equipment (unless it has been repaid – see the [Grant Repayment factsheet](#) for further information on this).
- The metering arrangements must be correct – the right type of meters calibrated and placed in correct locations according to whether the installation is classed as using a standard or multiple metering arrangement. Domestic properties on Shared Ground Loops will have their payments made on the deemed heat use and will be required to meter their heat use for performance only, and not for the purpose of determining payments. Please refer to the [Easy Guide to Shared Ground Loops](#) for further information.
- You can't use the equipment to heat only a single domestic home, although a combination of homes sharing a heating installation may be eligible, for example, a district heating system.

Eligible technologies

The technologies currently covered by the scheme are:

- solid biomass
- solid biomass contained in waste
- heat pumps (ground source, water source and air-to-water)
- solar thermal
- geothermal
- biomethane biogas
- Combined Heat and Power (CHP) (allowed for solid biomass, waste geothermal)

Eligible heat uses

To be eligible, the heat generated by the installation can be used in any of the following scenarios shown below:

In a building

The RHI Regulations define a building as 'any permanent or long-lasting building or structure of whatever kind and whether fixed or moveable which, except for doors and windows, is wholly enclosed on all sides with a roof or ceiling and walls'. To be eligible your building needs to fit both criteria.

Examples of buildings that would not be eligible:

- Tents, polytunnels or similar structures erected on a temporary basis would not be eligible as they do not meet 'the permanent and long lasting building or structure' criterion.
- Buildings with open sides that can't be closed such as barns, car ports, covered terraces etc. and buildings with retractable roofs would not be eligible as they do not meet the 'wholly enclosed on all sides' criterion.
- We are pragmatic about buildings with vents, flues, air intakes etc. (so long as they are small in size and number relative to the area and don't permit significant escape of heat). However, buildings with open holes in the roof (for example due to disrepair) or that have plastic drapes instead of a door would not be eligible as they do not meet the 'wholly enclosed on all sides' criterion.



Excluded heat uses from 22 May 2018

For applications made from 22 May 2018, the following are not eligible heat uses:

- wood fuel drying
- digestate drying
- waste drying or processing
- domestic swimming pools on non-domestic premises

For more details on these ineligible heat uses and who they apply to, please see the General Eligibility Requirements chapter, of [RHI Guidance Volume 1](#).

Heat used for the purpose of:

- Heating a space: heating rooms or other enclosed spaces within buildings, typically through the supply of hot liquid to heat emitters such as radiators and underfloor heating.
- Heating water: for direct use such as commercial and industrial hot water or use in schools and hospitals.
- Carrying out a process (within a building): the heat must be used to carry out a specific process such as industrial cooking) or chemical manufacture. It also includes heat that is subsequently used for cooling but does not include heat used for the generation of electricity.

For more information about eligible and ineligible heat uses, see the General Eligibility Requirements chapter, of [RHI Guidance Volume 1](#).

Eligible technologies and sizes

Eligible Technology	Technology-Specific Criteria	Eligible Sizes
Solid biomass	<p>Must generate heat from solid biomass. (For more information see the Solid Biomass chapter of RHI Guidance Volume 1).</p> <p>Fuel must meet the sustainability requirements. Please see the Ongoing Fuel Requirements chapter of RHI Guidance Volume 2 for more details.</p>	<p>All scales eligible.</p> <p>MCS certification requirements (or equivalent) apply for installations less than or equal to 45kW.</p>
Solid biomass contained in municipal waste	<p>Must generate heat from solid biomass contained in waste. (For more information see RHI Guidance Volume 2, Ongoing Fuel Requirements)</p>	<p>All scales eligible.</p>
Ground-source heat pumps	<p>Must extract naturally occurring energy, or the following heat sources in addition to naturally occurring energy: solar energy stored in the ground (other than from a solar collector), heat from space heating or cooling or heat from processes other than heat generation.</p> <p>Must extract naturally occurring energy, solar energy stored in the ground (other than from a solar collector), heat from space heating or cooling or heat from processes other than heat generation.</p>	<p>All scales eligible.</p> <p>MCS certification (or equivalent) requirements apply for installations less than or equal to 45kW.</p>
Water-source heat pumps	<p>Must have a Coefficient of Performance (CoP) of at least 2.9 and a design SPF of at least 2.5.</p> <p>Must be able to measure the Seasonal Performance Factor (SPF) on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Reversible heat pumps must only measure heating not cooling for RHI payment purposes.</p> <p>Heat pumps capable of heating and cooling must be sized based on the heating capacity in accordance with BS 12831.</p> <p>Must not use energy located and extracted from 500m or more beneath the surface of solid earth.</p>	
Air-to-water heat pumps	<p>Must not be designed to provide cooling</p> <p>Must have a Coefficient of Performance (CoP) of at least 2.9 and a design SPF of at least 2.5.</p> <p>Must be able to measure the Seasonal Performance Factor (SPF) on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Must not be designed to use heat in the air expelled from a building or directly from a process which generates heat.</p>	<p>All scales eligible.</p> <p>MCS certification (or equivalent) requirements apply for installations less than or equal to 45kW.</p>

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Geothermal	To count as geothermal, must generate heat using naturally-occurring energy located and extracted from at least 500m beneath the surface of solid earth.	All scales eligible.
Solar thermal	Collector type must be flat plate or evacuated tube.	Installations less than 200 kW eligible. MCS certification (or equivalent) requirements apply for installations less than or equal to 45kW.
Biogas combustion	Must be from anaerobic digestion, gasification or pyrolysis. Participant must not use biogas which is landfill gas. Must not generate heat from solid biomass. Fuel must meet the sustainability requirements. Please see the Ongoing Fuel Requirements chapter of RHI Guidance Volume 2 and the Sustainability Self-Reporting Guidance for more details.	All scales eligible.
CHP	Must be one of the following technologies: geothermal, biogas, solid biomass contained in waste or solid biomass, and meet the criteria for those technologies. Ineligible in certain circumstances if accredited under the RO and if it is or has been a 'qualifying CHP station'. Fuel must meet the sustainability requirements. If you have a solid biomass CHP installation and it is CHPQA certified, you may receive a different tariff if you meet the relevant criteria under the RHI Regulations. Please see the Ongoing Fuel Requirements chapter of RHI Guidance Volume 2 for more details.	All scales eligible.
Biomethane injection	See RHI Guidance Volume 1 , Registration for Biomethane Producers. Fuel must meet the sustainability requirements. Please see the Ongoing Fuel Requirements chapter of RHI Guidance Volume 2 and the Sustainability Self-Reporting Guidance for more details.	All scales eligible.

For more information about technologies and accompanying fuels eligible for the Non Domestic RHI as well as additional criteria specific to a technology, see [RHI Guidance Volume 1](#).

Next steps

If you decide to go ahead with an installation and apply for the RHI, you must make sure that you:

- understand the RHI eligibility requirements
- plan for the RHI requirements as part of the design and installation process
- obtain and retain documentation from manufacturers and installers as you will need to supply this evidence for your application.

You and your installer need to be fully familiar with the details of the scheme as in:

[RHI Guidance Volume 1: Eligibility and How to Apply](#), [RHI Guidance Volume 2: Ongoing Obligations and Payments](#), specifically the sections relating to ongoing fuel eligibility requirements for solid biomass and biomethane, including their sustainability requirements.

Once you become accredited, or registered, you will have ongoing obligations which you will be required to comply with. Failure to comply with your ongoing obligations will result in compliance action which may impact your RHI payments or your accreditation. For further information on ongoing obligations, please refer to our [Easy Guide to Compliance](#) when accredited.

You'll also find helpful information in the Easy Guide series particularly the [Easy Guide to Metering Requirements](#) and the [Easy Guide to Applying](#).

Easy guide series

- [Easy Guide to the Non-Domestic RHI](#)
- [Easy Guide to Eligibility](#)
- [Easy Guide to Applying](#)
- [Easy Guide to Metering Requirements](#)
- [Easy Guide to Compliance](#)
- [Easy Guide to Periodic Data Submissions](#)
- [Easy Guide to Sustainability](#)
- [Easy Guide to Heat Pumps](#)
- [Guide to Tariff Guarantees](#)

This Easy Guide is applicable to applicants and participants on the GB Non-Domestic scheme. If you're an applicant or participant on the Northern Ireland Non-Domestic scheme then please refer to the [Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive](#).

Contact us

If you have a query or need help please contact us:

By telephone: 0300 003 2289

By email: RHI.Enquiry@ofgem.gov.uk

The Non-Domestic RHI enquiry line is open Monday to Fridays. Please see our [Contact us](#) page for timings. Note: calls may be recorded.

Please have your RHI application reference number to hand if you are calling or put it in the subject line of your email.