

# Microalgae in the Republic of Ireland

## Environmental Permitting

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or local authorities are the bodies responsible for licensing industrial and agricultural activities in Ireland. This comprises of six stages. Stage 1, the operator must initially publish details of the proposed activity in the local newspaper and by notification on the site, and then notifying the requisite Local Planning Authority. After this phase is completed, the operator submits an application to the EPA for assessment (Stage 2). Application forms, available in hardcopy and in electronic format, contain several sections with detailed plans, proposed activities and environmental management strategies. The EPA has eight weeks to determine whether to grant a licence. Public consultations are held and objectors have the opportunity to state their case before a final decision is made.

Main implementing legislation	Primary implementing agency
Protection of the Environment Act 2003	Environmental Protection Agency <a href="http://www.epa.ie">www.epa.ie</a>

### Key Points to consider:

1. What is the size of the facility?
2. What services exist already on the site?
3. Is the site located close to dwellings / environmentally sensitive areas / sites of special scientific interest?
4. Are any discharges produced by the site? Will significant amounts of waste be stored on site?

### First step:

- Contact EPA

## Planning

In general, under planning legislation, the decision as to whether to grant a planning permission, with or without conditions, is a matter for the relevant local planning authority in the first instance. Planning decisions may be appealed to An Bord Pleanála, the planning appeals board within 8 weeks of a decision being made by the local authority. A developer has the right to a pre-planning consultation with the planning authority

Planning exemptions exist for certain developments, including those connected with agricultural activity. Included in this is Class 9 development which includes glasshouse-type structures with a gross floor space not exceeding 300 square metres. The exemption applies only with a number of conditions and limitations. The Department of Agriculture should be consulted about what it considers to be agricultural activity as consent systems other than the planning system exist.

Main implementing legislation	Primary planning authority	Planning mechanism
National Planning and Developments Act 2000	Local Planning Authorities (LPAs)	Planning permission

### Key Points to consider:

1. What size is the facility?
2. Is the site located close to dwellings / environmentally sensitive areas / sites of special scientific interest?
3. Are any discharges produced by the site?
4. What services exist already on the site?
5. Is the site likely to cause nuisance - e.g. noise above levels of agricultural machinery / odour / light above dense street lighting?

### First step:

- Contact Local Planning Authority / Department of Agriculture

## Regulatory Issues

Regulatory issues are very much dependent on end use of biomass. Please consult the relevant factsheet for further information.

Factsheet #15. Algae as Feedstock for Energy Generation - European fuel quality and other bioenergy legislation are explained

Factsheet #16. Algae as Feedstock for Chemicals - this covers REACH and other pertinent legislation

Factsheet #17. Algae as Feedstock for Food or Feed - FEMAS and other regulations for entering the food chain are described in more detail.

### Key Points to consider:

1. What inputs have gone into the production process: are any classified as waste?
2. What is the target end use of the algal biomass?
3. What further processing steps are required?