

Environmental Health Directorate

The Environmental Health Directorate (EHD) operates under the Department for Health Regulation within the Ministry for Health and Active Ageing. Its mission is to promote and safeguard the well-being and health of the public from adverse environmental effects.

Structure, Functions, and Responsibilities

The EHD is responsible for monitoring environmental factors to identify health hazards, guiding policy, and implementing measures to mitigate risks. Its functions include:

- **Monitoring and Assessment:** Identifying health hazards by monitoring environmental factors through controls and investigations and enforce regulations to control the risks. These include:
 - i. Investigate Public Health issues,
 - ii. Enforce Public Health regulations,
 - iii. Reduce the incidence of communicable diseases and health hazards,
 - iv. Monitor the wholesomeness of food products,
 - v. Monitor the quality of drinking water and recreational water,
 - vi. Monitor institutions,
 - vii. Ensure rodent control,
 - viii. Control the importation and exportation of food stuffs,
 - ix. Supervise the proper internment and repatriation of human remains,
 - x. Make recommendations to licensing authorities and issue of licenses pertaining to the Superintendent of Public Health.
 - xi. Audit food safety management systems,
 - xii. Perform legionella audits in water systems.
- **Policy Guidance:** Providing consultations on policies to mitigate identified environmental health risks.
- **Implementation:** Enforcing measures to protect public health from environmental threats.

The directorate encompasses various units, including:

- **Environmental Health Services:** Overseeing public health related to environmental factors and includes the following units:
 - i. Burials Regulatory Unit covering matters related to burials and cemeteries.

- ii. Port Health Services covering matters related to tobacco and food imports and exports. Ensuring Compliance with International Health Regulations by issuing Ship Sanitation Certificates and Exemption Certificates, as well as overseeing the repatriation of human remains and ashes to, from, or through Malta.
 - iii. Water Regulatory Auditing Unit covering matters related to drinking water, bathing water and Legionella.
 - iv. Environmental Risk Management Unit covering matters related to complaints, pest control and planning authority permits.
 - v. Food Safety Risk Management Unit covering all matters related to food safety controls.
 - vi. Health Consultation and Certification Unit covering matters of certifications of food and non-food businesses.
 - vii. Sanctions and IT Unit covering matters related to sanctions and IT.
 - viii. Tobacco Surveillance Unit covering all matters related to tobacco.
 - ix. Food Surveillance Unit covers matters related to e-commerce, recalls and sampling programmes.
 - x. Gozo Regional Unit covers the various services provided by the Environmental Health Directorate (*Malta*) in the island of Gozo.
- **Public Health Laboratory:** A testing laboratory responsible for checking compliance with relevant local and European Union regulations.
 - **Port Health Medical Services:** Providing medical support related to environmental health issues, controls on imports of medicinal products and the International Health Regulations.

General description of the categories of documents held

The EHD maintains various documents pertinent to its operations, including:

- Annual reports detailing the directorate's activities and achievements.
- Documentation related to the approvals/licensing and inspection of establishments under its remit.
- Records of environmental monitoring (complaints) and assessments.
- Records of ship sanitation inspections.
- Records of imports and exports.
- Records of private water supplies.
- Records of bathing water.
- Records of consultations and certifications of new business operators.
- Records of approved cesspits.
- Records of sanctions.
- Records of all controls and investigations on food and non-food.

- Records of repatriation of human remains and ashes.
- Records of imports of tobacco and related products.
- Records of burials, cemeteries and cremation.
- Standard Operating Procedures and a Risk Register for managing environmental health risks.
- Quality Management System documents to ensure quality in the services provided.
- Records of recalls and samples elevated.

Contact details of the FOI office for the Environmental Health Directorate

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This information is provided in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act to promote transparency and facilitate public access to information held by the Environmental Health Directorate.