

NEW WATER TREATMENT SYSTEM FOR ENNIS TOWN

AFTER years of water quality concerns, Ennis town and environs is to get a new Water Treatment Plant Utilising Membrane Technology based on Ultra Filtration (UF) System, following the appointment of Mallow based Company EPS Pumping and Treatment Systems. This will be the first plant of its size undertaken by a local authority in Ireland, utilising a technology that is impenetrable to organisms like cryptosporidium. The plant is to be designed to produce up to 18.0 million litres of treated water per day.

The proposed treatment plant is to be built on agricultural land which adjoins the existing reservoir site at Drumcliff. The works will comprise of the design, specification, procurement, supply, construction, commissioning, operation and maintenance of a complete, fully functioning water treatment facility.

Ennis has been subject to prolonged boil notices over the last number of years and the town's relationship with Mallow-based company EPS began 18 months ago when the water treatment specialist assisted in putting in place a temporary plant to give some relief to the people of the area. It has now been confirmed that EPS will spend the next two years constructing the new €7.5 million permanent Works. EPS will subsequently operate the plant for 20 years, in line with the D.B.O. (design, build and operate) form of contract favoured by the Department of the Environment.

The civil works for this project will be completed in Consortium with Cork based Contractor Bowen Construction.

EPS has already been instrumental in providing at least some relief to beleaguered Galway through the upgrading of quite a substantial water treatment plant at Luimnigh, for Galway County Council.

As one of a draft of proposed steps to alleviate the Galway city crisis, it was agreed to accelerate work on the Luminigh water treatment plant. Water from this plant could then be transferred to Galway City Council, while solutions are still being considered for the Terryland plant. EPS as a company had the resources and skills in house to accelerate the Contract Programme for the Luminigh upgrade by several months going some way to reduce the difficulties being experienced by the general public in Galway at present.

The recent problems experienced in Galway and Ennis have highlighted the dangers of the presence of organisms like Cryptosporidium can pose to the public when water sources become contaminated.

Two technologies which are being utilised at present to treat water containing the Cryptosporidium parasite include Ultraviolet light irradiation of the Water (UV) and ultrafiltration (UF).

The UF process kills or disables the parasite but does not remove it from the water. This renders it safe to the end user. The UF process forms a physical barrier which removed cryptosporidium completely from the water. The UF process is generally used in

conjunction with traditional gravity filtration, whereas the UF system is used as a stand alone treatment solution.

For further information please contact EPS on Telephone: 022 31200.

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