

CAMPAIGN AGAINST HOUSEHOLD & WATER TAXES

DON'T REGISTER, DON'T PAY!



Build Mass Non-Registration by St. Patrick's Day!

The household tax is extremely unpopular. In the face of this unpopularity, the government is trying to threaten us with fines and sanctions to make us pay up. But if we all stand together these threats can be defeated.

According to the legislation, nobody has to register until the end of March. The government wants 1.8 million households to register and pay this tax by then. But imagine the situation if hundreds of thousands or even a million plus households do not register. We will then be in a really strong position. Government threats would be unworkable as it would take it decades to drag everyone into the courts.

Our campaign against registration is growing daily. Join us. If you and your friends join the campaign to boycott registration we can establish mass non-registration up and down the country and create a force that will successfully defy government threats and sanctions.

Because of the threats some people may

be considering registering despite not wanting to. But our advice is – don't do it yet. You will see by St Patrick's Day (two weeks before the registration deadline) that we have enough non-payers to defeat the government and to stop them from robbing you and your household.

Property Tax

The government has already signalled its plans to fast forward the introduction of a full-blooded property tax to 2013 and to introduce a water tax. What starts off at €100 will soon rise to €1000+. It intends to use the household tax registration process to build up the database it needs to introduce the property tax and the water tax. If we register we will be making it easier for the government to introduce these higher taxes.

Remember that not one cent from the household tax will be used to improve local council services. Not one cent will be used to improve services such as health and education. The money will be used to bail out the

bankers and the speculators. By taking money out of the pockets of ordinary people they will depress demand for goods and services and make the crisis worse, not better.

For three years now Fianna Fail, the Green Party, Fine Gael and Labour have been making us foot the bill for the crimes of bankers and speculators. This is a great opportunity to strike back and start the job of reversing the tide. This is our chance to take a stand and show our opposition to austerity policies. Let's make sure we use it!



- **No to ALL home taxes – household, property, water and septic tank!**
- **We won't pay to bail out bankers and speculators!**
- **If they get €100 it will rise to €1,000 – boycott from the beginning!**
- **Don't register – establish mass non-registration by St. Patrick's Day!**
- **Mass non-registration will make the government's threats unworkable!**

www.nohouseholdtax.org

Contact the campaign hotline 1890 989800

Find us on Facebook – search for Campaign Against Household and Water Taxes

Let's Stand together and beat the Household Taxes

The Campaign Against Household and Water Taxes has been building huge momentum over the last number of months. Hundreds of local meetings have been organised and tens of thousands of newsletters and leaflets distributed to homes across the state.



Thousands of people have attended public meetings to express their anger and add their voices to the growing opposition to this unjust tax. Everywhere the message is clear: people cannot and will not pay the debts of bankers and property developers.

While this government, like the last one, expects ordinary people to pay these private gambling debts, increasing numbers have said 'enough is enough!' The campaign is also being backed by a growing number of TDs who are supporting the call for non-payment.

Despite the threats, public opposition to the household taxes has been overwhelming as evidenced by numerous opinion polls. Two Dublin-based polls, for example, showed 85% support for non-registration (98FM) and a tiny minority of just 5% saying they would pay the tax (Northside People).



The Campaign Against Household and Water Taxes is based on the principle of non-payment and in order to win, it needs to be organised and active in every community across the state.

By standing together and encouraging neighbours, friends and work colleagues to get involved we can defeat this unjust tax. Among other things, the Campaign's €5 membership fee will be used to establish a legal defence fund.

We need your active participation and support. Everyone has a part to play. Whether it is organising or attending a public meeting in your area; putting a 'We're Not Paying' poster in your window; distributing posters, leaflets or newsletters to your neighbours and work colleagues; becoming a member of the campaign; or simply spreading the word that the way to defeat this tax is by not paying, we can win.

To get involved in the campaign please log on to the website at www.nohouseholdtax.org or call the campaign hotline at 1890 989800.

Make the Rich Pay for their Crisis!

Despite the economic crisis, there is still vast wealth in Ireland. But it is in the hands of an elite of super-rich individuals. A 2006 Bank of Ireland 'Wealth of the Nation' report found that just 1% of the population own 34% of the wealth in the state.

In 2010, Cork IT economics lecturer Tom O'Connor updated the figures from this report and concluded that the 33,000 millionaires identified in it still owned wealth of €121 billion.

In 2011 the *Irish Times* reported that this state has the second highest proportion of millionaire households in the EU and that the 300 richest people are worth close to €50 billion.

Many of this super-rich elite are tax exiles who refuse to pay their taxes here. Others pay a minimal rate of tax.

Instead of trying to impose further taxation on ordinary families, the government should make the wealthy pay their share of tax.

**€100 now ...
over €1000 soon**

Property Tax will be neither 'fair' nor 'progressive'

The €100 household tax was introduced as a temporary measure to be replaced by a full property tax and a separate water tax by 2014.

However in response to criticisms of the flat nature of the tax, it is intended to bring forward the introduction of the full property tax possibly as early as 2013. Minister Phil Hogan has said this will be 'fair' and 'progressive'. The reality however is that it will be neither.



The 2009 Commission on Taxation suggested that houses valued between €150,000 and €300,000 should be levied with a property tax of €563. John Fitzgerald of the ESRI estimated that the property tax could be as high as €800 per year. For families struggling to deal with the costs of the economic crisis, there would be nothing 'fair' about having to face such astronomical bills. (And a water tax of approximately €500 per year as well!)

A lot of nonsense has been written about the 'progressive' nature of such a property tax and the need to 'expand the tax base'. Stephen Collins in the *Irish Times* claimed that "extra taxes should not be imposed on work but on fixed assets like property". But as ordinary workers, we only have one source of income – that which we get from our work. So if we have to pay a property tax we have to pay it out of the wages we earn. Unlike the wealthy sections of society we don't have alternative sources of income such as dividends, rents, etc.

What the government is proposing is not a property tax in the real sense – one which would be levied on the wealth and assets held by the wealthiest sections of society. A real property tax would make sure that those who own real wealth would be forced to pay more taxes. Instead what is proposed is simply a home tax, which if allowed to be implemented will force those of us on low and middle incomes to pay more, while continuing to let the wealthy off scot free.

It's The Same Fight

Don't Pay the Septic Tank Registration Charge

In rural areas, the fight against the septic tank registration fee is a key part of the campaign against household taxes.



People connected to a mains sewage treatment system may be unaware of the importance of this issue, but it is having a huge impact in rural communities. Originally, the government proposed a €300 inspection fee for septic tanks, which it reduced to €50 after a concerted media campaign.

The excuse offered for the introduction of the registration fee is

because successive governments refused to implement an EU directive on ground water pollution and that consequently, the State is being fined for non-compliance.

But local Councils already have the information on those not connected to a public mains sewage system and therefore they know who has a septic tank. The registration fee is a cynical attempt to take more money from people already reeling from three years of austerity budgets.

Everybody agrees that pollution issues must be dealt with and clean drinking water must be guaranteed to every household. There are an estimated 400,000 septic tanks in the state and there are fears that a large number of these will fail to meet the directive.

If a tank fails the test, upgrading the system could cost between €5,000 and €15,000. To date, the government has not made clear whether financial assistance will be available. This despite

the fact that a huge number of households were granted planning permission for septic tanks, even though successive governments knew the planning regulations did not comply with EU directives.



Attempts have been made to isolate this issue from the household tax and the proposed water tax but the three taxes cannot be separated. In all cases, no extra services are being provided from the collection of charges. Instead, money is being freed up to pay off the debts of bankers and developers.

As with the household tax and the water tax, we should be saying loud and clear, "We can't pay septic tank registration charges, we won't pay!"

Government Threats Can be Defeated if We Stand Together

To force us to pay the household tax the government has made a number of threats. But if we face these threats collectively we can resist them. There are two main threats being used to try and scare people to register and pay:

A maximum €2,500 fine for those who don't register

There is no automatic fine.

- ⇒ People who don't register have to be brought to court and have a case proved against them. But if hundreds of thousands, or even a million households, refuse to register – they cannot take everyone to court.
- ⇒ The Campaign will set up a legal defence fund from some of the membership fee (€5 per household) currently being collected around the country.
- ⇒ By challenging each case, we can clog up the system. Just as happened during the campaign against water charges in Dublin in the 1990s, if someone in an area is taken to court, we can organise to ensure that hundreds of fellow non-payers turn up to support them.
- ⇒ Politically, we can collectively challenge the government

for taking people before the courts for not paying this tax while bankers and speculators continue to get off scot free.

- ⇒ A fine for non-registration or the Household Tax itself could be deducted directly from your wages or social welfare payment.

Under current legislation this is not possible.

- ⇒ To do this the government would need to change the law. Again if we build a mass campaign and if up to a million households are collectively saying to the government 'your tax is unacceptable' they are much less likely to try to bring forward such legislation. The Campaign intends to build links with trade unions and will be calling on trade unionists to boycott any work that would assist the government in organising deductions.

All you need to know about the Household Tax

We answer some of the questions you might have about the Household Tax

Q: How much is the household tax? €100

Q: Who has to register/pay? Every homeowner in the state (1.8m) is being asked to register. Every homeowner is being asked to pay except some groups such as council tenants (including shared ownership), people living in named ghost estates, those entitled to mortgage interest supplement and owners of commercial property.

Q: When is the deadline for registration? March 31 2012.

Q: Will this money be used to improve local services? No. Local authority budgets have been slashed to pay for the bailout and this tax will not even cover all these cuts.

Q: Why does the government want you to register? It wants the information you give them when registering to build up a database. They would not be able to introduce property tax (2013) and water tax (2014) without this.

Q: Isn't a property tax progressive? There is nothing "progressive" about taxing the homes of ordinary people. The mansions of the super-wealthy should be taxed but this can be done instead via a wealth and assets tax.

Q: How much would property and water tax be? Probably more than €1000 a year.

Q: Can I be charged extra if I don't pay? Yes. There is a 10% late charge for the first 6 months, a 20% late charge for the second six months and a 30% late charge after that. There is also an extra 1% charge for each month. That means a penalty of €42 in a year.

Q: Can I be fined for non-registration? Yes. But this is not an automatic fine. The local authority would have to take you to court and the court would have to find against you. You could receive a "Class C" fine of up to a maximum €2500.

Q: Can a fine be deducted from my wages or social welfare? Not unless the government

changes the law. And only then if the local authority takes you to court and the court finds against you.

Q: Can this be stopped? Yes. If a huge number of people refuse to register, the government will be unable to bring everyone to court. This campaign will appeal to trade unionists to boycott all work aimed at penalising non-payers. There will be an almighty political storm if the government start cases against ordinary workers protesting against an unjust tax used to fund an unjust bailout. The Campaign also intends to establish a legal defence fund from some of the €5 membership fees paid by those who join the campaign.

Q: Has a government ever been beaten on an issue like this? Yes. Thatcher's poll tax was defeated in Britain. "People power" beat water charges here in the 1990s.

Q: What can I do to support the campaign? Don't register. Don't pay. Contact us. Take a window poster, car sticker, leaflets. Come to your local meeting. Get your friends, neighbours, workmates involved. Spread the word. Join the Campaign by paying the €5 membership fee to help fund Campaign materials and the legal defence fund.



please cut this page out and display on your work or community centre noticeboard

For additional information see the longer FAQ on the Campaign website

www.nohouseholdtax.org
Campaign Hotline 1890 989800

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