

Environmentally Hazardous Operations

Summary

NNR's report 'Environmentally Hazardous Operations' is the third in a series of four reports on simplification of regulations at local authority level and addresses the local authorities' fees for registration of environmentally hazardous operations and routines for inspection. Summaries in English of all four reports are available on NNR's website www.nnr.se/inenglish/publication.html

NNR's study reveals substantial differences between local authorities in terms of fees for registration of environmentally hazardous operations, which range from 0 to 1,220 EUR (0 to 11,000 SEK). Inspection fees also vary significantly between local authorities, from 0 to 1,110 EUR (0 to 10,000 SEK) per year.

There is also large variation in inspection frequency between the local authorities. Just over half (54%) of the local authorities in the study carry out an annual documentation check, while others do so every other year or less frequently. Just over one third (39%) of the local authorities carry out an annual on-site inspection, while others do so every other year or less frequently. Despite this, an overwhelming majority (89%) of the local authorities charge an annual inspection fee even if they do not carry out inspection each year.

It can also be noted that the small number of local authorities that indicated they did not charge a fee for registration and inspection finance the entire cost of these procedures from taxes. Naturally, businesses have differing views of which types of licensing and inspection work should be financed via taxes and which should be financed wholly or partly via fees, so there is a need for the local authority to report clearly on how they have made this assessment.

Further to the results of the study, NNR makes the following recommendations for 2012:

All local authorities shall clearly report which factors have been taken into consideration in calculating the fee levels for registration and inspection of environmentally hazardous operations.

The costs for staff, training, information, administration, etc. that the local authority has taken into consideration in calculating the fee should be clear from websites and information material.

The local authority shall demonstrate the link between the inspection fee businesses pay and what the local authority actually does in return in the form of inspection.

It must be clear when and for what businesses are paying a fee. If a local authority chooses to spread the fee over several years, it should be clear that this is the case and that the purpose of an annual fee is to spread the cost of control measures that take place every other or every third year.

The local authorities should assess on an ongoing basis the effects their application of the rules has on businesses.