

On this week's Ours to Protect, series Producer Ethna caught up with her name sake George Quirke about living "off grid" – but what exactly does that mean?

"Off grid" refers to energy that is generated and untied to the electrical grid. However, most people use the term more broadly to describe living in a way that is sustainable and as self-sufficient as possible, outside of mainstream society and not dependent on that society for food, water, shelter, and energy.

Off-the-grid living allows for buildings and people to be self-sufficient, which is advantageous in isolated locations where normal utilities cannot reach and is attractive to those who want to reduce environmental impact and cost of living.

Generally, an off-grid building must be able to supply energy and potable water for itself, as well as manage food, waste and wastewater.

More and more Irish people are choosing this way of life. The main question isn't whether it's doable but if an individual can adapt to its unique requirements. These include learning to use off-grid technologies, handling occasional loneliness, and embracing a more eco-friendly lifestyle.

Environmental website ecoshack.com have the following steps for living off grid:

1. Find the Right Location
2. Build the Smallest Home Possible
3. Design for Passive Heating and Cooling
4. Install Off Grid Solar Power and Solar Hot Water Systems
5. Off Grid Water Systems
6. Waste Disposal
7. Grow Your Own Food

Resources:

www.ecoshack.com

www.ourstoprotect.ie

www.irish.solar

www.offyourgrid.ie