

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Water Framework Directive and Daughter Directives Team
Area 2B
Ergon House
Horseferry Road
London SW1P 2AL



Telephone 08459 33 55 77

Website www.defra.gov.uk

Mr Gary Jones

request-138046-65961b6d@whatdotheyknow.com

Our ref: RFI 5133

Your ref: 138046-65961b6d

5th December 2012

Dear Mr Jones

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: - SAFETY GUIDELINES, STANDARDS, REGULATIONS, SCALES OR LEVELS WHICH DEFRA USES FOR DEEMING WHAT IS NORMAL AND WHAT IS DANGEROUS WHEN TESTING FOR CHEMICALS OR CONTAMINANTS IN THE ENVIRONMENT (AIR, PRECIPITATION, WATER BODIES AND SOILS).

Thank you for your request for information about the safety guidelines, standards, regulations, limits, scales or levels which Defra uses to determine what are normal levels and what is dangerous when testing for all kinds of chemicals or contaminants in the environment (air, precipitation, water bodies and soils) which we received on 13th November. We have handled your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

Please note that in view of the very wide nature of your query, your request was referred to colleagues working in Soils and Air Quality policy areas within Defra as well as to the Water Quality team in which I work. My colleagues in the Soils and Air Quality teams will jointly be writing to you separately regarding how you could access the information which is held in the public domain on the safety guidelines, standards, regulations, limits, scales which are used in testing for chemicals and contaminants in air and soils. You should note that whilst your request potentially has a wide remit, generally the information which would be supplied would be in relation to operations practice in England, with reference to cross-border practice where relevant.

The information that you have requested regarding testing for contaminants or chemicals in water is held by the Environment Agency, rather than Defra. I have been advised by Environment Agency colleagues that in the first instance you should contact the Environment Agency customer contact centre on 0870 850 6506 and ask to be referred to the National Requests team. Depending on the details of your discussions with the National Requests team they may advise you that some information can only be released after you apply for a licence.



I attach an annex giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service that you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Phoebe Barrett

Direct Line 020 7238 6719

Fax 020 7238 5106

Email phoebe.barrett@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Mike Kaye, Head of Information Standards, Area 1B, Ergon House, Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 2AL (email: requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF