



Dear allotment holders

In July Wyre Council launched an investigation under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to consider historic contamination to soil via air deposition from AGC Chemicals Europe Ltd at Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone in Thornton Cleveleys.

The issue relates to the release of a chemical called PFOA from the AGC Chemicals site between the 1950s and 2012.

Initial soil samples have been taken from a number of locations within 1km of the Hillhouse site, including allotments at Occupation Road. Early data provided by the Environment Agency suggests the level of PFOA in the soil is above the interim guideline value for the growing and consumption of produce in an allotment setting.

While elevated concentrations are not necessarily a concern, these early results from the Occupation Road allotments indicate that further sampling is required at Sandringham Avenue allotments. This will take place early in the New Year.

A questionnaire about how you use your plot and the type of produce you grow is available here:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=VUIjPQ_iBUKlpZZYpAKZmww7yS9XnxBPnOXyt7CeatFUOFVMWVdLRldMQ0xWRDQzUkVGMlgwMzI2RC4u

We would be grateful if you could complete this and return it to us no later than **10am on Monday, December 16**. You can also request a printed copy of the questionnaire by emailing multi.agency@wyre.gov.uk

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is the body which exists to protect public health from risks arising from the consumption of food. It has provided the following advice for allotment holders and residents who grow food in gardens near to the Hillhouse site:

- Everyone in the country is exposed to very low levels of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), including PFOA, via their diet. Based on current information, local residents who regularly eat large amounts of vegetables and fruits grown in allotments or in gardens could be increasing their exposure to PFAS, while occasional or modest intakes are unlikely to greatly affect long-term background intakes.
- Various contaminants can be present in soil. The FSA advise to wash fruit and vegetables with water before consuming to remove soil and dust, as well as for general hygiene reasons such as removing harmful bacteria. Peeling vegetables can also remove more soil and bacteria.

As more data is gathered from the local area, the relevant agencies will work together to develop any further guidance if necessary.

We will be adding helpful information to our website when possible so it would be a good idea to check this regularly to see if we can answer any further questions there. The webpage address is: www.wyre.gov.uk/multi-agency An email address has also been set up to receive questions about the investigation: multi-agency@wyre.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Huddleston

Chief Executive

Wyre Borough Council