

Terry Jermy MP - Written Questions

Tim Pye, v2, 20th February 2025

<https://members.parliament.uk/member/5338/writtenquestions>

Summary of questions and responses

UIN	Topic	Response
28814	New guidance on lead paint	No plans
28812	Lead contamination in water ways	See the Environment Agency's public water quality archive website. See WAMM.
28813	Lead contamination in agricultural land	The European Moss Survey monitors lead. UK Heavy Metals Network oversees compliance with the Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010). Lead in sewage sludge spread on land is monitored under SUIAR. Emissions of lead by industry are subject to the The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016
28811	Lead contamination in the food supply	28813
28816	Replacement of pipe where there is lead in the water	Treating water with orthophosphate reduces the problem significantly. Water companies' business plans for 2025-2030 include trialling approaches to reduce lead exposure. The Drinking Water Inspectorate provide the independent assurance
28815	Water company's assessments of the levels of lead in domestic drinking water supplies	28816
28808	National Screening Committee review into lead poisoning	The UK NSC is currently considering all open call proposals
28806	Testing for lead poisoning in adults and children	28808
28807	Data on children with lead poisoning	See LEICSS
28818	Removal of lead pipes	27855
28817	Removal of lead paint	28818
29309	Preventing population exposure to lead	The UKHSA is raising awareness through its web pages on lead
29205	Lead pipes in housing	No answer yet
28820	Testing for lead levels on the parliamentary estate	Lead is present in the Palace of Westminster, but OK if undisturbed. We follow CLAW

Question for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Lead: Paint

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 14 October 2024 to Question 5973 on Lead: Paint, whether his Department is taking steps to prepare new guidance.

Asked 4 February 2025

Defra does not currently plan to issue new guidance on lead paint.

Answered 14 February 2025

By Emma Hardy (Labour, Kingston upon Hull West and Haltemprice)

UIN 28814

Question for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Inland Waterways: Pollution Control

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to (a) monitor and (b) stop lead contamination in waterways.

Asked 4 February 2025

The Environment Agency identifies and prioritises sources of metal pollution, including waterways contaminated by lead, and conducts regular and routine water quality inspections, in line with their regulatory duties. The results are published on the Environment Agency's public water quality archive website.

The Government has set a long-term statutory target under the Environment Act to reduce by half the 1,500km of English rivers polluted by target metals (including lead) from abandoned metal mines by 31 December 2038. To achieve this target, the Government is building mine water treatment schemes and diffuse interventions under the [Water & Abandoned Metal Mines Programme](#) - a partnership between Defra, the Environment Agency and the Mining Remediation Authority - to prevent metals from abandoned metal mines, including lead, from polluting rivers.

Answered 14 February 2025

By [Emma Hardy](#) (Labour, Kingston upon Hull West and Haltemprice)

[UIN 28812](#)

Question for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Agriculture: Lead

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to (a) assess and (b) help mitigate the risk of lead contamination in agricultural land in (i) England, (ii) East Anglia and (iii) South West Norfolk constituency.

Asked 4 February 2025

Defra monitors concentrations of ten heavy metals, including lead, in naturally-growing mosses as part of the European Moss Survey, which takes place every five years. The moss data provide a cost-effective measure of pollution deposition from the atmosphere which complements conventional precipitation analysis.

The latest report for the 2020-2022 survey is publicly available [here](#). It shows that lead deposition has declined since 1990.

The UK Heavy Metals Network forms the basis of the UK's compliance monitoring for the Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010), which covers lead, arsenic, cadmium, nickel and mercury. Lead in the PM₁₀ fraction of air (particulate matter with aerodynamic diameter of 10 µm or less) is measured at 26 sites. The UK has been compliant with applicable limit values in legislation for ambient lead in air for over 20 years.

Further details are publicly available here: [Air Pollution in the UK report – Defra, UK](#).

Treated sewage sludge (commonly called biosolids) can be beneficially spread to agricultural land under the Sludge (Use in Agriculture) Regulations (SUiAR).

Details are publicly available [here](#).

In England the Environment Agency is responsible for enforcing the SUiAR, which are supported by a sewage sludge in agriculture code of practice.

Details are publicly available [here](#).

The SUiAR provides controls that protect the environment and human health when these organic materials are spread to agricultural land. Provided the use of sewage sludge is carried out in accordance with the relevant regulatory controls and good practice guidance is followed, the recycling of sewage sludge to land is an allowable activity.

The SUiAR require that sludge shall be used in such a way that the quality of the soil and of the surface and ground water is not impaired. A person using sludge has to ensure they can meet this requirement of the SUiAR. The requirement is applicable to all relevant contaminants which could, when sludge is used, cause the quality of the soil and of surface and

ground water to be impaired. Lead is a contaminant that can be present in sludge and which is specifically listed in both the SUIAR and its supporting sewage sludge in agriculture code of practice.

Emissions of lead from industrial installations in England are subject to stringent emission limits and monitoring requirements under The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016.

This question is grouped with 1 other question:

[28811](#)

Answered 14 February 2025

By [Daniel Zeichner](#) (Labour, Cambridge)

[UIN 28813](#)

Question for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Food: Lead

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to (a) monitor and (b) stop lead contamination in the food supply chain.

Asked 4 February 2025

This question is grouped with 1 other question:

[28813](#)

Answered 14 February 2025

By [Daniel Zeichner](#) (Labour, Cambridge)

[UIN 28811](#)

Question for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Water Supply: Lead

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with water companies on the replacement of water pipes to households in which lead has been found in the water supply in (a) England, (b) East Anglia and (c) South West Norfolk constituency.

Asked 4 February 2025

Lead pipes have not been permitted since 1970, but they may be present in older properties.

To reduce the risk of lead leaching into water, water companies treat the water with orthophosphate which reduces the problem significantly. Any failure of the lead standard of 10 micrograms per litre is investigated thoroughly by water companies with resamples being taken. Failures of the standard are generally caused by internal lead pipework and fittings which are the responsibility of the owner.

In Defra's [Strategic Policy Statement to Ofwat](#), we supported action by the water industry to trial approaches to reduce exposure to lead which have been agreed in water companies' business plans for 2025-2030. Two Green Recovery projects, approved by Ofwat, are also trialling replacement of customer supply pipes made of lead.

On public drinking water – the Drinking Water Inspectorate are the body who provide the independent assurance that public drinking water supplies are safe.

Drinking water for the human consumer remains safe as it is tested and appropriately treated before distribution to the tap, so the human health risk from drinking water remains very low.

This question is grouped with 1 other question:

[28815](#)

Answered 14 February 2025

By [Emma Hardy](#) (Labour, Kingston upon Hull West and Haltemprice)

[UIN 28816](#)

Question for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Drinking Water: Lead

This question is grouped with 1 other question:

[28816](#)

Answered 14 February 2025

By [Emma Hardy](#) (Labour, Kingston upon Hull West and Haltemprice)

[UIN 28815](#)

Question for Department of Health and Social Care

Lead: Poisoning

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the National Screening Committee review into lead poisoning will be complete.

Asked 4 February 2025

The UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) made a recommendation not to screen children for lead poisoning in 2018. The UK NSC has not been asked to review screening adults for exposure to toxic metals. Further details on the UK NSC's review are available at the following link:

<https://view-health-screening-recommendations.service.gov.uk/lead-poisoning/>

We are aware that a proposal has been submitted to the UK NSC via its open call, to review the decision made in 2018 for screening children for lead poisoning, in light of new evidence. The UK NSC is currently considering all open call proposals. More information about the UK NSC's open call is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-nsc-annual-call-submitting-a-screening-proposal/uk-nsc-annual-call-how-to-submit-a-proposal>

This question is grouped with 1 other question:

[28806](#)

Answered 14 February 2025

By [Ashley Dalton](#) (Labour, West Lancashire)

[UIN 28808](#)

Question for Department of Health and Social Care

Lead: Poisoning

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase testing for lead poisoning in (a) adults and (b) children.

Asked 4 February 2025

This question is grouped with 1 other question:

[28808](#)

Answered 14 February 2025

By [Ashley Dalton](#) (Labour, West Lancashire)

[UIN 28806](#)

Question for Department of Health and Social Care

Lead: Poisoning

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department holds on the number of children reported to have had lead poisoning in each year since 2016.

Asked 4 February 2025

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) coordinates the Lead in Children Exposure Surveillance System (LEICSS), a passive surveillance system covering England, which aims to identify elevated blood lead concentrations in children under 15 years old.

The following table shows the LEICSS data on case numbers between 2016 and 2023, inclusive:

Year	Number of cases
2016	33
2017	49
2018	45
2019	36
2020	35
2021	121
2022	191
2023	226

Note: Between 2016 to 2020, the annual number of cases ranged between 33 and 49. From 2021 there was a marked increase in the number of cases. The steep rise in reported cases from 2021 onwards is due to a change in the case definition in our surveillance system.

Answered 14 February 2025

By [Ashley Dalton](#) (Labour, West Lancashire)

UIN 28807

Question for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Housing: Lead

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether her Department is taking steps to remove toxic lead pipes in housing in (a) England, (b) East Anglia and (c) South West Norfolk constituency.

Asked 4 February 2025

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to Questions UIN [27855](#) on 6 February 2025.

This question is grouped with 1 other question:
[28817](#)

Answered 12 February 2025

By [Alex Norris](#) (Labour, Nottingham North and Kimberley)

[UIN 28818](#)

Question for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Lead: Paint

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether her Department is taking steps to help remove lead paint in older homes.

Asked 4 February 2025

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to Questions UIN [27855](#) on 6 February 2025.

This question is grouped with 1 other question:
[28818](#)

Answered 12 February 2025

By [Alex Norris](#) (Labour, Nottingham North and Kimberley)

[UIN 28817](#)

Question for Department of Health and Social Care

Lead: Health Hazards

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Health and Security Agency is taking to prevent population exposure to lead.

Asked 5 February 2025

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is raising awareness and has published advice and guidance for the public and professional partners on the risk of harm from lead exposure, and effective public health interventions to reduce lead exposure. The guidance is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lead-poisoning-advice-for-the-public-and-healthcare-professionals>.

The UKHSA supports partners in identifying the pathways and sources of lead and in introducing public health interventions to aid in reducing exposure.

Answered 17 February 2025

By [Ashley Dalton](#) (Labour, West Lancashire)

[UIN 29309](#)

Question for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Water Supply: Lead

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to tackle toxic lead pipes in housing in (a) England, (b) East Anglia and (c) South West Norfolk.

Asked 5 February 2025

Answer overdue: was due for answer by 10 February 2025

UIN 29205

Question for House of Commons Commission

Parliamentary Estate: Lead

To ask the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent and Rhymney, representing the House of Commons Commission, whether the Commission has tested for lead levels on the parliamentary estate.

Asked 4 February 2025

We are aware lead is present in the Palace of Westminster and other older buildings on the estate, particularly underneath existing paintwork. When left undisturbed lead does not pose a risk to users of the buildings.

Where relevant, lead is tested for as part of surveys during the construction project process, and this is carried out in accordance with the control measures and guidelines set by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Control of Lead at Work Regulations 2002. We also carry out paint analysis, to gather information on the building history, original appearance, and techniques used, and this will also reveal if lead is present in the paint.

While we follow all appropriate control measures as set by the Health and Safety Executive, we do not record lead levels or routinely test for lead outside of project works involving known lead as it is not a statutory requirement to do so.

Answered 19 February 2025

By Nick Smith (Labour, Blaenau Gwent and Rhymney)

[UIN 28820](#)