

**From:** CustomerEIR <[CustomerEIR@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:CustomerEIR@severntrent.co.uk)>  
**Sent:** 22 October 2025 16:42  
**To:** Swinglehurst, Elissa (Cllr) <[Elissa.Swinglehurst@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Elissa.Swinglehurst@herefordshire.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** CustomerEIR <[CustomerEIR@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:CustomerEIR@severntrent.co.uk)>  
**Subject:** EIR948 Environmental Information Response

You don't often get email from [customereir@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:customereir@severntrent.co.uk). [Learn why this is important](#)

ST Classification: UNMARKED

Dear Cllr Elissa Swinglehurst,

Thank you for your recent request for information, which we have answered in line with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 ("Regulations"). We have outlined our response below, including your original questions for reference.

**Reflecting on the [recent piece by The Guardian](#), raising concerns regarding leachate-infused biosolids being spread on agricultural holdings across the country, I would like to understand the local impact of this practice in Herefordshire, specifically within the Wye Catchment. I would be grateful for your assistance in understanding:**

**The tonnage of biosolids spread within the Wye catchment (including the Lugg) from Severn Trent's sewage treatment works?**

As you have not given a timeframe, we have answered your question based on the timeframe of 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. Across this period biosolids have not been spread within the Wye catchment, including the Lugg.

**1. What testing is done to soils prior to spreading? What is the availability of that data?**

The Sludge (Use in Agriculture) Regulations, contain limits on the concentration in soils following an application and on how much heavy metal can be applied from applications. The Biosolids Assurance Scheme, which water companies have agreed to abide by, uses more stringent limits than those stated in the Sludge Regulations, taken from the Sewage sludge in agriculture: code of practice for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Links provided below.

[Sewage sludge in agriculture: code of practice for England, Wales and Northern Ireland - GOV.UK](#)

[The Sludge \(Use in Agriculture\) Regulations 1989](#)

In response to the second question on availability of soils testing data, we have carefully considered your request, however, we have concluded that we are unable to provide the information on the basis that disclosure would adversely affect the confidentiality of commercial or industrial information where such confidentiality is provided by law to protect a legitimate economic interest. In this context, regulation 12(5)(e) provides an exemption from disclosure.

We have also considered the public interest test, taking account of the presumption favour of disclosure. We have determined that the public interest remains in maintaining the regulation 12(5)(e) exemption. In coming to this view, we have taken into account access to information, transparency and accountability of water companies as some of the potential public interest arguments in favour of disclosure.

**2. What testing is done of the biosolids for PFAS, PCBs, dioxins, flame retardants, solvents, endocrine disruptors, microplastics and other contaminants prior to spreading?**

For investigational purposes, we sample our Biosolids for a suite of PFAS compounds.

**3. Do the biosolids spread within the Wye catchment contain leachate? If so, what volume of leachate is spread within the catchment every year?**

No Biosolids spread in Wye catchment.

**I would also be grateful if you are able to provide a point of contact for future co-operative engagement - can you confirm if this would be someone other than yourself?**

If you have any queries, please continue to reach out to our EIR team at [CustomerEIR@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:CustomerEIR@severntrent.co.uk) This helps us ensure your enquiry is promptly directed to the right team, so we can provide you with the most efficient and helpful response.

Any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this response, and we will reply within 40 working days from receipt of the request for internal review.

Many Thanks  
Severn Trent EIR team

Severn Trent Plc (registered number 2366619) and Severn Trent Water Limited (registered number 2366686) (together the "Companies") are both limited companies registered in England & Wales with their registered office at Severn Trent Centre, 2 St John's Street, Coventry, CV1 2LZ. This email (which includes any files attached to it) is not contractually binding on its own, is intended solely for the named recipient and may contain confidential, commercially sensitive or may be covered by legal professional privilege. If you are not the intended recipient, you must not disclose or use the information contained in it. If you have received this message in error, please notify the sender immediately or call us on 03457 500 500. If you are not the intended recipient you must not use, disclose, distribute, reproduce, retransmit, retain or rely on any information contained in this email. Please note the Companies reserve the right to monitor email communications in accordance with applicable law and regulations. To the extent permitted by law, neither the Companies or any of their subsidiaries, nor any employee, director or officer thereof, accepts any liability whatsoever in relation to this email including liability arising from any external breach of security or confidentiality or for virus infection or for statements made by the sender as these are not necessarily made on behalf of the Companies. Reduce waste! Please consider the environment before printing this email.