

Your guide to the Grenfell environmental checks



In October 2018, the government confirmed that additional environmental checks would be carried out around the Grenfell Tower site. These checks will investigate the potential risk of land contamination as a result of the fire.

This is to reassure residents that any environmental risks to public health will be fully assessed and appropriate action taken, if needed.

We are carrying out the environmental checks in two stages, under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 – the legal framework for identifying and dealing with contaminated land.

The environmental checks are being funded by the government and a multi-agency partnership (MAP) is overseeing the works. The MAP includes the Environment Agency, Public Health England, NHS England, the Food Standards Agency, the Grenfell Tower Site Management Team and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government supports the MAP and leads on engagement with the community.

Scientific advice and scrutiny on the environmental checks is provided by a group of independent scientific experts. You can find out more in our 'Meet the Scientists' leaflet.

Stage 1

The first stage of the environmental checks was carried out by AECOM, an independent environmental specialist company, during the spring and summer of 2019. They gathered background information, such as where residents found debris and the direction of the smoke plume. They took 117 samples from 21 locations.

AECOM then looked for any links between the chemicals found in the soil, how people could come into contact with them and who or where may be affected. These links are called 'potential contaminant linkages'.



The levels of chemicals that AECOM found was typical of those generally found in London. At this stage we don't consider there to be an elevated risk to anyone's health from potential land contamination because of the Grenfell Tower fire, and the health advice remains the same. This is to wash your hands after gardening, working or playing in soil and to wash and peel home-grown fruit and vegetables.

You can find out more about Stage 1 at:

www.gov.uk/guidance/grenfell-environmental-checks-stage-1-report

Stage 2

Next we will investigate the potential risk of any land contamination through more sampling. The results will be used to consider any possible risks to public health.

The investigation will focus on chemicals where a potential contaminant linkage was found during Stage 1. These are lead and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). Asbestos, dioxins and furans will also be investigated further.

Samples will be taken up to a 1km radius from the Tower to the north west, based on information on the smoke plume and wind direction, and 500m in all other directions. Sensitive locations such as schools, nurseries and community gardens, where fruit and vegetables are grown are being prioritised for sampling.

We will continue to ensure that residents are involved during Stage 2. The current restrictions in response to the COVID-19 coronavirus have meant that some of our work on Stage 2 has had to be paused. Where possible, progress can and is still being made and we will continue to keep you informed over the coming weeks.

Air quality monitoring

Air quality monitoring has been in place around Grenfell Tower since June 2017. The air is monitored continuously and the data is analysed at least once per day. Like many parts of London, air quality can be affected by pollution, such as from heavy traffic and gas-fired boilers. However, we have not identified any causes for concern.

You can find out more about the air quality in the area surrounding Grenfell Tower, including a weekly report, at www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-monitoring-following-the-grenfell-tower-fire

Further information

To find out more about the environmental checks:



Email the team on environmental-checks@communities.gov.uk



Call them on 0303 444 9086



Download the Nextdoor app or visit www.nextdoor.co.uk and search for **Grenfell Community Updates – HM Government**.

Visit the environmental checks pages on the **gov.uk website** at www.gov.uk/guidance/soil-and-environmental-checks