



Frequently Asked Questions

Should your question not be covered in this document or the technical guidance note, please contact the survey helpdesk via telephone on 0800 169 5549, or by email at defra.survey@urs.com

Click on the question to go to the answer

Does this survey apply to my business even though I am only a small company?

How long does take to complete the questionnaire?

My business does not have any environmental expenditure, why have I received this survey?

I simply don't have all the information you require, is it worth sending in a partially completed or estimated questionnaire?

I will complete the questionnaire but I cannot provide actual data, only estimates. Is this still acceptable?

My primary role is the running of my business, why should I use valuable resources to complete this questionnaire?

I do not see any benefits for my company from completing the survey

Within our organisation there is an overlap with environmental protection expenditure and health & safety expenditure. Is it OK to include both types of expenditure in this survey?

Do I include expenditure for all of my company's operations or for just the site or operational unit?

Should I include the cost of R&D which may indirectly result in environmental improvements?

How will you differentiate between manufacturers and distributors in our sector, for example the chemical industry?

Will my company be surveyed in future years?

Where and when will the results be available?

I have lost your questionnaire, but I would still like to participate in this survey

I've read all the supporting material. However I'm still having some difficulty understanding what is required in relation to my business.

Does this survey apply to my business even though I am only a small company?

Answer: Yes, this survey aims to cover all United Kingdom (UK) industry regardless of size.

How long does take to complete the questionnaire?

Answer: It is difficult to be precise. The time taken to complete the survey will vary depending on the size of the company, how much has been spent in the last year and whether your management or environmental accounting systems already produce relevant information.

UK Environmental Protection Expenditure Survey FAQ

My business does not have any environmental expenditure, why have I received this survey?

Answer: Responses from companies with no environmental protection costs are still very important for the quality of the survey results. All companies should attempt to answer questions on Operating Environmental Protection Expenditure 1.1 (a), 1.2 B, 1.2. C, 1.3; and Capital Environmental Protection Expenditures 2.1 (a), 2.2 (a), together with the classification and contact details on the first page.

I simply don't have all the information you require, is it worth sending in a partially completed or estimated questionnaire?

Answer: Yes absolutely! The return of the questionnaire is vital to the success of this project, and the results of individual questions can still be used in the analysis.

I will complete the questionnaire but I cannot provide actual data, only estimates. Is this still acceptable?

Answer: Yes. Many companies will have to make estimates, particularly in answer to certain questions. Simply make the best estimates you can, and return the questionnaire.

My primary role is the running of my business, why should I use valuable resources to complete this questionnaire?

Answer: This survey produces estimates of the costs to businesses of protecting the environment. The survey is based on a sample of companies and it is vital that companies respond so that better results can be produced. If companies do not take part then it is possible that results for particular industries will be misrepresented, which would be misleading both for government and for industry.

What are the benefits of completing the survey for my company ?

Answer: Benefits can include:

- **Environmental compliance.** Participating companies can use the information as part of their internal environmental management system (EMS) such as the ISO 14001 scheme. This is important for scheduling capital projects, where capital investments may be required to address particular compliance issues, and allow a more proactive management of resources.
- **Environmental benchmarking.** The information will make it possible for participating companies to compare their own results with average values for similar companies in their market sector. The averages will be derived by Defra using returned information collated on a confidential basis.

Within our organisation there is an overlap with environmental protection expenditure and health & safety expenditure. Is it OK to include both types of expenditure in this survey?

Answer: No. Environmental protection expenditure is the only expenditure needed for this survey.

UK Environmental Protection Expenditure Survey FAQ

Do I include expenditure for all of my company's operations or for just the site or operational unit?

Answer: The survey should be completed for the operational unit to as given on the questionnaire. However, if you are only able to supply site data, then we will be happy to accept this. In this case please state on the form what parts of the company the information provided relates to.

Should I include the cost of R&D which may indirectly result in environmental improvements?

Answer: No. Only include R&D costs directly related to reducing the environmental impacts of your company's activities.

How will you differentiate between manufacturers and distributors in our sector, for example the chemical industry?

Answer: Companies are selected from the government's register of businesses which identifies their specific industry/business sector. The questionnaire is being sent to a sample of companies from the mining and quarrying, manufacturing and electricity, gas & water supply sectors only.

Will my company be surveyed in future years?

Answer: If your company employs more than 250 employees then you will be approached annually. For companies with less than 250 employees, in most sectors a random sample is taken so you may or may not be surveyed at some time in the future. It will be useful for you to keep records of how you complete the form this year to save time in future surveys.

Where and when will the results be available?

Answer: Results from previous years will be published on Defra's website and should be available in May each year. The most recent report is from the 2011 survey, available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-protection-expenditure-epe-survey-2011>

I have lost your questionnaire, but I would still like to participate in this survey

Answer: You can download a questionnaire from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs/series/environmental-protection-and-expenditure-epe-survey> (PDF 1.5Mb)
Alternatively contact the Helpline on 020 8944 3333 or Email defra.survey@urs.com

I've read all the supporting material. However I'm still having some difficulty understanding what is required in relation to my business.

Answer: If you ring the Helpline on 020 8944 3333 staff will be able to explain what is required and help you complete the questionnaire.