

Radioactivity in Food and the Environment 2018 report shows all levels and concentrations of radioactivity continue to be well within dose limits

24 October 2019

The latest Radioactivity in Food and the Environment Report (RIFE 24) has been published today (24 October 2019) and shows that doses of radioactivity received by people in Scotland remain well within international dose limits.

The highest dose for a member of the public reported in Scotland from an authorised discharge was 0.035 millisievert (mSv) – around one thirtieth of the legal limit.

As a comparison, the UK average exposure from all sources (including background radiation) is 2.7 mSv, of which 0.40 mSv is from patient exposure to radiation from medical treatments.

The [annual RIFE report](#) looks at the levels and concentrations of radioactivity measured in the environment during 2018 and discharges from all of the nuclear licensed sites in Scotland. It assesses the dose a member of the public could receive, based on a number of factors such as environmental concentrations, diet and activity.

SEPA is responsible for the radiological monitoring that is carried out in Scotland and has a duty to ensure that no member of the public receives a dose in excess of the statutory dose limit of one millisievert (1 mSv) per year from authorised discharges. This year's data shows that doses were within the legal limits and that SEPA's regulatory processes in relation to radioactive substances are sufficiently robust.

Dr Paul Dale, Unit Manager from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), said:

“RIFE 24 continues to demonstrate that Scotland's communities are adequately protected against sources of radioactivity that could impact on our food and the wider natural environment. Due to the low concentrations of radioactivity measured we do see some small variations, which is due to changes in diet and activities.

“The report represents a collaborative effort by all agencies to carry out rigorous annual monitoring, to ensure doses are within international limits and the 2018 report confirms that this remains the case.”

The [RIFE 24 report](#) is a joint publication between all six agencies across the UK with responsibility for ensuring that doses from authorised releases of radioactivity do not pose an unacceptable risk to health – SEPA, the Environment Agency (EA), Food Standards Agency (FSA), Food Standards Scotland (FSS), Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA).

Also released today is a [Summary of Radioactivity in Food and the Environment](#), which provides a summary of the public's exposure (dose) to radiation between 2004 and 2016.

Ends