



Participant Information Sheet

PROJECT TITLE: Safe Soil, Safe Food - Understanding PFAS in Adelaide's Urban Residential Soil

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL NUMBER: H-2024-039

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Dr Matthias Salomon

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in the research project described below.

What is the project about?

This project focuses on mapping concentrations of PFAS and soil health in Adelaide's urban residential garden soils. PFAS, an acronym for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, represents a group of man-made chemicals that have been in use since the 1940s. These chemicals have seen widespread application due to their unique chemical properties, such as resistance to water, oil, and heat. This has made them indispensable in various industrial applications and consumer goods, leading to their presence in everything from non-stick pans and water-resistant clothing to certain types of food packaging and firefighting foams. One of the significant concerns surrounding PFAS compounds is their longevity in the environment, especially in soils. These compounds are known for their persistence, meaning they do not break down easily. This has raised environmental and health concerns, given that these substances can remain in soils for extended periods and potentially find their way into the food chain.

*The 18 metropolitan Adelaide councils included in this study are:

Campbelltown City Council	City of Adelaide	City of Burnside	City of Charles Sturt	City of Holdfast Bay	City of Marion
City of Mitcham	City of Norwood Payneham and St Peters	City of Onkaparinga	City of Playford	City of Port Adelaide Enfield	City of Prospect
City of Salisbury	City of Tea Tree Gully	City of Unley	City of West Torrens	Town of Gawler	Town of Walkerville

Who is undertaking the project?

This project is being conducted by researchers of the University of Adelaide and Flinders University.

Name	Organisation
Dr Matthias Salomon	University of Adelaide
Dr Jungho Suh	University of Adelaide
Hannah Thwaites	University of Adelaide
Dr Shervin Kabiri	University of Adelaide
Prof Timothy Cavagnaro	University of Adelaide
Prof Melissa Jane Nursey-Bray	University of Adelaide



Why am I being invited to participate?

You are being invited to participate in this study because you reside within the specific geographical region of interest and are 18 years or older. As a first step, we are seeking expressions of interest and will select 100 participants based on these submissions. Please note, in cases where the expressions of interest exceed our capacity for participant inclusion, especially when multiple registrations come from the same suburb, participants will be selected randomly.

What am I being invited to do?

You are being invited to send us a soil sample from your garden and complete a questionnaire related to your gardening practices and soil usage.

How much time will my involvement in the project take?

We anticipate that collecting the soil sample and filling out the questionnaire will take up to 30 minutes.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?

There are no foreseeable risks associated with participating in this project. While soil contamination is a topic of ongoing research, we currently have no data suggesting that PFAS in residential gardening soil poses an acute issue. Therefore, this study is purely explorative in nature. The results of the soil tests will not be shared with external organisations. Any data that is published or presented will be de-identified, ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of all participants are maintained.

In the theoretical event that PFAS concentrations in soil exceed the health investigation thresholds, no results will be reported to external organisations. All participants who have provided their email address will receive their results, along with a comparison to the health investigation levels (as defined by National Environment Protection Measures) as a reference point. For additional guidance and resources, participants will be directed to the Australian Government's PFAS Taskforce website (www.pfas.gov.au). Any decision on further action is the sole responsibility of the participant.

We recommend adhering to general gardening safety practices when collecting soil samples for this study. This includes using a hand shovel and wearing gloves and a face mask for protection. This recommendation is not due to any expected acute contamination risk, but rather as a general guideline for safe gardening practices.

What are the potential benefits of the research project?

This survey offers insights into the extent of PFAS contamination in Adelaide's urban residential soils and to better understand its general soil health, a topic previously under-researched. Understanding the Adelaide's residential soil health and the distribution and concentration of PFAS will enable better decision-making for urban agriculture and residential gardening.

Can I withdraw from the project?

Participation in this project is completely voluntary. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time via email message. Upon withdrawal, any collected soil samples and associated information will be disposed of securely, ensuring your data is no longer included in the project findings.

What will happen to my information?

Privacy and Confidentiality: Your personal details, when collected, will be treated confidential. We will not disclose any identifiable information about you to any third party. Once soil sampling kits are dispatched, all address details will be permanently deleted. If you have provided an email address, it will be stored to share your specific results and won't be used for any other purposes or shared with external entities. Your submitted soil samples are only linked to your suburb and email address and any published results will be de-identified. Additionally, a participant consent form will be included within the soil sampling kit, which will need to be signed; this consent form will be stored in an access-restricted location, accessible only to project members, and stored for a minimum of 5 years.

Storage: Soil samples will be kept in storage in case of repeating the soil analysis or conducting additional analysis. Personal address information is deleted once your soil sample kit has been posted.



Publishing: The results from this study may be published in scientific journals and/or presented at conferences and non-academic events. However, any data shared in these formats will be completely anonymous, ensuring that individual participants cannot be identified.

Sharing: If you provided your email address, we will share your personal soil test results with you electronically.

Your information will only be used as described in this participant information sheet and it will only be disclosed according to the consent provided, except as required by law.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?

Dr Matthias Salomon

Ph: 08 8313 6530

Email: Matthias.salomon@adelaide.edu.au

What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

Questions

If you have questions about the study, you can contact the research team:

Name: Dr Matthias Salomon

Phone: 08 8313 6530

Email: Matthias.salomon@adelaide.edu.au

Insurance and Compensation

The study has been indemnified by The University of Adelaide which is enforceable by a participant to seek compensation in addition to your right to seek compensation under the common law through the legal system in legal proceedings.

Complaints

If you wish to speak with an independent person regarding concerns or a complaint about this study, the University's policy on research involving human participants, or your rights as a participant, please contact the Human Research Ethics Committee's Secretariat on:

Phone: +61 8 8313 6028

Email: hrec@adelaide.edu.au

Post: Research Services, Level 3, Rundle Mall Plaza, 50 Rundle Mall, ADELAIDE SA 5000

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome. If I want to participate, what do I do?

As a first step, express your interest by completing the following survey.

Following receipt of this information, we will select 100 people evenly spread across metropolitan Adelaide and contact you via email to notify you and for further information. The submission of this survey will be taken as an indication that you have read the above information and consent to participate.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Matthias Salomon

On behalf of the research team.