

Toxics Release Inventory/Community Right-to-Know: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Releases Annual National Analysis (2021)



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The United States Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) released its 2021 Toxics Release Inventory (“TRI”) National Analysis (“Analysis”).

The TRI is a publicly available database prepared and published by EPA annually.

The Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (“EPCRA”) was enacted in 1986. The federal statute requires certain facilities to submit reports each year on the amounts of toxic chemicals they release into the environment, either routinely or as the result of accidents.

Federal legislation in 1990 extended reporting requirements to waste management and source reduction activities. EPA implements these laws and compiles information it receives in the TRI.

The TRI contains information on the release of several hundred chemicals and chemical categories from industries including manufacturing, metal and coal mining, electric utilities, and commercial hazardous waste treatment (among others). EPCRA requires companies that manufacture, process, or otherwise use specified toxic chemicals in amounts above reporting threshold levels to submit reports to EPA designated state officials.

A March 16th EPA news release states that the analysis indicates:

- Environmental releases of TRI chemicals from covered facilities remain below pre-pandemic levels
- Releases in 2021 are 10% lower than 2012 releases
- In 2021 facilities managed 89% of their TRI chemical waste through preferred practices such as recycling, energy recovery, and treatment
- 11 percent of the TRI chemical waste was released into the environment
- 24 percent increase in the number of new pollution reduction activities facilities initiated
- 45 percent decrease in ethylene oxide releases from 2012 to 2021
- 1.3 million pounds of PFAS were managed as waste

EPA states that more than 21,000 facilities submitted reports on 531 chemicals that were required to be reported because they were released into the environment or otherwise managed as waste.

Sections of the report include:

- Chemical Releases
- Chemical Profiles

- Managing Waste
- Sector Profiles
- Source Reduction
- TRI Map Function

A link to the EPA news release which provides access to the various reports can be found [here](#).