

# HERE'S WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT TRI!

The Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) provides a wealth of information that is being accessed daily across our nation. Citizens groups are finding it indispensable in furthering their efforts to keep their local environment healthy. Educators are using TRI to give their students "real life" practice in analyzing toxic hazards.

Legal organizations, the media, and librarians have all hailed TRI for empowering individuals and groups with vital information about toxic chemicals that could impact the quality of life in their area. TRI is being used by citizens and businesses to increase awareness of toxic hazards, and to bring about the cooperation and change that can have a dramatic impact on thousands of Americans, young and old.

*"By placing previously inaccessible information from corporate files and computers into the hands of ordinary citizens, TRI enables people to spotlight polluters and push for emissions reductions. In scores of advocacy reports, citizens have used TRI to identify problems and advance solutions. TRI is a dynamic and expanding program. Current efforts....will give citizens a greater say in preventing toxics where we work, live and play."*

Paul Orum, Coordinator  
Working Group on Community  
Right-To-Know

*"TRI is a powerful tool to protect people from toxic chemical hazards both on the job and at home...workers and other community residents have joined together to seek reduction of both toxic chemical usage inside the plant and emissions outside of the plant."*

Eric Frumin,  
Health and Safety Director  
Amalgamated Clothing and Textile  
Workers Union



**TOXIC  
RELEASE  
INVENTORY**

*"Drinking and breathing is protected by your library card. You can find out what individual wastes are being released in your community by using the Environmental Protection Agency's Toxic Release Inventory, available at most major libraries and many college libraries."*

Ann Heanue, Associate Director  
American Library Association  
Washington Office

*"Kansas City, KS Public Library patrons have used TRI in ways we never imagined....We've had requests from businessmen, journalists, and environmentally concerned citizens. This year the metro-wide school debate topic is the environment, so TRI is again being used as a unique, authoritative source of information. TRI has brought us people who would not have otherwise used our library, and it has provided access to information we could not otherwise obtain from our collection."*

Wendy Zumalt,  
Adult Services Librarian  
Kansas City, KS Public Library

***"For classroom instruction, the principal data base accessed by our students is the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) required under Title III of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act....The significance of this Act cannot be overstated. ...Our students work in multidisciplinary research teams on real world problems and [acquire] both the information retrieval and social skills necessary to network with industry, citizens, and regulatory personnel."***

**Michael Heiman  
Professor of Environmental Studies  
Dickenson College, Carlisle, PA**

***"The TRI gives citizens previously unavailable information about the toxic waste releases of the largest industries in their communities. Armed with TRI information, people can take local action to protect themselves from the hazards of exposure to toxic chemicals."***

**Research Report by Citizens Fund**

***"The TRI is a good example of why the 1990s are being called the information age. It provides reams of information from about 20,000 companies on how they dispose of 325 types of chemicals."***

**Pollution Picture Hazy  
by Tahree Lane  
The Blade, Toledo, Ohio**

***"The TRI has enabled grass-roots groups around the country to expose chronic polluters and pressure them to clean up. Local and national organizations have used TRI data to generate scores of investigative reports — and action by concerned citizens."***

**Keeping Tabs on Toxics  
by John E. Young in  
World Watch Magazine**

***"The EPCRA legislation serves a very important function by enabling industrial workers and concerned citizens to find out about materials they work with, or reside near, that might have an impact on their health or safety."***

**EPCRA Enforcement  
Encourages Pollution Prevention  
by Robert Nagel, Esq  
Atlantic States Legal Foundation**

***"For the most part, (the TRI) serves the public good in various ways and probably prompts companies to do things that it otherwise wouldn't have done (to reduce emissions)."***

**Bob Kissell, Senior Consultant  
DuPont Company  
Environmental Engineering  
Department**

# TRI RESOURCES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

## **Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)**

ATSDR is a federal public health agency designated to prevent or mitigate adverse health effects and diminished quality of life resulting from exposure to hazardous substances. To accomplish its mission, ATSDR conducts public health assessments and sponsors and conducts research to increase scientific knowledge in this area. Health-care providers, state and local agencies, and the public are provided information and education opportunities that address the effects of hazardous substances. Call ATSDR at (404) 639-0727 or write to: ATSDR, 1600 Clifton Road, N.E., (E-28), Atlanta, GA 30333.

**Academic Institutions** The TRI is available in the collections of Federal Depository Libraries, many of which are located at academic institutions across the country. Universities may also employ physical chemists and biochemists who can describe the properties and uses of hazardous chemicals. Universities with public health curriculum would likely have faculty who are familiar with risk assessment procedures. Academic institutions, in general, are good resources for basic information about chemicals and toxigenic properties.

**Emergency Management Agencies** Every state and most counties have emergency management agencies that are responsible for coordinating emergency preparedness planning and response. At the local level this task is often delegated to the police, fire, or medical service department. Many of these agencies have access to computerized emergency information bases, including TRI. These agencies are good resources for basic information about known potential chemical hazards in your community.



## **TOXIC RELEASE INVENTORY**

## **Environmental and Public Interest Groups**

Many groups with an environmental or community health focus are knowledgeable about the TRI. These organizations may be able to assist you with your personal concerns about health issues, or they may be able to refer you to a particular source.

Many of the larger organizations have local chapters and active grassroots organizations.

**Fire Departments** Fire departments are a good source of information about the hazardous chemicals used by facilities within their jurisdiction. Since fire departments are often the first to respond to a chemical emergency, they receive materials safety data sheets (MSDS) or lists of MSDS chemicals and hazardous chemical inventory forms that provide information about the properties and effects of a specific chemical.

**Facilities** Each business or facility that reports chemical releases to the Toxic Release Inventory is required to designate an individual to serve as the public contact for inquiries about TRI. The name and phone number for the contact is included on the actual reporting form (Form R) submitted by the facility.

**Libraries** TRI has been distributed in one or more formats to over 3,000 public libraries and Federal depository libraries across the nation. Also, libraries can be an invaluable source for other information about chemicals and their health and environmental effects. Ask your local librarian to assist you in identifying community resources which can provide additional assistance.

**Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs)** EPCRA also required the establishment of LEPCs, designated to develop emergency response plans to prepare for and respond to chemical emergencies. The LEPCs are a focal point in the community for information about hazardous substances, emergency planning, and health and environment risks. Contact your SERC or call your local emergency management agency to obtain information on your LEPC.

**Poison Control Centers** are located in communities across the country to assist residents and the medical community in the handling of accidental poisonings. Toxicologists at these centers are knowledgeable about acute and chronic health effects that result from exposure to hazardous chemicals. They can also identify the chemical hazards that are most prevalent in the community and can describe preventive and remedial measures required to minimize health problems. Information on your local poison control center is listed in the yellow pages of your telephone directory.

**State Emergency Response Commissions (SERC)** EPCRA required each state to designate a SERC, responsible for establishing Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) and coordinating their activities. SERCs also develop procedures for receiving and processing public requests for information collected under EPCRA and review local emergency plans.

**State and Local Agencies** Government agencies serving your area are a vital source of information. TRI reports are filed with the state, as well as with the Federal Government. Most states provide access to the data collected, and many publish analyses of the data. Many state have a counterpart to the U.S. EPA, as well as a state health department — employing toxicologists, health and safety officers, environmental specialists, and others who can provide assistance. You can locate these agencies in the blue pages or government section of your telephone directory or you can call your EPA Regional Office.

**Trade Associations** Health and medical associations, organizations of chemists and toxicologists, and associations of chemical manufacturers are good resources for assistance in interpreting the TRI data and for identifying people with expertise in your area of interest. For a listing of these

organizations consult the Encyclopedia of Associations in the reference section of your library or check your local yellow pages.

## REGIONAL TRI CONTACTS

*Each of the ten regional EPA offices has a TRI Coordinator and risk assessment experts on staff, along with information on Title III and a range of related topics. For information on TRI reporting requirements or other TRI information contact:*

**Dwight Peavey (ATR)**  
Pesticides and Toxics Branch  
USEPA Region 1  
(For regular mail, continue with.)  
JFK Federal Building  
Boston, MA 02203  
(For courier deliveries, continue with )  
One Congress Street  
10th Floor  
Boston, MA 02203  
617-565-3230  
Fax 617-565-4939

**Nora Lopez (MS-105)**  
Pesticides and Toxics Branch  
USEPA Region 2  
2890 Woodbridge Avenue, Building 10  
Edison, NJ 08837-3679  
908-906-6890  
Fax 908-321-6788

**Mikal Shabazz (3AT31)**  
Toxics and Pesticides Branch  
USEPA Region 3  
841 Chestnut Building  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
215-597-3659  
Fax 215-597-3156

**Carlton D. Hailey (Title III)**  
Pesticides and Toxics Branch  
USEPA Region 4  
345 Courtland Street, NE  
Atlanta, GA 30365  
404-347-1033  
Fax 404-347-1681

**Karen Turner (SP-14J)**  
Pesticides and Toxics Branch  
USEPA Region 5  
77 West Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60604  
312-353-5871  
Fax 312-353-4342






**Warren Layne (6TPT)**  
Pesticides and Toxics Branch  
USEPA Region 6  
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 700  
Dallas, TX 75202-2733  
214-655-7574  
Fax 214-655-2164

**Jim Hirtz (TOPE)**  
Toxics and Pesticides Branch  
USEPA Region 7  
726 Minnesota Avenue  
Kansas City, KS 66101  
913-551-7472  
Fax 913-551-7065

**Kathy Atendo (BART-TS)**  
Toxic Substances Branch  
USEPA Region 8  
999 18th Street  
Denver, CO 80202-2405  
303-293-1735  
Fax 303-293-1229

**Pam Tsai (A-4-3)**  
Pesticides and Toxics Branch  
USEPA Region 9  
75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
415-744-1116  
Fax 415-744-1073

**Phil Wong (AT083)**  
Pesticides and Toxics Branch  
USEPA Region 10  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98101  
206-553-4016  
Fax 206-553-8338

-  *What are these chemicals and how toxic are they?*
-  *Will these chemicals affect my health?*
-  *What other chemicals are made or stored at this facility?*
-  *What is the government doing about these releases?*
-  *How do I find out what's going on in my community?*

These are not easy questions to answer. Many factors must be considered in order to evaluate what risks, if any, you face from the presence of toxic chemicals in your local environment. Risk is the measure of the chance that you will experience health problems or the environment will be degraded. Risk screening uses available information, such as TRI, to develop a relative estimate of risk for a given set of conditions. Risks are ranked as high, medium, or low in order to set priorities for further evaluation.

## **RISK SCREENING**

### ***#1 Ranking the potency of the chemical.***

The toxicological potency of a chemical is a measure of a chemical's potential to harm human health and the environment. Health effects include the potential to cause cancer, genetic damage, reproductive damage, or harm to the nervous system. Environmental effects incorporate potential for damage to plants, animals, and fish.

### ***#2 Ranking the exposure of the chemical.***

Regardless of how toxic a chemical is, it cannot do harm unless it has contact with the environment or a human being. In ranking exposure, you must first look at the amount of the chemical that is being released...the duration and the intensity of the releases... and how long the chemical remains in the environment. Then it is important to define the route of the exposure. Is the chemical moving through the air, surface water, or ground water? Finally the exposed population must be defined, as the more people exposed the higher the likelihood that health problems will occur.

### ***#3 Ranking the potential risk of the chemical.***


Using the potency and the exposure ratings, risk screening identifies the chemicals, facilities, and routes of exposure that present a "high", "medium", or "low" priority for a follow up investigation. This final step establishes the probability that a release in a particular area will harm human health or the environment.

The TRI data is a first link to discovering which chemicals being manufactured, released, or transferred in your community pose a threat to human health and the environment. The TRI will tell you the names and estimated amounts of chemicals released in your area during the preceding year. You can also find out about chemicals that were transferred into or away from your area for treatment and disposal.

This information alone does not indicate the risks that these chemicals pose or may pose to human health and the environment. Small releases of highly toxic chemicals may be a greater risk than very large releases of less toxic chemicals. Though the TRI data is useful to evaluate the risk in your community, other information is required to form a complete picture. A determination of risk depends on the release conditions, extent of exposure, environmental conditions, and other factors.

**SO WHERE DO YOU GO FROM HERE?**

**Once you become aware of toxic chemical releases in your community, you can decide what to do next. Here are several ideas...**

 **Learn the facts...**In addition to chemical release information, TRI contains the names and telephone numbers of public contacts at reporting facilities. Companies are becoming more sensitive to citizens' concerns about health and the environment, and some have begun community outreach programs. Company officials may provide answers to your questions that could affect risk screening. They can also steer you towards local agencies, for example, the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC).



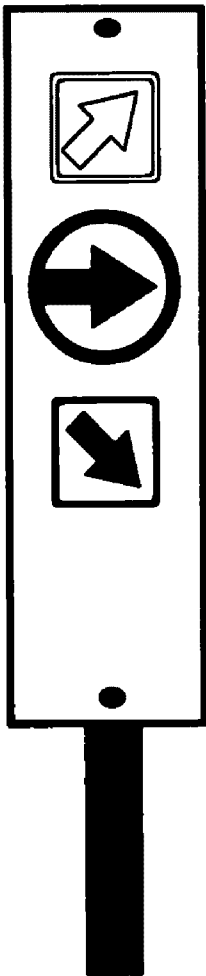
**Go to the local library...**Ask your librarian to help you find information about chemicals in your community. There are several standard reference works that can help you decide whether further investigation is warranted.



**Identify local safety and public health agencies...**These groups can help you evaluate what you have learned and identify any additional information you may need. Most counties have a public health agency staffed by one or more doctors, including a county health officer. Some areas have poison control centers with toxicologists and other staff who may be of some assistance. If you have difficulty identifying appropriate agencies in your area, call the local hospital or fire department for a referral.



**Locate the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)...**The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) which created TRI also established LEPCs to plan for emergency action in the event of hazardous chemical spills and similar incidents. LEPCs are aware of hazardous chemicals used and stored by facilities in your area. They receive Material Safety Data Sheets that detail physical properties and health effects of hazardous chemicals used by local manufacturers and other facilities. LEPCs, while often associated with existing county-level emergency planning or civil defense agencies, include representatives of environmental and transportation agencies, fire fighters, hospitals, the media, community groups, and others.







**Call the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)...**The ATSDR is the leading federal public health agency concerned with risks resulting from chemical exposure. Located in Atlanta, GA, it was created by the Superfund legislation in 1980. ATSDR makes information on the health effects of hazardous substances available to the public, conducts health assessments, and sponsors research. The ATSDR publication series titled Toxicological Profiles characterizes toxicological properties and health effects information for specific chemicals so they can be understood by a lay person. These publications, widely distributed to libraries across the country, are invaluable if you are interested in a specific chemical. ATSDR maintains contacts with state and local health agencies throughout the U.S. (For more information, call ATSDR at (404) 639-0727.)



**Contact EPA for free fact sheets...**EPA publishes fact sheets that summarize health and environmental effects of TRI chemicals. A typical 4-5 page fact sheet describes the symp-

toms that may result from exposure as well as accepted methods of treatment. Fact sheets are free on request when you call the EPCRA Hotline (800-535-0202). EPA also administers ten regional offices across the country for additional assistance.



**Contact your local college or university...**Leading experts can often be found in the academic community, and professors and staff are often willing to share their knowledge with local residents. Be prepared to make a few phone calls — several attempts may be necessary to find the right department or person.



**Network with neighbors and community groups...**This is a good way to exchange information, participate in meetings with officials, experts, and company representatives, and plan activities that address your concerns. The more people who are involved, the more attention you are likely to receive from industry officials, government agencies, and the news media.

## ADDITIONAL SOURCES FOR ASSISTANCE

### Hotlines

**Risk Communication Hotline** - Responds to questions on risk communications issues and literature, provides information on EPA's Risk Communication Program, and makes referrals to other related agency sources of information. (202-260-5606, Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. EST)

**National Air Toxics Information Clearinghouse** - Purpose is to collect, classify, and disseminate air toxics information and make callers aware of published air toxics information from EPA, other Federal agencies, and similar relevant sources. (919-541-0850, Monday - Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. EST, Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. EST)

**Air Risk Information Support Center Hotline** - Developed to assist state and local air pollution control agencies and EPA regional offices with technical matters pertaining to health, exposure, and risk assessment of air pollutants. (919-541-0888, Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. EST)

### Publications

**Chemical Releases and Chemical Risks: A Citizen's Guide to Risk Screening**, U.S. EPA Office of Pesticides and Toxic Substances, 1989, 8 pages. Free by calling 1-800-535-0202 (703-535-0202 in AK and VA).

**Hazardous Substances in Our Environment: A Citizen's Guide to Understanding Health Risks and Reducing Exposure**, U.S. EPA Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, 1990, 125 pages. Free by calling 202-260-5606. Answers questions about health risks from hazardous substances. Contains glossary, lists other resources.

**TRI Risk Screening Guide, Volume 1-The Process**, U.S. EPA Office of Toxic Substances, 1989, 102 pages. Describes in greater detail how to use TRI data to conduct risk screening. Contains glossary, lists other resources. \$44.50 from NTIS by calling 703-487-4650 (#PB90122128).

# ACCESSING THE TOXIC RELEASE INVENTORY

## TRI IS EASY TO ACCESS!

### TOXIC RELEASE INVENTORY

The Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) is only as valuable as the number of people who use the information. It's as important as ever to raise the awareness of the availability and value of TRI across the nation. Individuals and organizations are important "rungs" of the information ladder that links each concerned citizen with top corporate and government decision makers.

That's why EPA is dedicated to making TRI easy to access for everyone around the country. In the spirit of the right-to-know legislation, a concerted effort has been made to offer TRI in a variety of common formats and at a broad range of public facilities. TRI products have been distributed to over 4,000 locations, many of which are public libraries where individuals can use the TRI data free of charge. Many states also make TRI data publicly available, either on a computerized system or in published reports. More information is provided below for other sources for obtaining TRI.

For timely information and assistance about reporting requirements under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) and Toxic Release Inventory publications:

EPCRA Hotline  
Phone (toll free): 1-800-535-0202  
Hours: 8:30 AM - 7:30 PM (Eastern Time)  
Days: Monday — Friday

## TRI PRODUCT FORMATS

(see reverse for ordering information)

**On-line** The Toxic Release Inventory data base is a part of the National Library of Medicine's TOXNET system, offering state-of-the-art, user-friendly on-line searching. The system features a variety of on-line user assistance features, a flexible command language, and free text search capability. Users can print entire or specific portions of the records either on-line or off-line, as there are a wide variety

of customized text options built into the system. Users can also sort and manipulate the TRI data. The menu-driven search package allows individuals with limited computer skills to use the TRI on-line database efficiently and effectively. Demonstration diskettes are available to assist those with limited computer knowledge. With TRI on-line, EPA furthers its commitment to the spirit of the right-to-know legislation and expands the accessibility of TRI to our nation's concerned citizens and environmentally conscious businesses and organizations.

**CD-ROM** The complete Toxic Release Inventory and Hazardous Substance Fact sheets containing reference material on the health and ecological effects of the regulated substances are available on CD-ROM. (Compact Disc Read-Only Memory is a medium for retrieving data on a specially equipped microcomputer. The use of CD-ROMs has become commonplace in libraries.) The CD-ROM offers search flexibility comparable to on-line searching, but often at a fraction of the cost. CD-ROM is available from the GPO or the NTIS.

**Diskette** The Toxic Release Inventory is available on high density diskette, compatible with the IBM PC microcomputer in dBASE III PLUS, Lotus 1-2-3, and Macintosh Excel format. User can select

## Right-To-Know Network (RTK-Net)

RTK-Net is an online network concerned with environmental issues, in particular, matters arising from passage of the Right-To-Know provisions embodied in the EPCRA legislation. This network was originally established in 1989 as a pilot project by OMB Watch and The Unison Institute (two non-profit organizations), to provide access to the TRI, link TRI with other environmental data, and exchange information among public interest groups.

RTK Net has since grown into a full service center, providing free dial-in access privileges to government and industry as well, more complete data base services, and training and technical support. Participants can also communicate via e-mail, exchange documents electronically, and participate in "live" and "computer" conferences. Conference subjects are selected by participants and have included issues pertaining to health, activism, and environmental racism.

For more information, contact RTK-Net, 1731 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009-1146 or phone Unison Institute at 202-797-7200 (FAX-202-234-8584). You can also register online by modem at 202-234-8570, parameters 8,n,1, and log in as "public".



### **TRI User Support**

To help you obtain, use and understand the Toxic Release Inventory, EPA operates a TRI User Support (TRI-US) service. Specialists are available to answer questions, refer you to the nearest library where TRI is located, or assist you in finding just the information you are seeking. TRI-US offers comprehensive search assistance, on an individual basis, for both the TRI CD-ROM and the public online system, NLM/TOXNET. Documentation is available for computerized TRI products, and training is offered periodically. There is no charge for this service.

For assistance, call (202) 260-1531 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. EST Mon - Fri.

either 5.25 or 3.5 inch diskettes by state or for the U.S. The diskettes provide the following data: TRI facility identification number, facility name, county, city, zip code, Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Code; name of parent company; chemical name and Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) Registry Number, aggregated chemical releases to the air, land, underground injection, and water, and total chemical transfers to disposal locations and publicly owned treatment works. Diskettes for 1988 and beyond also include the public contact and phone number; longitude and latitude; state/county, Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) code, and various EPA-assigned waste permitting identification numbers. Diskettes are accompanied by documentation and are available from the GPO or the NTIS.

**Microfiche** The Toxic Release Inventory fiche is comprised of three parts. Part 1 includes the introduction and contains a list of regulated chemicals, a directory of EPA and State TRI contacts, a guide to searching the fiche, and other reference material. Part 2 is an index to: chemical substance names; names of facilities, publicly owned treatment works,

and off-site disposal locations; facility city, county and zip code; and chemicals released into the air, land, or water. Part 3 contains the TRI submissions for facilities in each State and U.S. Territory. Fiche can be obtained for the whole United States or for a specific state. The fiche can be accessed in over 3,000 libraries across the country or it can be ordered from the GPO.

**Magnetic Tape** Each annual Toxic Release Inventory is available on 9-track tapes and includes tape documentation. Tapes can be ordered in ASCII or EBCDIC format in a 1600 or 6250 bpi density. The reporting facilities names and addresses are also available on tape in the same formats and densities with tape documentation. The tape identifies facilities by name, address, city, state, county, zip code, Standard Industrial Classification code, Dun and Bradstreet Number, parent company name and Dun and Bradstreet number, public contact and phone number, and TRI facility identification number. The magnetic tapes are available from the GPO or the NTIS.

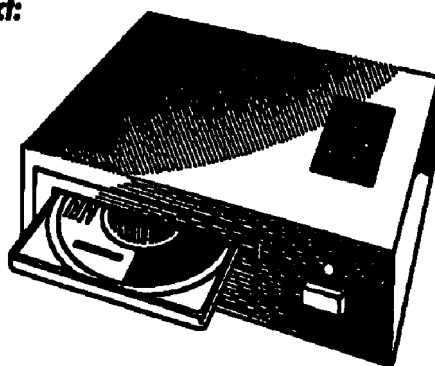
**Reports** Several detailed annual reports on the Toxic Release Inventory are available, providing summaries, analyses and comparison of TRI data by year. The reports summarize data on total releases and transfers of TRI chemicals; geographic distribution of TRI releases and transfers; industrial patterns of releases and transfers; the interstate and intrastate transport of TRI wastes; chemicals with the largest releases and transfers; waste treatment and minimization, and other insightful analyses. The latest report is available from the Government Printing Office (GPO).

*Reports may not be available for all years.*

**To purchase the TRI on CD-ROM, Microfiche, Diskette, Magnetic Tape, Reports, or electronic bulletin board (GPO) contact:**

Government Printing Office (GPO)  
710 North Capitol Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20401  
Phone: (202) 783-3238 (sales)  
(202) 512-1530 (diskettes, tapes)

U.S. Department of Commerce  
National Technical Information Service (NTIS)  
5285 Port Royal Road  
Springfield, Virginia 22161  
Phone: Toll free 1-800-553-NTIS (rush orders only)  
(703) 487-4650 (sales)  
(703) 487-4763 (computer products)



**For On-line Access contact:**

TRI Representative  
National Library of Medicine  
Specialized Information Services  
8600 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda, Maryland 20894  
Phone: (301) 496-6531

# USING THE TOXIC RELEASE INVENTORY



## WHO USES TRI?

The Toxic Release Inventory is a rich source of data for a broad-based audience that includes manufacturers, environmental consulting firms, trade associations, labor groups, health professionals, state and local environmental agencies, Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), and federal agencies. An important and growing user group is concerned citizens who, on their own or through organized groups, use TRI to raise and answer questions about chemical releases in their communities.

### STATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMISSIONS (SERCs)

EPCRA requires each state to set up a SERC to designate local emergency planning districts within the state, and coordinate activities and review plans of the local committees. The SERCs serve as liaison between the state and EPA, and provide the forum for coordinating all Title III information, although another state agency may be designated to collect TRI data. Each SERC works to ensure that its state programs are integrated with the federal law to strengthen enforcement. It provides leadership, coordination, technical assistance, and training — working closely with the LEPCs — using its knowledge to help individuals and organizations meet their responsibilities under the Act.

toxic chemicals in their own neighborhoods. It encourages dialogue between individuals and local companies which can result in a change in current practices, and improve the local environment. For example, a group of Minnesota residents used TRI data to pressure a local firm to reduce the use of a carcinogen by 90 percent! The state later passed tougher regulations

limiting the amounts of chemical releases allowable under state permits. One neighborhood near Houston, Texas worked directly with a local plant to develop an emissions reduction plan, using recent TRI data as the basis for discussions. Citizens often use the TRI data in combination with other information sources to explore health-related risks in their communities.

**Businesses** Manufacturers can use the TRI data as a basis for reducing large stocks of toxic chemicals located in dense population areas or to lower levels of chemical releases. TRI data is also used to cut costs and improve operations.

"Wastes" represent an expense — chemical wastes leftover after manufacturing must be managed, which may include treatment or disposal or transportation away from the facility. Companies are using TRI to increase awareness of environmental business opportunities and, as a result, reduce the use of toxic chemicals. TRI is also used to market a chemical or process that is cleaner, safer, or more cost-effective for the reporting facilities. Law firms, real estate companies, and banks use TRI to identify potential liability issues associated with a particular parcel of land. Most important of all, the publicity that has resulted from the availability of TRI data has caused many companies to voluntarily pledge toxic chemical release reductions.

**Educators** Academic researchers rely on TRI data to conduct important studies of the environment. Several universities use TRI reports to study how chemicals are used and develop alternative technologies for the prevention of toxic releases. The Environmental Studies Program at Dickinson College in Pennsylvania requires its undergraduates to prepare toxic waste audits on communities or facilities, using TRI as a resource. According to the Professor of Environmental Studies, "Our students work in multi-disciplinary research teams to answer real-world problems, and acquire both the infor-

### LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEES (LEPCs)

Appointed by the SERCs, the LEPCs include representatives from state and local government, law enforcement, civil defense, fire fighting, first aid, health, environmental and transportation agencies, hospitals, broadcast and print media, community groups, and businesses that are subject to EPCRA requirements. The LEPCs develop an emergency plan, which is reviewed annually, to prepare for and respond to chemical emergencies. LEPCs also receive emergency release and chemical inventory information from local facilities and make this information available to the public on request. They also have the authority to request information from facilities for their own planning purposes. Each LEPC serves as a focal point for each community for information and discussions about hazardous substances, emergency planning, and health and environmental risks. LEPCs can be effective in taking steps to educate the public about chemical risks and working with businesses to minimize those risks.

mation retrieval and social skills necessary to network with industry, citizens, and regulatory personnel."

**Public Interest Groups** Public interest groups make effective use of the TRI data to educate citizens, prepare revealing company profiles and influence change. Most often, they use TRI to bring public pressure to bear on facilities and public officials. For example, the Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition used TRI to identify companies emitting potentially harmful chemicals and urged them to cut releases. National public interest groups often publish reports based on the TRI data. For example, a study highlighting the nation's toxic polluters and a report naming companies releasing known ozone-depleting chemicals were developed as a result of the availability of the TRI data. The TRI data is also vital for presenting a convincing case to influence legislators. The Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group figured prominently in the passage of the nation's first state toxics-use reduction law, and many other states have followed suit.

**Labor** Concern for worker safety was a key factor in the original passage of the national right-to-know legislation. The right-to-know about chemical hazards in the workplace has been a consistent goal of organized labor since the early 1970s. The Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union teamed up with a Minnesota community and used the TRI data to pressure their company to reduce the use of methylene chloride, a known health hazard to the workers, and search for safer alternatives. Union members and activists pressured the state for tougher regulations that would force the company to cut emissions by 93%. One worker remarked, "Right-to-Know provided the catalyst. Once the community got involved, there was tremendous pressure on the business to reduce the risks!" Publication of toxic release data often generates pressure on companies to improve environmental performance. Unions can capitalize on public awareness to help protect their members.

**State and Local Agencies** TRI data is useful to hospitals, schools, and state and local governments for emergency planning and response at the state and local level. Many emergency manage-

ment agencies, fire departments, and emergency medical services use TRI to identify chemicals in use and map facility locations for more effective, quicker response to emergencies. The TRI data is also used to identify the need for and pass state and local legislation. In 1989, Louisiana used the TRI data as the basis for passing a new Air Toxics law requiring a 50 percent reduction of emissions by 1996. TRI is also used in combination with other data to determine whether companies are complying with environmental legislation already in effect. For example, TRI data on off-site transfers can be used to identify chemicals or wastes being transported from a facility, to verify that the receiving landfill has the proper permits for incoming amount and type of waste.

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** TRI is used by EPA as a baseline for measuring improvements in companies across the nation. Company performance records are tracked over time to monitor efforts, such as the 33/50 program, and to monitor emission reductions called for under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. TRI is used throughout the EPA to measure company compliance with other laws and to target areas where enforcement of other regulations is needed, to gauge the need for additional regulatory efforts to clean up water, air, and solid waste problems, and to develop strategies for assessing pollution prevention programs.

**Health Officials** TRI data can be used to build an information base on hazardous chemicals used, manufactured, or transported in a state or community. Health professionals can use this information to better prepare personnel for emergencies. TRI can help diagnose, treat, or study health effects resulting from chemical exposure in the community or workplace.

**Media** TRI is important to the education of the community about facilities and potential hazards in the local area. Many large newspapers, such as USA Today, the New York Times, and the Wall Street Journal have run stories on the effectiveness of the right-to-know statute, as have scores of local newspapers, trade and labor union publications and periodicals.

**International** TRI enhances the ability of the world to work as one in monitoring the earth's environment. Several nations use the data to assist in their efforts to become more environmentally conscious. Environment Canada uses the TRI data to determine which industries and chemicals needed greater regulation in their country and is preparing a National Pollutant Inventory modelled on TRI. The Russian Federation Embassy used TRI data to evaluate companies interested in opening facilities in their country. Other users of TRI around the world include Great Britain, continental Europe, India, and Japan. This is one of the fastest growing segments of the TRI-user community.

**Federal Agencies** TRI data is used extensively at the federal level for a variety of programs. Congress relies on TRI to prepare environmental legislation, such as the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. Through TRI data, federal lawmakers discovered that the nation's Clean Air Act toxics control program was not adequate. Of the top 25 TRI reported chemicals released to the air, only two were regulated by the Clean Air Act. In 1990, amendments to the Clean Air Act required manufacturers to develop risk management plans, shifting the initial emergency planning burden from the mostly-volunteer LEPC to industry. The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, a federal public health agency whose job it is to prevent or minimize adverse health effects from exposure to hazardous substances, uses TRI data to set goals for improving the nation's health. The Internal Revenue Service uses TRI data to measure the compliance of reporting companies with tax laws pertaining to the use of toxic substances.

# WHAT IS THE TOXIC RELEASE INVENTORY ?

## TOXIC RELEASE INVENTORY

### BACKGROUND

In 1984 a deadly cloud of methyl isocyanate killed thousands of people in Bhopal, India. Shortly thereafter there was a serious chemical release at a sister plant in West Virginia. These incidents underscored demands by industrial workers and communities in several states for information on hazardous materials. Public interest and environmental organizations around the country accelerated demands for information on toxic chemicals being released "beyond the fence line" — outside of the facility. Against this background, the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) of 1986 was enacted.

#### TITLE III

The Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA) of 1986 is also known as Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986. The Act provides for the collection and public release of information about the presence and release of hazardous or toxic chemicals in our nation's communities. The law requires industries to participate in emergency planning and to notify their communities of the existence of, and routine and accidental releases of, hazardous chemicals. The goal is to help citizens, officials, and community leaders to be better informed about toxic and hazardous materials in their communities.

### *The Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA) of 1986*

Hailed as one of the most potent pieces of environmental legislation in 20 years, EPCRA's primary purpose is to inform communities and citizens of chemical hazards in their areas. Sections 311 and 312 of EPCRA require businesses to report the locations and quantities of chemicals stored on-site to state and local governments. This helps communities prepare to respond to chemical spills and similar emergencies. The goal is to reduce risk for communities as a whole.

Through EPCRA, Congress mandated that a Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) be made public. TRI provides citizens with accurate information about potentially hazardous

chemicals and their use so that communities can hold companies accountable and make informed decisions about how toxic chemicals are to be managed.

Section 313 of EPCRA specifically requires manufacturers to report releases of more than 300 designated toxic chemicals to the environment. The reports are submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state governments. EPA compiles this data in an on-line, publicly accessible national computerized Toxic Release Inventory (TRI). Many states also make TRI available. This vast new source of data is indeed a powerful force for environmental improvement.

Facilities are required to report on releases of toxic chemicals into the air, water, and land. In addition, they need to report on off-site transfers —

a transfer of wastes for treatment or disposal at a separate facility. Facilities are also required to report on pollution prevention activities and chemical recycling. Reports must be submitted on or before July 1 each year and must cover activities that occurred at the facility during the previous year.

### *A facility is required to report if it...*

- ☐ Has ten or more full-time employees; and
- ☐ Manufactures or processes over 25,000 pounds of the approximately 300 designated chemicals or 20 chemical categories specified in the law, or uses more than 10,000 pounds of any designated chemical or category; and
- ☐ Conducts selected manufacturing operations in the industry groups specified in the U.S. Government Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Codes 20 through 39.

Each year, over 80,000 reports — representing billions of pounds of chemical releases — are submitted to EPA by more than 20,000 manufacturing facilities.

TRI is unique in that it marks the first time that the public has direct access to detailed information about releases of toxic chemicals in their communities. TRI offers an opportunity for citizens to increase their knowledge of chemical usage in their area and to use this knowledge to affect community environmental policy and change.

### TRI INFORMATION

#### *The TRI database includes information on...*

- ☐ What chemicals were released into the local environment during the preceding year.
- ☐ How much of each chemical went into the air, water, and land in a particular year.
- ☐ How much of the chemicals were transported away from the reporting facility for disposal, treatment, recycling, or energy recovery.
- ☐ How chemical wastes were treated at the reporting facility.
- ☐ The efficiency of waste treatment.
- ☐ Pollution prevention and chemical recycling activities.

#### Standard Industrial Codes

SIC	Industry Group
20	Food
21	Tobacco
22	Textiles
23	Apparel
24	Lumber and Wood
25	Furniture
26	Paper
27	Printing and Publishing
28	Chemicals
29	Petroleum and Coal
30	Rubber and Plastics
31	Leather
32	Stone, Clay, and Glass
33	Primary Metals
34	Fabricated Metals
35	Machinery (excluding electrical)
36	Electrical and Electronic Equipment
37	Transportation Equipment
38	Instruments
39	Miscellaneous Manufacturing

#### **EPA's 33/50 Program**

TRI is a strong motivator for the prevention of pollution. More specifically, it has been the foundation for the implementation of the 33/50 Program, a voluntary pollution prevention initiative so named because it establishes national emissions reduction goals for high priority chemical wastes — 33 percent reduction by 1992 and 50 percent by 1995. It is a collaborative partnership between government, industry, and the public. This program is intended to fulfill the promise of TRI with real, voluntary reductions in toxic pollution.

TRI provides the first comprehensive overview of toxic chemical pollution from manufacturing facilities in the United States. However, the law does not cover toxic chemicals that reach the environment from non-industrial sources, such as dry cleaners or auto service stations. Reported releases are annual estimates. The amounts reported could have been released evenly over the course of the year or, possibly, in a single large burst. Though the TRI data base is a starting point for assessing possible health effects resulting from industrial chemical use, the user cannot ascertain levels of exposure or risk without combining TRI information with information from other sources. Even though the TRI reporting base has its limitations, it provides communities with a spring board from which citizens can seek further vital information about toxic chemicals in their area.

#### ***A Public "Report Card"***

TRI is a public "report card" for the industrial community, creating a powerful motivation for waste reduction. This annual accounting of the nation's management of industrial toxic chemical wastes is a valuable source of information for concerned individuals and communities. Citizens can use TRI to evaluate local facilities through comparisons...determine how toxic chemicals are used...and, with other information, evaluate potential health risks for their community. Organizations can use TRI information as a starting point for constructive dialogue with manufacturing businesses in the area.

## **POLLUTION PREVENTION AND TRI**

Following implementation of the Pollution Prevention Act (PPA) of 1990, TRI reporting has become even more comprehensive. Historically, government agencies and waste generators have tried to resolve environmental problems using "end-of-pipe" waste management practices, that is, treating or disposing of waste after it has been created. Pollution prevention strategies focus instead on avoiding creation of wastes by redesigning products, changing processes, substituting raw materials for less toxic substances and other techniques.

With passage of the PPA, Congress adopted as national policy an environmental hierarchy that establishes pollution prevention as the first choice among waste management practices. For waste that cannot be avoided at the source, recycling is considered the next best option. A waste generator should turn to treatment or disposal only after source reduction and recycling have been considered.

Reporting requirements for TRI changed in 1991 as a result of the PPA. Prior to 1991, facilities were required to report toxic substances released into the environment and transferred offsite for treatment or disposal. Beginning in 1991, facilities were also required to indicate amounts of chemicals that are recycled, used for energy recovery, and treated on-site. (Energy recovery means burning the chemical so that resulting heat energy contributes to subsequent manufacturing operations.) These amounts must be reported for the past year and the current year, as well as projected amounts for the next two years. Furthermore, facilities must indicate source reduction activities that have been implemented.

These changes to TRI will highlight the importance of pollution prevention and encourage reporting facilities to develop and implement strategies for reducing waste. This new information will also help the public gauge industry's commitment to improving the nation's environment. By working together, businesses and neighboring communities can build on emerging pollution prevention practices for everyone's benefit.

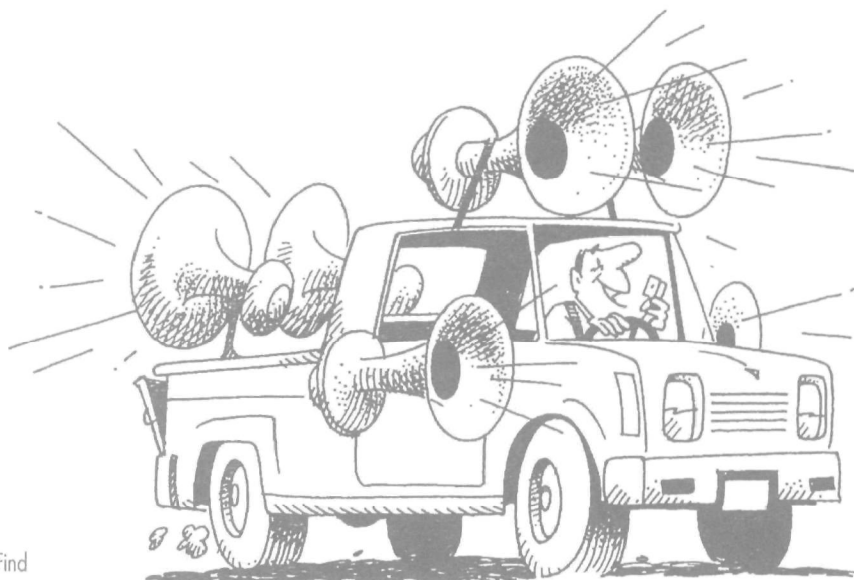
# PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

**TOXIC  
RELEASE  
INVENTORY**

*It's easy to help spread the word about the public availability of the Toxic Release Inventory through your local media. Simply prepare a list of local radio stations, TV stations, and cable companies. Then distribute the below announcements to this list on your letterhead, including a contact name and phone number at the top of the page and your company, organization, or library name and a phone number inserted at the bottom, as indicated*

## 15 SECONDS

Are there toxic chemicals in your community? Find out by using the Toxic Release Inventory – TRI – a database of information available to the public.



## 20 SECONDS

Are toxic chemicals being released into your air, land, or water? You can find out through the Toxic Release Inventory – TRI – a database of toxic chemical releases available from state environmental agencies, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and public libraries across the nation.

## 30 SECONDS

Are toxic chemicals being released into your air, land, or water? You have the right to know! Get involved in reducing the risk to your health or your local environment. Start by using the Toxic Release Inventory – TRI – You can access this national database of information on toxic chemical releases through public libraries, state environmental agencies, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and on-line through the National Library of Medicine's TOXNET System.

**Tag line for each public service announcement:**

**This is a public service message  
from [insert your name here].**

**Call [insert your number here] for more information.**



# PRESS RELEASE

## General Version

**TOXIC  
RELEASE  
INVENTORY**

*EPA is making a concerted effort to let the public know about the availability of TRI and how it can be used to promote a safer environment. The sample press release below provides background information about TRI. EPA would like for you to help promote this unique piece of environmental information by publishing information about TRI in your news bulletins, newsletters, magazines, etcetera. The sample press release below can be tailored to your specific organization's needs and is provided as guidance.*

### Citizens Embrace New Tool To Improve The Environment

Washington, D.C. .... Information on chemical releases into the environment submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency by manufacturers is being used across the nation by private citizens, citizen groups, governments, businesses and legislators to improve the quality of the environment.

According to **[YOUR NAME AND TITLE]**, the Toxic Release Inventory is being used by diverse groups across the country to positively influence the views of companies, legislators and the public regarding the overall condition of our nation's environment. The Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) was established under the provisions of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) of 1986. Because the public has unprecedented access to detailed information about toxic chemicals in their communities, they essentially have a report card on how industry and its practices affect the environment.

The TRI is a collection of information on releases of toxic chemicals into the air, land, and water across the nation. By law, certain businesses are required to report releases of toxic chemicals into the air, land and water. These businesses are also required to report to EPA and the state in which they reside, information on transfers of toxic wastes for transfer to off-site locations along with pollution prevention activities and chemical recycling activities.

The philosophy behind the TRI is that the public has a right to know what is happening with chemicals in their neighborhoods and local communities across the nation. The TRI is available to the public and is an important resource for discovering potential high-risk chemicals in localities. The TRI enables Americans at a grassroots level to take responsibility for the local environment and safeguard their community's quality of life. Equipped with a greater knowledge of chemical usage in their communities, citizens can use this information to affect environmental policy and manufacturing practices.

#### **[SUBSTITUTE OR ADD INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION HERE.]**

The EPA has provided TRI to more than 4,000 libraries across the nation. It is also available for sale in a variety of formats from Government Printing Office (202-783-3238) and the National Technical Information Service (703-487-4650), and on-line through the National Library of Medicine's TOXNET System (301-496-6531). To find out the location of the library nearest you, contact your EPA regional office or call the EPCRA Hotline, sponsored by EPA, toll-free at 1-800-535-0202. For a free TRI Information Kit, call the EPCRA Hotline or write to: TRI User Support (TS-793), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460.



# PRESS RELEASE

## Library Version



**TOXIC  
RELEASE  
INVENTORY**

EPA recognizes the important role that libraries play in providing citizens access to public information. Libraries are the primary community information resource visited by people of all ages, and all cultural and socio-economic groups. With this in mind, EPA chose libraries to be the primary access point for obtaining TRI at the local level and provided copies of TRI to nearly 4,000 libraries across the country. Citizens nationwide have easy access to information about the presence of chemicals in their communities but many do not know that this information is available to them.

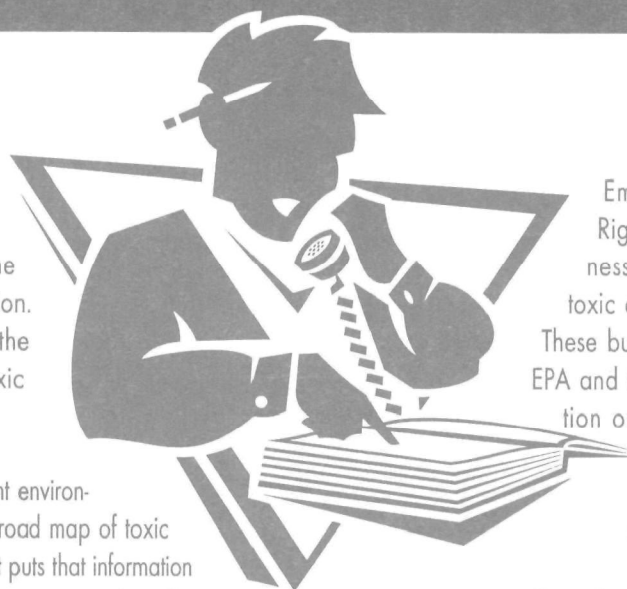
EPA would like for you to use the sample press releases below to inform community residents that TRI is in your collection. The press release can be tailored to meet the individual needs of the library. It is appropriate for publication in newsletters, newspapers, bulletins, magazines, and other forms of written communication.

### Libraries Play Important Role In Improving Environment

**[NAME]**, Director of the \_\_\_\_\_ Library is pleased to announce the addition of the EPA Toxic Release Inventory to its collection. The TRI is being used by citizens across the country as a resource for looking at toxic chemical releases in their communities.

"The Inventory is among our most potent environmental weapons. The Inventory is really a road map of toxic chemicals, right down to the local level, and it puts that information directly at the fingertips of citizens. We all can act to reduce those risks, and measure the results of our efforts," according to Administrator Carol Browner, head of the EPA. By promoting citizen access to the Toxic Release Inventory, libraries can meet the needs of citizens who exercise their right to know about toxic chemicals being released in their community. Using this important information, individuals can begin working with local groups, businesses, and governments to improve cooperation and work towards safeguarding their local environment.

The TRI is a collection of information on releases of toxic chemicals into the air, land, and water across the nation. Under the



Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), certain businesses are required to report releases of toxic chemicals into the air, land and water. These businesses are also required to report to EPA and the state in which they reside, information on transfers of toxic wastes to off-site locations along with any pollution prevention activities and chemical recycling activities.

Our reference librarian will be happy to assist you learn more about TRI or to find out the location of the library nearest you which has TRI in its collection. Please call \_\_\_\_\_ for assistance. You may also contact your EPA regional office or call the EPCRA Hotline sponsored by the EPA toll-free at 1-800-535-0202. For a free TRI Information Kit, call the EPCRA Hotline or write to: TRI User Support (TS-793), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street SW., Washington, D.C. 20460, Attn: TRI Information Kit.

## STATE TRI CONTACTS

TRI reports must be filed with the state where the facility is located, as well as with the U.S. EPA. Each state has designated an agency to receive TRI reports and assist the public in obtaining and using TRI data. Many states have developed computerized data bases and publish reports highlighting TRI data for their area.

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American Samoa Government  
Pago Pago, AS 96799  
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Fax (602) 231-6313

### **John Ward**

(Send Reports and Related Mail to:)

**Attn: SARA Division**

**Arkansas Department of Labor**

10421 West Markham  
Little Rock, AR 72205  
(Other Correspondence and Spill Reports to:)  
Arkansas Department of Pollution Control  
and Ecology  
8001 National Drive  
Little Rock, AR 72209  
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### **Pamela Thuber**

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Frank Reeves Center for Municipal Affairs  
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Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2263  
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Mississippi Emergency Management Agency**

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**Pennsylvania Emergency**  
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**Environmental Quality Board**  
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