



Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) Assistance/Enforcement Program

U.S. EPA | ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AT EPA NEW ENGLAND

EPA NEW ENGLAND'S ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRAM

works to protect all people, regardless of race, color, national origin or income, from environmental harms and risks, and to involve all citizens in making decisions that affect their environment. The program is designed to achieve environmental and public health improvements for communities disproportionately burdened by the impacts of pollution.



INTRO:

EPA New England's EPCRA Team, in partnership with local community officials, helps to assist and empower "the community" in preparing and implementing the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act and the Pollution Prevention Act. EPCRA is a powerful tool for protecting and alerting communities, and providing citizens access to information on chemicals within their community. The region's EPCRA team works with a variety of private and public entities to plan, prepare, and prevent chemical accidents and releases. The team assists industries in their annual chemical inventory reporting requirements and facilities in their toxic chemical release and waste management reporting. They also assist state and local agencies in developing and implementing preparedness and emergency response plans, and providing individuals with "right-to-know" information about toxic and hazardous chemicals in their communities.

OVERVIEW:

The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986 establishes requirements for federal, state and local governments, Indian Tribes, and industry regarding emergency planning and "Community Right-to-Know" reporting on hazardous and toxic chemicals. The Community Right-to-Know provisions help increase the public's knowledge and access to information to chemical information found at individual facilities, their uses, and releases into the environment. Information from these provisions will help states and communities develop a broad perspective of chemical hazards and toxics for the entire community, aiding in the protection of public health and the environment.

Among the key provisions of EPCRA, Sections 311 and 312 require an annual reporting of chemical inventory data (known as Tier II reports) by facilities to the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), and the local fire department for any hazardous chemicals stored or used in the work place. EPCRA Section 313 (known as the Toxics Release Inventory) requires certain facilities to submit an annual Form R report for specified chemicals that are released into the environment or managed as waste. States and communities, working with facilities, can

use this information to improve chemical safety, prevent pollution, and protect human health and the environment. Tier II data is available to the public through local emergency planning committees (LEPC) or the local fire department; and TRI data can be accessed through EPA's TRI website at www.epa.gov/tri/. EPA New England's EPCRA Program also includes Clean Air Act 112r which regulates chemical accident prevention. A comprehensive picture of federal and state EPCRA activity can be found on EPA's Emergency Management Programs website at www.epa.gov/emergencies/.

Although EPCRA is a federal requirement, its output-development of comprehensive emergency plans and availability of chemical inventory and release data is largely implemented at the state and local level, notably those provisions dealing with emergency planning and hazardous chemical reporting. The State Emergency Response Commission contacts can be found at www.epa.gov/osweroe1/content/epcra/serc_contacts.htm. For additional information, please access the key contacts provided, as well as: Len Wallace, *EPA New England Senior EPCRA Enforcement*, (617) 918-1835, and Jim Gaffey, *EPA New England Preparedness Exercises*, (617) 918-1753, gaffey.jim@epa.gov.

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