

## Newsroom

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## EPA's 2012 Toxics Release Inventory Shows Air Pollutants Continue to Decline

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**WASHINGTON** - Total releases of toxic chemicals decreased 12 percent from 2011-2012, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) annual Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) report released today. The decrease includes an eight percent decline in total toxic air releases, primarily due to reductions in hazardous air pollutant (HAP) emissions.


"People deserve to know what toxic chemicals are being used and released in their backyards, and what companies are doing to prevent pollution," said EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. "By making that information easily accessible through online tools, maps, and reports, TRI is helping protect our health and the environment."

The 2012 data show that 3.63 billion pounds of toxic chemicals were either disposed or otherwise released into the environment through air, water, and land. There was also a decline in releases of HAPs such as hydrochloric acid and mercury, which continues a long-term trend. Between 2011 and 2012, toxic releases into surface water decreased three percent and toxic releases to land decreased 16 percent.


This is the first year that TRI has collected data on hydrogen sulfide. While it was added to the TRI list of reportable toxic chemicals in a 1993 rulemaking, EPA issued an Administrative Stay in 1994 that deferred reporting while the agency completed further evaluation of the chemical. EPA lifted the stay in 2011. In 2012, 25.8 million pounds of hydrogen sulfide were reported to TRI, mainly in the form of releases to air from paper, petroleum, and chemical manufacturing facilities.

Another new addition to TRI reporting is a requirement for each facility located in Indian country to submit TRI reports to EPA and the appropriate tribe, and not the state where the facility is geographically located. EPA finalized this requirement in a 2012 rule aimed at increasing tribal participation in the TRI Program.

This year's TRI national analysis report includes new analyses and interactive maps for each U.S. metropolitan and

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micropolitan area, new information about industry efforts to reduce pollution through green chemistry and other pollution prevention practices, and a new feature about chemical use in consumer products.

The annual TRI report provides citizens with critical information about their communities. The TRI Program collects data on certain toxic chemical releases to the air, water, and land, as well as information on waste management and pollution prevention activities by facilities across the country.

The data are submitted annually to EPA, states, and tribes by facilities in industry sectors such as manufacturing, metal mining, electric utilities, and commercial hazardous waste. Many of the releases from facilities that are subject to TRI reporting are regulated under other EPA program requirements designed to limit harm to human health and the environment.

Also available is the expanded TRI Pollution Prevention (P2) Search Tool, which now allows users to graphically compare facilities within the same industry using a variety of environmental metrics.

Under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), facilities must report their toxic chemical releases to EPA by July 1 of each year. The Pollution Prevention Act of 1990 also requires facilities to submit information on waste management activities related to TRI chemicals.

More information on the 2012 TRI analysis, including metropolitan and micropolitan areas is available at [www.epa.gov/tri/nationalanalysis](http://www.epa.gov/tri/nationalanalysis).

More information on facility efforts to reduce toxic chemical releases, including the new P2 facility comparison report, is available at [www.epa.gov/tri/p2](http://www.epa.gov/tri/p2).

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