

**What Has Washington State Learned About How to Reduce Toxic Releases?
Thursday, 9:15-9:45 a.m.
Grand Ballroom**

John Ridgway, Presenter

This presentation will look at the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) from a state government perspective. The TRI will be discussed relative to three closely linked dynamics: 1) Environmental Justice, 2) Effective use the TRI, and 3) Reducing Toxic Releases. The presentation will address changing environmental conditions in our communities. Recommendations will include pro-active, positive ways a state can support those changes through outreach, networking, and the use of the TRI. The presentation will start with examples and lessons learned from Washington State's on-going efforts to reduce toxic threats.

The TRI was one of the first tools to help map and better understand environmental conditions in Washington's communities. Continuing efforts include: testing for toxics in common products; finding safer alternatives; providing technical assistance to businesses; collaboration with local governments; using and promoting Green Chemistry; promoting TSCA reform; support to state legislation; inter-state collaboration; environmental justice assessments; and enforcing the banned sale of products made with toxics. Washington State is a national leader at legislating and working to reduce toxic releases. Challenges and options along the toxics-use continuum, from chemical design to waste disposal, offer opportunities for the reduction of toxic releases.

This multi-media presentation will connect all of these perspectives together with an entertaining twist. At the Washington State Department of Ecology, primarily within its Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction program as a mid-level manager, John has actively led Washington State's TRI and Community Right-to-Know efforts for most of the past 30 years. His work has been augmented with 20 concurrent years of environmental justice engagement with his agency, state legislature, neighboring states, local communities, tribes, businesses, the U.S. EPA, and China's Ministry of Environmental Protection. John has also been an active member of the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council for multiple terms.

John has been with the Washington State Department of Ecology for close to 30 years. Much of that time has been focused on community right-to-know interests at the local, state, tribal, and federal levels. He was directly involved with the first years of The Toxic Release Inventory's (TRI) implementation and the challenges of addressing the many questions about the TRI - coming from the public, the news media, government, academia, and industry. John works with TRI-specific laws in Washington that trigger additional pollution prevention requirements upon TRI reporters.

Over the same period, John has been part of his agency's hazardous waste (RCRA) management addressing permitting, compliance / enforcement, technical assistance, fee collection, pollution prevention, toxic's reduction, and collaboration with EPA. John currently serves on EPA's e-Manifest federal Advisory Board representing state government. Related work has included nuclear waste management, local and state-wide emergency planning, information technology (IT) / data management, and international collaboration, including hazardous waste management and tracking in the People's Republic of China.

John has also been a two-term member, including co-chair, of the EPA's National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC), representing state and local government. John has a B.S. degree in energy studies from The Evergreen State College.