EMPOWERING PEOPLE WITH INFORMATION

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OMB Watch
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Our Advocacy
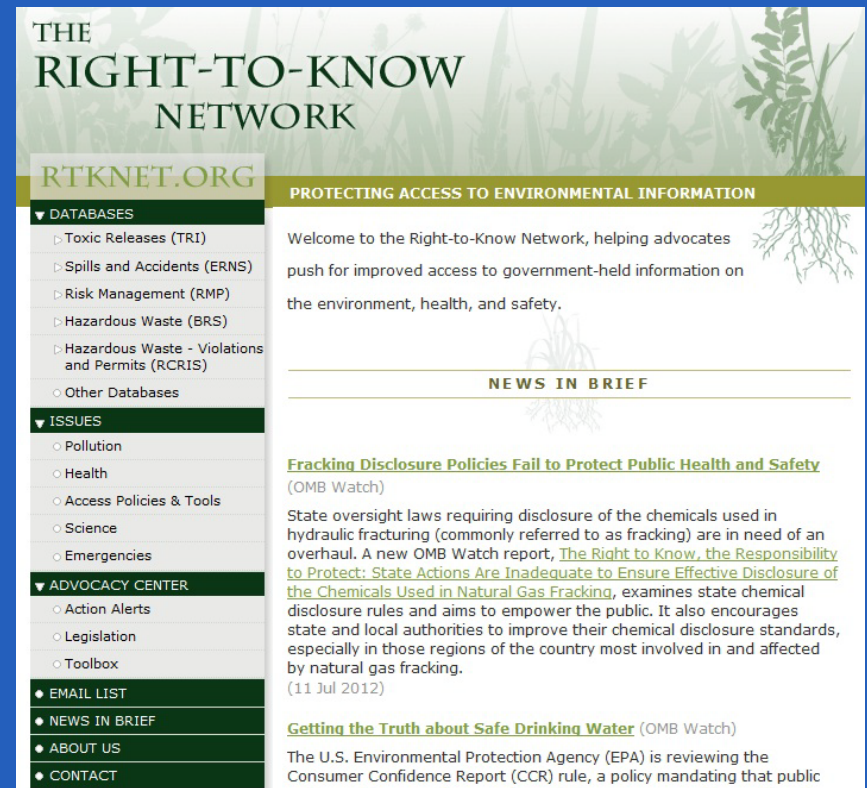
- Environmental Right-to-Know Focus

- Putting Government Information Online
  - Right-to-Know Network
  - Campaigns (*Toxics Release Inventory & Risk Management Plans*)

- Strengthening Policy
  - Environmental Information Initiative

Right-to-Know Network: WWW.RTK.NET

- Established in 1989 to empower citizen involvement in community & government decision-making

- A free online service that provides access to five environmental databases.

Toxics Release Inventory (TRI)

- TRI contains information on toxic chemical releases reported annually to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- TRI is similar to pollution registries in other countries.

What are the Impacts of TRI?

- Flagship example of the impact of public transparency.

- Many companies have reduced their chemical use and release, often by 30-50 percent or more.

- Chemical giant Monsanto reports that it reduced its toxic air emissions by over 90% between 1988 and 1992.

Accessing the Data

1. Go to www.rtknet.org

2. Select Toxics Release Inventory, under the "Databases" option.

3. Search by location, facility, or industry

Interpreting the Data

TRI Facilities for Washington, DC (2010)

Summary [?]

Reporting Year: 2010
Total pounds of releases: **25,065**
Total pounds of waste: **109,401**
Total number of facilities: **8**
Total number of TRI submissions: **20**
Total number of TRI Form A submissions: **2**
RSEI data were only calculated for 1988-2007, and can't be provided in this search for 2010.

Get list of facilities
Get list of submissions

Top 5 parent companies for pounds of releases [?]

US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE	21,844
POTOMAC POWER RESOURCES LLC	2,623
HOLCIM (US) INC	500
US DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY	98
VULCAN MATERIALS CO	0

Expand summary to all parent companies

Top 5 chemicals for pounds of releases

Manganese compounds	11,163
Copper compounds	9,761
Naphthalene	1,618
Chlorine	1,018
Polycyclic aromatic compounds	962

Expand summary to all chemicals

Top 5 general industries for pounds of releases [?]

Misc. non-TRI industry, or no industry code	21,844
Electric Utilities	2,623
Stone/Clay/Glass	500
Printing and Publishing	98

EPA's TRI Explorer

...herwise Released (in pounds), for All industries, for All chemicals, District of Columbia , 2011

Row #	Chemical	Total On–site Disposal or Other Releases	Total Off–site Disposal or Other Releases	Total On– and Off–site Disposal or Other Releases
1	2,2–DICHLORO–1,1,1–TRIFLUOROETHANE	.	.	.
2	AMMONIA	182	0	182
3	BENZO(G,H,I)PERYLENE	0	0	0
4	CHLORINE	953	0	953
5	COPPER COMPOUNDS	7,414	0	7,414
6	DIOXIN AND DIOXIN–LIKE COMPOUNDS	**	**	**
7	LEAD	207	967	1,174
8	MANGANESE COMPOUNDS	20,338	0	20,338
9	NAPHTHALENE	14	1	15
10	NICKEL COMPOUNDS	4	201	205
11	NITRATE COMPOUNDS	0	0	0
12	POLYCYCLIC AROMATIC COMPOUNDS	0	1	1
	Total	29,112	1,171	30,283

How do groups put the data to work?

- Public education
  - Analysis of data and report publishing
  - Outreach to communities
  - Comparisons of industries and facilities
  - Public health monitoring

- Push for pollution reduction/prevention
  - Public Policy
  - Partnerships
  - Courts

Using TRI Data

- Publicize bad actors
  - Top ten toxic companies
  - Analyze and compare facilities

- Identify trends
  - Pollution trends (e.g., mercury and power plants)
  - Improvements/regressions
    - Geographic; by industry; by chemical, etc.
  - Link TRI data to health and economic trends

Risk Management Plans (RMP)

- Over 400 chemical plants pose a significant danger to communities

- Purpose is to prevent accidental releases of harmful chemicals and reduce the severity of releases that do occur.

- RMPs include:
  - Worse case chemical release scenarios (Off-site consequence analysis (OCA) information)

  - Non-OCA information:
    - 5-year accident history;
    - Chemical prevention; and
    - Emergency response programs at facilities.

- Under law, RMPs must be available to the public.

Accessing Risk Management Plans (RMP)

Interpreting the RMP Data

RMP Facilities for Chicago, IL

Summary ?

Total number of facilities: **43**
Number of deregistered facilities: **17**
Number of processes that could reach off-site: **47**
Total pounds of toxic chemicals in processes: **8,509,620**
Total pounds of flammable chemicals in processes: **211,000**
Number of 5-year accidents: **6**
Number of deaths from 5-year accidents: **0**
Number of injuries from 5-year accidents: **288**
Amount of property damage from 5-year accidents: **$592,000**

Get list of facilities

Top 10 chemicals for number of facilities ?

Ammonia (anhydrous)	27
Sulfur dioxide (anhydrous)	3
Chlorine	3
Dimethylamine [Methanamine, N-methyl-]	2
Toluene diisocyanate (unspecified isomer) [Benzene, 1,3-diisocyanatomethyl-]	2
Hydrogen fluoride/Hydrofluoric acid (conc 50% or greater) [Hydrofluoric acid]	2
Ammonia (conc 20% or greater)	2
Formaldehyde (solution)	2
Chloroform [Methane, trichloro-]	2
Pentane	1

Expand summary to all chemicals

Top 5 toxic chemicals for pounds in processes ?

Sulfur dioxide (anhydrous)	2,158,000
Chlorine	1,430,000
Oleum (Fuming Sulfuric acid) [Sulfuric acid, mixture with sulfur trioxide]	966,000
Ammonia (anhydrous)	952,918
Epichlorohydrin [Oxirane, (chloromethyl)-]	340,000

Risk Management Plans (RMP)

- EPA removed the RMP database from its website after Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

- In 2003, we submitted a Freedom of Information request, which was denied.

- In 2005, we filed a complaint in court.

- After 30 days: EPA provided us with the data without any further explanation.

Risk Management Plans (RMP)
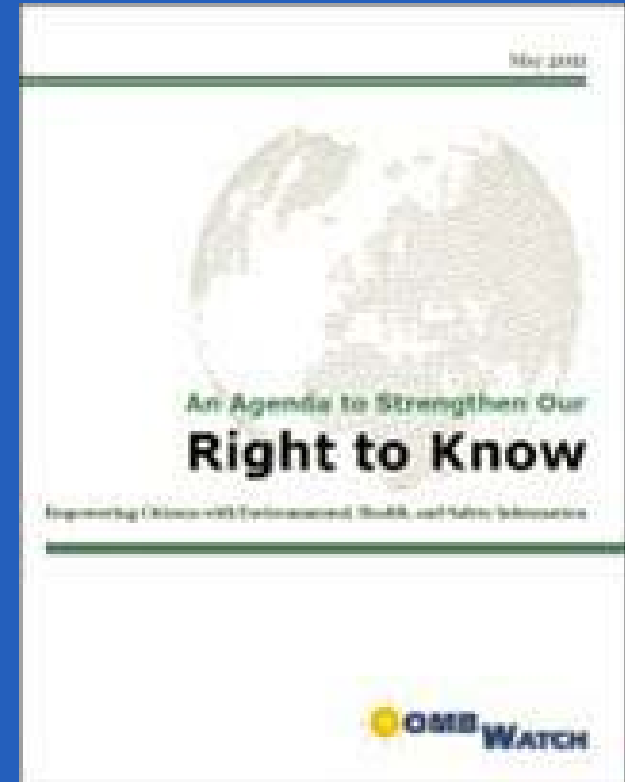
- In 2007, EPA changed its rule to remove the off-site consequence analysis from the RMP's executive summary.

- Current Status of the RMPs:

  - After 7 years since the rule change, EPA still has not renewed online access to this data.

  - RTKNet still remains the only online public access to RMP data.

Environmental Information Initiative

- Collaborated with over 100 groups & individuals, including those working with low-income & minority communities

- Developed over 100 policy recommendations to empower people to protect themselves

- Submitted report to the White House and several federal agencies -
  - Environmental Protection Agency
  - Health & Human Services
  - Department of Interior

Environmental Information Initiative (cont.)

- Key Priorities:

  - Government agencies should always consider the environmental & health impacts of development projects on low-income and minority communities.

  - Government agencies should present health & safety information from chemicals in a simple, easy-to-understand format.

  - Government has a responsibility to reach out proactively to the public.

Thank you

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