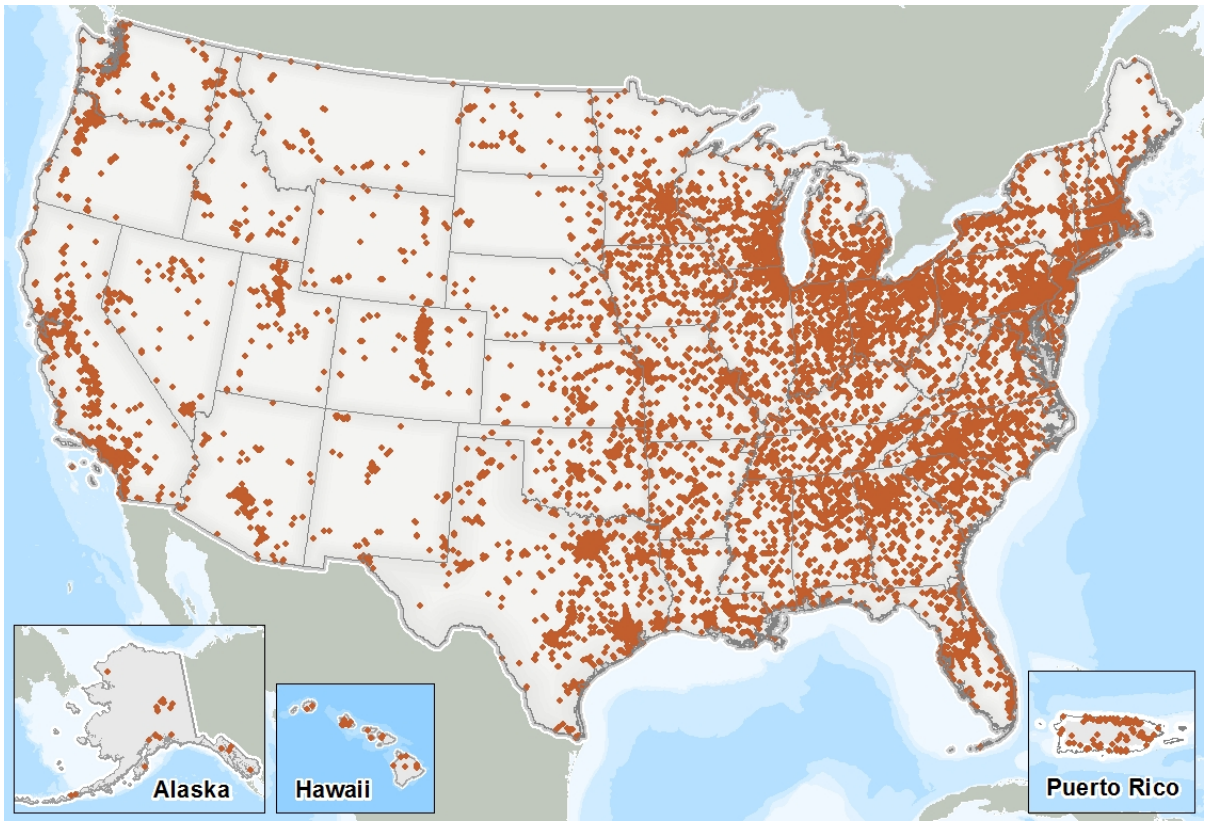
Introduction: What is the TRI National Analysis?

Tens of thousands of chemicals are used by industries and businesses in the United States to make the products on which our society depends, such as pharmaceuticals, clothing, and automobiles. Many of the chemicals needed to create these products are toxic, and while the majority of toxic chemicals are managed so that they are not released into the environment, some releases of toxic chemicals are inevitable.

It is your right to know what toxic chemicals are being used in your community, how they are being disposed of or otherwise managed, and whether their releases to the environment are increasing or decreasing over time. The Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) is an EPA program that tracks the management of certain toxic chemicals that may pose a threat to human health and the environment. This information is submitted by thousands of U.S. facilities on over 650 chemicals and chemical categories under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) and the Pollution Prevention Act (PPA).

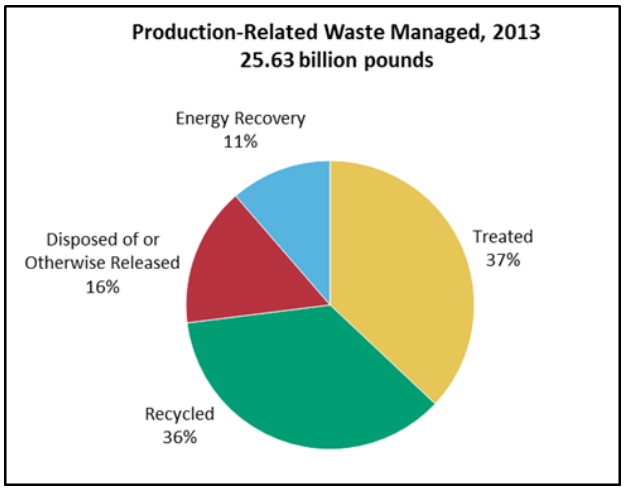
Geographic Distribution of TRI-Reporting Facilities

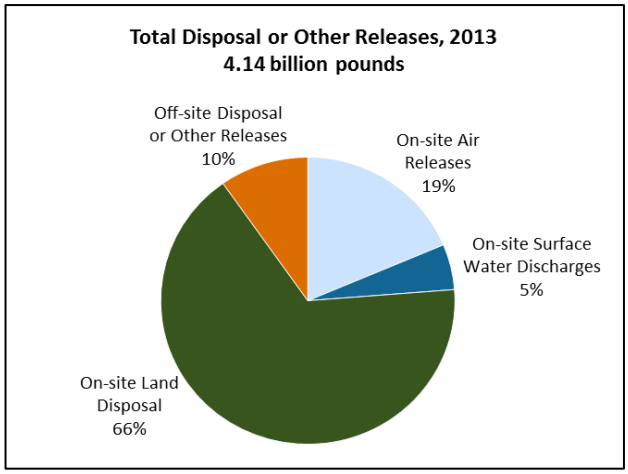


This map shows the locations of all facilities that reported to TRI for 2013. Facilities that report to TRI are typically large and are from industry sectors involved in manufacturing, metal mining, electric power generation, and hazardous waste treatment. Federal facilities are also required to report to TRI by Executive Order 12856.

Users of TRI data should be aware that TRI captures a significant portion of toxic chemicals in wastes that are managed by industrial facilities, but it does not cover all toxic chemicals or all industry sectors of the U.S. economy. Furthermore, the quantities of chemicals reported to TRI are self-reported by facilities using readily-available data. Each year, EPA conducts an extensive data quality analysis before publishing the National Analysis. During the data quality review, potential errors are identified and investigated to help provide the most accurate and useful information possible. This effort makes it possible for TRI data presented in the National Analysis to be used along with other information as a starting point in understanding how the environment and communities may be affected by toxic chemicals.

The TRI National Analysis is developed on an annual basis, and the 2013 TRI National Analysis is EPA's interpretation of TRI data reported for 2013 by July 1, 2014. It provides a snapshot of the data at one point in time. Any reports submitted to EPA after the July 1st, 2014 reporting deadline may not be processed in time to be included in the National Analysis. The most recent data available are accessible from the TRI Data and Tools webpage.





Quick Facts for 2013

Number of TRI Facilities: 21,598

Production-Related Waste Managed:

25.63 billion lb

- Recycled: 9.23 billion lb
- Energy Recovery: 2.91 billion lb
- Treated: 9.49 billion lb
- Disposed of or Otherwise Released: 4.00 billion lb

Total Disposal or Other Releases:

4.14 billion lb

- **On-site: 3.74 billion lb**
  - Air: 0.77 billion lb
  - Water: 0.21 billion lb
  - Land: 2.75 billion lb
- **Off-site: 0.41 billion lb**

For 2013, 21,598 facilities reported to TRI. These facilities reported managing 25.63 billion pounds of toxic chemicals in production-related wastes. This is the quantity of toxic chemicals in waste that is recycled, burned for energy recovery, treated, and disposed of or otherwise released. In other words, it encompasses all toxic chemicals in waste generated from facilities' processes and operations. Of this total, 21.62 billion pounds were recycled, burned for energy recovery, or treated, and 4.00 billion pounds were disposed of or otherwise released to the environment, as shown in the Production-Related Waste Managed pie chart.

TRI facilities also reported total on- and off-site disposal or other releases of 4.14 billion pounds of toxic chemicals. As shown in the Disposal or Other Releases pie chart, most were disposed of or released on-site to land (including landfills, other land disposal and underground injection).

Note that the two metrics related to disposal or other releases shown in the Quick Facts box are similar (4.00 and 4.14 billion pounds), but total disposal or other releases is slightly higher. The reason total disposal or other releases is higher is that it includes waste from catastrophic, remedial, and non-production related events, which is not included in the production-related waste quantities. Another reason the two metrics are different is because total disposal or other releases counts only the quantity of toxic chemicals in waste at its final disposition, while production-related waste managed counts the toxic chemical waste as many times as it is managed during the year. For example, if a TRI facility transfers a waste off-site to another TRI facility that disposes of it to land, the waste would be counted twice (once for each facility that manages it) under production-related waste managed, but only once under total disposal or other releases.

Additional information is presented in the following chapters of the TRI National Analysis:

- **Waste Management and Pollution Prevention** presents trends in toxic chemicals managed and the types of pollution prevention activities that facilities have implemented.
- **Releases of Chemicals** presents trends in releases of toxic chemicals, including a focus on selected chemicals of concern.
- **Industry Sectors** highlights toxic chemical waste trends for four industry sectors.
- **Where You Live** presents analyses of TRI chemicals by state, city, county, ZIP code, metropolitan area or micropolitan area, and by Large Aquatic Ecosystems (LAEs) such as the Chesapeake Bay, as well as information about facilities in Indian Country.
- **Beyond TRI** combines TRI data with other EPA data, such as greenhouse gas emissions, to provide a more complete picture of national trends in chemical use, management and releases.

To conduct your own analysis of TRI data, use EPA's TRI data access and analysis tools available to the public from the TRI Data and Tools webpage.