



At a Glance

Why We Did This Project

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Inspector General (OIG), conducted this audit to determine (1) how the EPA is ensuring that companies are compliant with Chemical Data Reporting (CDR) Rule requirements under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) and (2) whether the EPA is using CDR data to prioritize chemicals for the purpose of identifying their potential risks to human health and the environment.

Under the CDR Rule, the EPA collects information about the types, quantities and uses of chemical substances produced domestically and imported into the United States. The EPA uses this information, which manufacturers and importers are required to submit every 4 years, to screen and prioritize chemicals for the purpose of identifying potential human health risks and environmental effects, per the methodology outlined in the agency's *TSCA Work Plan*.

This report addresses the following:

- *Ensuring the safety of chemicals.*
- *Compliance with the law.*

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EPA's Chemical Data Reporting Rule Largely Implemented as Intended, but Opportunities for Improvement Exist

What We Found

As required by the TSCA, the EPA is using CDR data to help assess the risks of chemicals in U.S. commerce. We determined that the EPA is implementing the risk evaluation process as outlined in its *TSCA Work Plan* to assess chemicals for human health and environmental risks.

Implementing policies for data quality checks will help tailor the information reported by manufacturers and importers to meet the EPA's needs and improve its usefulness.

In addition, the EPA uses tools such as on-site inspections to monitor companies' compliance with the CDR Rule, and the agency takes enforcement action when violations are identified. However, we noted that while the EPA conducts data quality checks of the chemical information submitted by companies every 4 years, the agency lacks documented policies and procedures that specify how to select and conduct these data quality checks. Policies and procedures would help the EPA implement future data quality checks that meet its information needs, as well as help prevent the possible loss of institutional knowledge during periods of staff turnover or absence.

We also noted that public stakeholders and EPA employees we interviewed cited issues regarding accessing and extracting CDR information from the EPA's CDR database. Our attempt at accessing information from the agency's database also proved difficult. However, during the course of our audit, the EPA took steps to help users more easily navigate the data by providing Microsoft Excel files and a data dictionary. These improvements are intended to enhance the public's ability to obtain information about chemicals in U.S. commerce.

Recommendation and Planned Agency Corrective Action

We recommend that the Assistant Administrator for Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention develop and implement a policy and/or procedures for how the agency will conduct data quality checks of CDR Rule data submitted by companies to the EPA.

The Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention concurred with our recommendation and provided an acceptable corrective action with a milestone date. The proposed corrective action, when completed, will meet the intent of the recommendation.