

Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act

The goal of the **Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA)** is to prepare communities for and protect communities from chemical accidents. To ensure these goals are achieved, EPCRA section 301 required the creation of State Emergency Response Commissions (SERCs) and Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) which are primarily responsible for implementing sections 301 to 304 and 311 to 312. EPCRA's definition of "state" includes the 50 states and any other territory or possession over which the United States has jurisdiction. Federally recognized Tribes are the implementing authority for EPCRA on all Indian lands. Tribal Emergency Response Commissions are a form of a SERC, and any Tribal Emergency Planning Committees are a form of a LEPC. These groups share responsibility for developing and implementing emergency response plans and providing residents with information on the presence and releases of hazardous chemicals reported by facilities. EPCRA has four major focus areas:

Emergency Planning – Sections 301 to 303

require that facilities provide notification to their SERC and LEPC when EPCRA Extremely Hazardous Substance (EHSs) are present at the facility in quantities at or above the Threshold Planning Quantity.

These sections also require that the LEPCs develop and maintain community emergency response plans.



Emergency Release Notifications – Section 304

requires that facilities immediately provide notification of releases of EPCRA EHSs and the CERCLA hazardous substances to their SERC and LEPC when released in quantities at or exceeding the chemical's reportable quantity.

Facilities are also required to submit a written follow-up report of these releases to their SERC and LEPC.



Hazardous Chemical Inventory Reporting – Sections 311 and 312

require that facilities that are subject to the OSHA HazCom Standard provide two types of reports to their SERC, LEPC, and local fire department regarding the presence of hazardous chemicals at the facility.

Section 311 requires submission of either Safety Data Sheets for their chemicals or a list of the chemicals sorted by their hazard categories.

Section 312 requires annual submission of a hazardous chemical inventory form to identify the amount, location, and hazards of each chemical on site at the facility at any point during the year.



Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) – Section 313

is a publicly available database that contains information on the quantities of certain toxic chemicals released annually to air, water, and land, or otherwise managed as waste by industrial facilities throughout the United States.

The information facilities submit is compiled in the TRI and made publicly available through online tools, written analyses, and interactive charts and maps. The information helps support informed decision-making by communities, government agencies, companies, and others.

