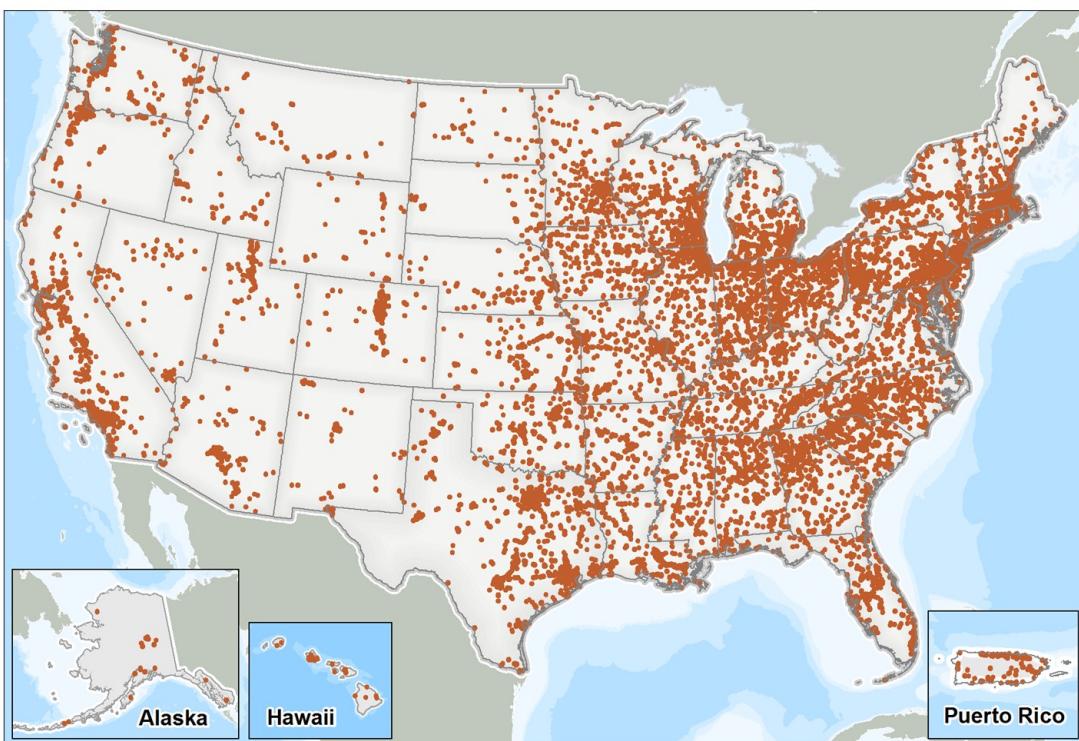


# Introduction: What is the TRI National Analysis?

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; therefore, some releases of toxic chemicals into the environment are inevitable.

It is your right to know what chemicals are being used in your community, how they are being disposed of, and whether their releases are increasing or decreasing over time. The Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) is a database that contains detailed information on disposal or other releases of over 650 chemicals from thousands of U.S. facilities that report to TRI (see Figure 1). These toxic chemicals can be harmful to either human health or the environment or both.

**Figure 1. Geographic Distribution of TRI-Reporting Facilities**



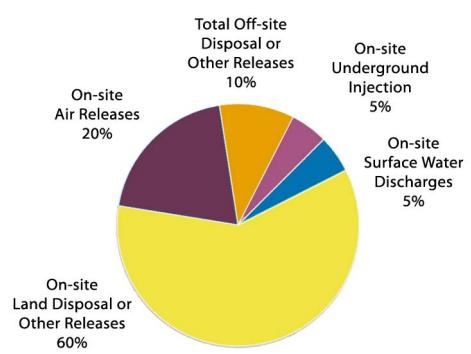
These facilities are typically large and are involved in manufacturing, metal mining, electric power generation, and hazardous waste treatment. Federal facilities are also required to report to TRI by Executive Order.

The 2011 TRI National Analysis is EPA's annual interpretation of TRI data, and it provides the public with valuable information on how toxic chemicals were managed, where toxic chemicals ended up, and how 2011 compares to previous years.

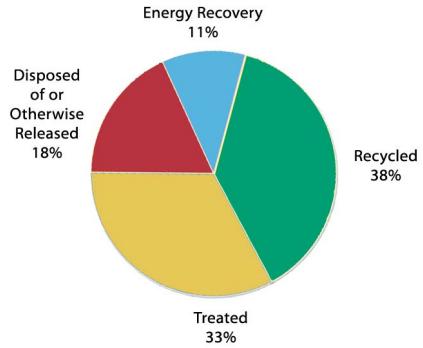
Users of TRI data should be aware that TRI captures a significant portion of toxic chemicals in wastes that are managed by industrial facilities, but it does not cover all toxic chemicals or all sectors of the U.S. economy. Furthermore, the quantities of chemicals reported to TRI are self-reported by 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 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 exposed to toxic chemicals.

The National Analysis provides a snapshot of the data at one point in time. If reports are submitted to EPA after the July 1 reporting deadline, they may not be processed in time to be included in the National Analysis. The most recent data available are accessible in the TRI tools listed [at the end of this document](#).

**Figure 2. TRI Disposal or Other Releases, 2011  
4.09 billion pounds**



**Figure 3. Production-Related Waste Managed, 2011  
22.77 billion pounds**



## Quick Facts for 2011

**Number of TRI Facilities:** 20,927

**On-site and Off-site Disposal or Other Releases:** 4.09 billion lbs

**On-site:** 3.67 billion lbs

- Air: 0.80 billion lbs
- Water: 0.22 billion lbs
- Land: 2.44 billion lbs
- Underground Injection: 0.22 billion lbs

**Off-site:** 0.41 billion lbs

**Production-Related Waste Managed:** 22.77 billion lbs

- Recycled: 8.58 billion lbs
- Energy Recovery: 2.46 billion lbs
- Treated: 7.60 billion lbs
- Disposed of or Otherwise Released: 4.13 billion lbs

In 2011, 20,927 facilities reported to TRI. Together they reported total on- and off-site disposal or other releases of 4.09 billion pounds of toxic chemicals. Most were disposed of or released on site to land, air, water, or injected underground, as shown in Figure 2.

Production-related waste includes waste that is recycled, burned for energy recovery, and treated as well as disposed of or otherwise released. In other words, it encompasses all waste generated from facilities' processes and operations. In 2011 more than 22.77 billion pounds of toxic chemicals were reported as generated at TRI facilities in production-related wastes. Of this total, over 18.64 billion pounds were recycled, burned for energy recovery, or treated, and 4.13 billion pounds were disposed of or otherwise released to the environment, as shown in Figure 3.

Note that the two metrics related to disposal or other releases shown in Figures 2 and 3 are similar (4.09 billion pounds and 4.13 billion pounds, respectively), but are not the same. This is because the value reported under disposal or other releases only counts waste once at final deposition. However, the value reported under production-related waste counts the 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, but only once under disposal or other releases. Also, waste from catastrophic, remedial or one-time events (typically not related to production) is not included in production-related waste managed, while such waste is included in the amounts shown in Figure 2.

This National Analysis Overview presents information on the quantities and types of TRI chemicals in waste on a national scale for 2011, and how these quantities compare to previous years. In addition, several of the industry sectors and companies that report the largest quantities of toxic chemicals in waste are highlighted. EPA's TRI Program provides additional detail about the TRI data on its [website](#), and it posts a variety of tools and resources to help you find information specific to your interests and communities. These include geographic profiles that focus on individual communities, tribal lands, and large aquatic ecosystems. Links to all of these resources can be found in the [TRI Tools and Resources section](#) of this document.

