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The North American PRTR Initiative: Tracking Pollutant Releases and Transfers to Advance Sustainability

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Scope

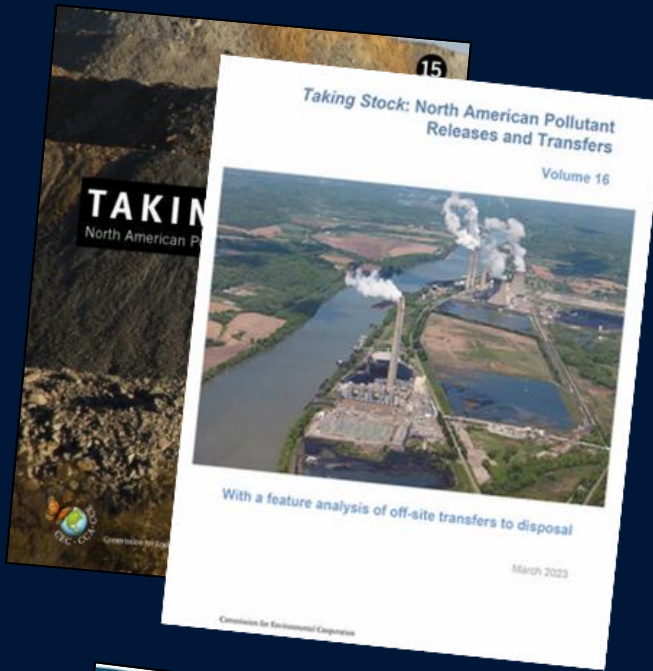
The NA PRTR Initiative brings together data for more than 40,000 facilities reporting across the region since 2006 to:

- Canada's NPRI
- Mexico's *RETC*
- United States' TRI



Objectives and Activities

- Compile, harmonize, and provide access to comparable PRTR data for the region
- Promote data quality, comparability, completeness
- Engage all stakeholders concerned with industrial pollutants and data access
- Promote use of PRTR data to support P2 and sustainability.



— TAKING — STOCK

Along with the energy, materials, and items we use every day, North American industry sectors generate pollutants that must be managed to protect our health and environment. Each year, the substances released to air, water, or land, sent to disposal, or transferred to recycling or other management are reported by industrial facilities to the Canadian, Mexican and U.S. pollutant release and transfer registers (PRTRs). The CEC's North American PRTR Initiative brings together the data for approximately 30,000 industrial facilities across the region...[read more](#)

electronics

The production of electronic goods can generate large amounts of potentially hazardous waste.

fossil fuels

Emissions from fossil fuel combustion can generate acidic gases and cause respiratory problems.

food production

Pollutants released to water from food production and processing can contribute to eutrophication, or oxygen-poor water bodies.



**Industry
P2 Challenge**

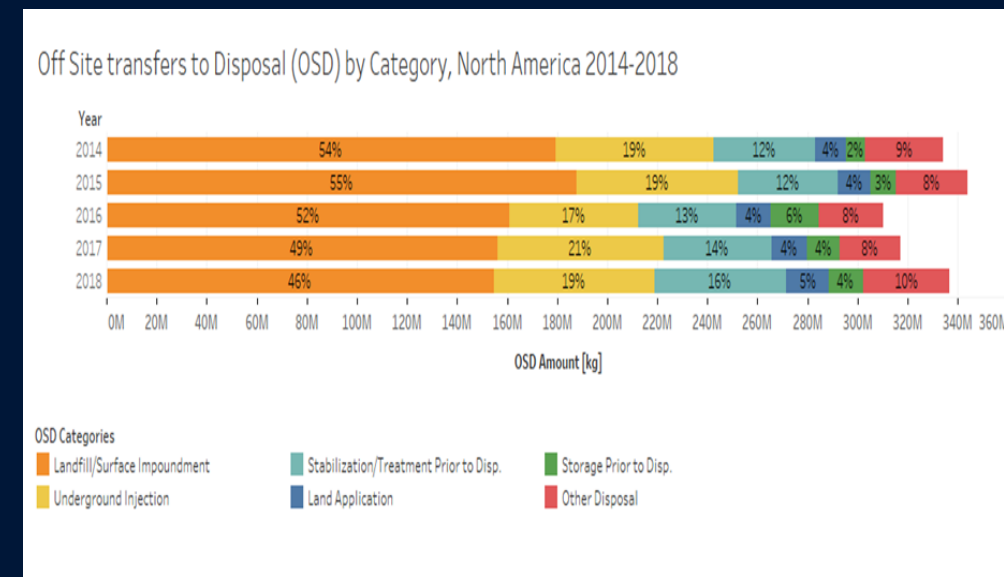
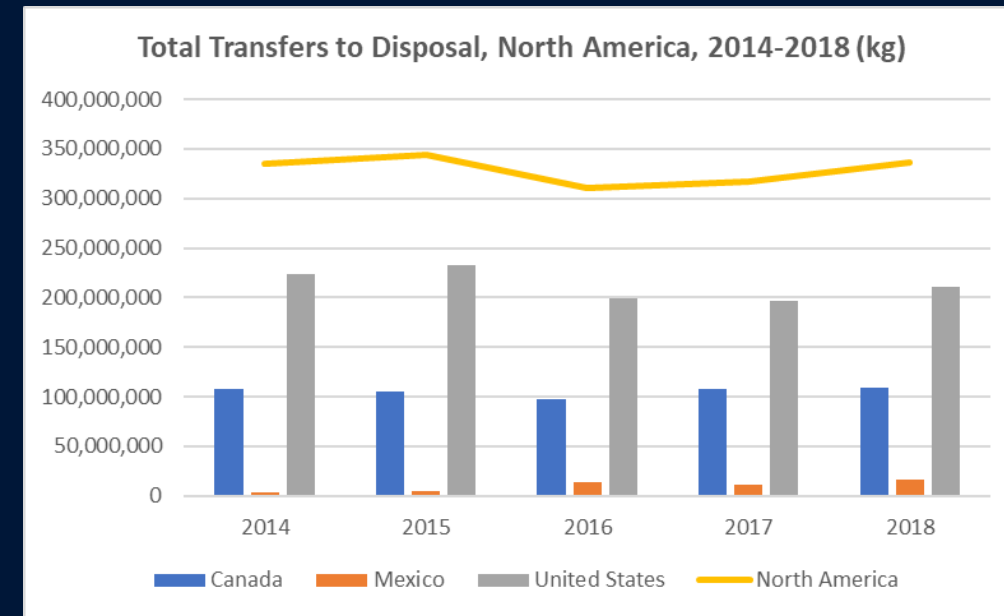
**Cross-border
Transfers Project**

Taking Stock Report, vol. 16 – Feature Analysis: Off-site Transfers to Disposal (OSD)

- **Aim:** Enhance understanding of disposal practices, risks, and alternatives to waste generation and disposal.

Key Findings (2014-2018):

- ~11,000 facilities report ~ 335 million kg/year in OSD
- Landfills/surface impoundments (~ 50%), followed by underground injection. Increases in stabiliz. prior to disposal and land application
- OSD in Canada and US: 6% of TRT; in Mexico: from 12% to 34% (driver: gold & silver mining)
- >2/3 of NA total due to about 10 sectors and 10 pollutants, e.g.:
 - steel manuf'g, oil/gas extraction, electricity gen., waste mgt
 - zinc, manganese, lead, barium compounds; H₂S.



What have we learned from this analysis?

1. There are important data gaps due to:

- Different reporting requirements (sectors, pollutants, disposal practices)
- Shared responsibilities (federal/state), involvement of third parties (e.g., waste mgt facilities), and incomplete information about waste recipients

These gaps impede the tracking and management of waste transfers and the ability to respond to extreme events (e.g., floods) that can remobilize pollutants from disposal sites.

2. Relatively few sectors and pollutants play key roles in OSD

This information can inform pollution prevention (P2) policies and programs.

3. Facilities are implementing (and reporting) P2 practices

This shows that PRTs are important tools for tracking progress in industry and for helping disseminate best practices to minimize waste generation and disposal.

Taking Stock Online

- Homepage with contextual information, interactive data graphics
- Integrated NA database:
 - 2021-22 data
 - Query cross-border transfers
 - Soon: facility greenhouse gas data
- Data visualization, mapping tools
- User feedback mechanism.

www.cec.org/takingstock

Do you want to know more about North American industrial pollutant releases and transfers?

Click on one of the On-site Releases or Disposals or Off-site Transfers in the picture below, then use the filters in the associated charts to explore some of the data available for approximately 30,000 facilities across the region.



ON-SITE RELEASES OR DISPOSALS

OFF-SITE TRANSFERS

Top Pollutants

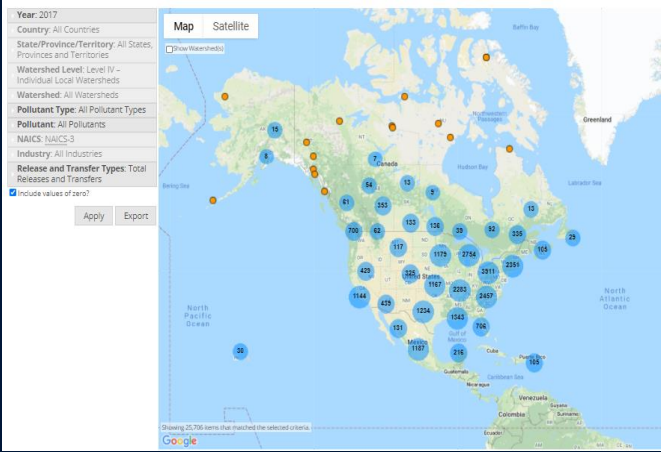
Select a release or transfer type, year, country (or region), and pollutant type to see the total reported by pollutant.

On-Site Air Emissions 2020 North America All Pollutant Types

Top Pollutants for North America



Pollutant	Relative Amount
Ammonia (total)	High
Methanol	Medium-High
Sulfuric acid	Medium
n-Hexane	Low





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***Industry Pollution
Prevention (P2) Challenge***

- Promoting Sustainability and Green Chemistry in the Automotive Manufacturing Sector and Supply Chain

***Cross-border Transfers Project
(OECD Collaboration)***

- Using CBT data and other information to assess data quality and possible enhancements to PRTR reporting requirements