Toxics Release Inventory/2021: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Releases Annual National Analysis

Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

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United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") released its 2021 Toxics Release Inventory ("TRI") National Analysis ("Analysis").

The TRI is a publicly available database that is prepared and published by EPA annually.

The Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act ("EPCRA") was enacted in 1986. The federal statute requires certain facilities to submit reports each year on the amounts of toxic chemicals they released in the environment, either routinely or as a result of accidents. Federal legislation in 1990 extended reported requirements to waste management and source reduction activities. EPA implements these laws and compiles information it receives in the TRI.

The TRI contains information on the release of over 800 chemicals and chemical categories from industries including manufacturing, metal and coalmining, electric utilities, and commercial hazardous waste treatment (among others). EPCRA requires companies that manufacture, process, or otherwise use specified toxic chemicals in amounts above reporting threshold levels to submit reports to EPA and to designated officials.

The 2021 TRI preliminary dataset released by EPA is stated to contain data from activities that occurred at more than 20,000 federal and industrial facilities in the United States.

For the reporting year 2021 for Per-and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances ("PFAS") were added to the TRI chemical list. This addition was required by the National Defense Authorization Act. Facilities were required to report on these chemicals for calendar year 2021 if TRI reporting requirements were met.

The 2021 TRI also reduced source reduction activity codes. The stated objective is further reduction to improve clarity and better reflect industrial activity. As a result of the reduction EPA states there are now 24 activity(s) codes corresponding to five categories.

A link to the 2021 TRI Preliminary Dataset can be found here.