Hazardous Waste Management/A Hidden Input to U.S. Economic Growth: Charles River Associates September 2026 Report

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Charles River Associates ("CRA") issued a September 2026 report titled:

Hazardous waste management: A hidden input to US economic growth ("Report").

The Report's author is Alan Jaske, PhD.

CRA indicates that it was retained by Veolia to analyze the role of hazardous waste management as an input to industrial activity and economic growth. Veolia has been described as a global leader in environmental services.

The Report examines hazardous waste management and its importance to the United States economy.

Hazardous waste is regulated under Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act ("RCRA"). RCRA includes a program that is intended to ensure that hazardous waste is managed safely from the moment it is generated to the final disposal. Note that a solid waste is a hazardous waste if it is specifically listed as a known hazardous waste or meets one of the four characteristics of a hazardous waste.

Listed hazardous wastes are wastes from common manufacturing and industrial processes, specific industries, and can also be generated from discarded commercial products. Characteristic wastes are wastes that exhibit one or more of the following characteristic properties:

1. Ignitability.
2. Corrosivity.
3. Reactivity.
4. Toxicity.

The CRA Report notes that "waste is an inevitable bioproduct of economic prosperity." Further, the Report indicates the logical conclusion that "industrial output expands and consumption increases, creating corresponding demand for waste management systems." In terms of waste, it states:

… an important subset contains hazardous material that requires specialized handling, treatment, and technical expertise to ensure safe disposal.

Nevertheless, the reader is reminded that despite the risks associated with hazardous waste, a functioning economy cannot exist without it.

The Report was generated using what is described as the latest facility-level data from EPA. Hazardous waste is generated by more than 18,000 facilities across a wide range of United States industries. The most waste-intensive include:

- Chemicals
- Petroleum and coal products
- Metals

These sectors are stated to collectively generate over 75 thousand tons of hazardous waste per day while also contributing nearly $1 trillion to US GDP and supporting 2.7 million jobs.

Described as key findings in the Report include:

- Manufacturing accounts for 90% of hazardous waste generated nationally.
- Texas alone is stated to account for 53% of the national total.
- Arkansas is listed among the top 15 states by hazardous waste generated (9th), generating 391,674 tons per year.
- As economic output expands so does the need for hazardous waste management.
- Generation is projected to reach 37.4 million tons annually by 2033 (roughly 5 million tons above current levels).
- Domestic policy aiming to reshore manufacturing of pharmaceuticals, semiconductors for computer chips, batteries for vehicles, and other forms of advanced manufacturing will contribute to this increase.
- For many industrial processes, persistent constraints on hazardous waste management can limit growth.

The Report also examines the factors which are stated to “most likely shape treatment and disposal capacities in the years ahead.” These include:

- Closures of on-site and captive management facilities.
- Unplanned maintenance and facility outages.
- Disaster relief.
- Large-scale remediation.
- Regulatory complexity.

A copy of the Report can be found here.