

Sent: Wednesday, July 02, 2003 4:36 PM

Subject: EPA REPORT OF TOXIC RELEASES HAS MIXED SIGNALS.

Dear Aquathin Dealer OnLine, Splash NewsBulletin and Allergic Reaction NewsBulletin Members;

In April of 2001, we reported to you in a Splash NewsBulletin, that the amount of toxic waste produced in 1999 was almost 20 billion pounds. You may recall I equated that to a string of 5 lb. sugar bags that would stretch to the moon and back...and then again back to the moon, just so we could relate to this mass quantity.

There are two quick reads below citing new reports that for 2001, reporting companies in the U.S. (only those reporting and only those in the U.S.) produced 26.7 billion pounds and released 6.16 billion pounds into the environment...and somehow this was less, as you will read. Sounds like fuzzy math to me.

Well, here's the really interesting math of the matter. Much of the article discusses lead and dioxin based contaminants. The EPA regulation for lead in water is .015 mg/l (milligram / litre or just 15 parts per billion). Dioxin is a minute .00000003 mg/l (or only 3 parts per trillion!). Here's the "unfuzzy math"...1 pound is 2.2 kilograms or 2200 grams, or 2,200,000 mg. Now you do the math and multiply 2,200,000 mg (and remember the permissible amount of lead and dioxin are significantly less than 1 milligram per litre) by 26 billion pounds and see the shocking math and the enormous toxicity we must live with ! AND REMEMBER THAT IS ONLY FROM THE REPORTING COMPANIES...AND ONLY IN THE U.S.

I love my Aquathin !!!!!!!

Warmest regards to all...as well, your comments are always welcome and very much appreciated.

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P.S. "Splash NewsBulletins", "Forum Q & A", "Allergic Reaction", Biz Bank, Tech Bank and Quote Bank... ARE ALL FREE services to all Authorized Aquathin Dealers and their clients to keep you abreast of technology updates and industry news.

EPA Says Toxic Releases, Wastes Declined in 2001

By J.R. Pegg

WASHINGTON, DC, June 30, 2003 (ENS) - U.S. industries released 15 percent fewer toxic chemicals and generated 22 percent less toxic waste in 2001 than they did a year earlier, according to new data released today by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The agency says these figures illustrate a continuing decline in the amount of wastes released into the nation's air, land and water, but environmentalists caution that the EPA's data only provides part of the picture.

The data was collected under the framework of the federal Toxics Release Inventory (TRI), established by Congress in 1986 as the nation's community right to know program. It finds that U.S. industries released some 6.16 billion pounds of toxic chemicals into the environment and managed 26.7 billion pounds of toxic waste in 2001.

The TRI includes information on releases and other waste management methods for 667 toxic chemicals.

Although this total is less than one percent of chemicals registered for use and represents a limited range of sources, the TRI is widely considered the most comprehensive source of information on toxic pollution in the United States.

The TRI program is "one of the most important activities EPA completes each year," according to Acting EPA Administrator Linda Fisher.

"It is a tool that gives the American public information on chemical releases for their communities so that they can make informed decisions about protecting their environment.," said Fisher in a prepared statement.

Environmentalists welcome the insights provided by the Toxics Release Inventory, but caution that it has large gaps in information. (Photo courtesy [Southern Oregon University](#))

The data collected under the TRI program are based on reports from manufacturing industries, metal mines, certain coal mining activities, electrical utilities that burn coal or oil, hazardous waste treatment and disposal facilities, chemical wholesale distributors, petroleum bulk plants and terminals and solvent recovery services.

It does not include releases from pollution sources like oil wells, airports and waste incinerators, or other sources of exposure to chemicals, such as chemicals placed in consumer products.

Of the 6.16 billion pounds of toxic chemicals released into the environment in 2001, 65 percent were released to land on and off site, 27 percent were released into the air, four percent to water and four percent to underground injection on- and off-site.

The metal mining industry reported the largest total release of toxic chemicals, accounting for 45 percent of the nation's total, followed by the electric utilities industries with 17 percent and the chemical industry with 9.5 percent.

Nevada released some 783 million pounds of toxic chemicals, more than any other state. Utah was second with 767 million pounds, followed by Arizona with 607 million pounds and Alaska with 522 million pounds.

Twenty chemicals accounted for 88 percent of the total release, with copper compounds totaling some one billion pounds and zinc compounds some 960 million pounds. Some 422 million

pounds of lead and lead compounds were released in 2001 - the first year facilities were held to a 100 pound threshold for lead.

The standard requirement for industries subject to the TRI is that any facility manufacturing or processing 25,000 pounds of a chemical regulated under TRI, or otherwise using 10,000 pounds of such a chemical, has to report its releases and wastes.

But the standards are stricter for a group of some 20 persistent bioaccumulative toxic (PBT) chemicals, which are considered more hazardous as they remain in ecosystems for long periods of time, and accumulate in animal and human tissues.

The threshold for reporting of PCB chemicals, which dioxins, mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and others, was lowered in 1999 to 10 pounds or 100 pounds.

In 2001, total PBT chemical releases totaled 454.4 million pounds, with lead and lead compounds comprising 97 percent of the total. Environmentalists note that with the lower threshold, much of the reported lead represents previously unreported pollution.

"It is a victory for the public interest that these companies are finally reporting their lead pollution," said Jeremiah Baumann, environmental health advocate for U.S. Public Interest Research Group. "We have known for centuries that lead is highly toxic, and more study has only shown that it is more toxic, and toxic at lower and lower exposure levels. It is now the 21st century, and high time for these companies to start reducing their use of lead."

Absent lead, PBT chemicals decreased by some two percent compared to last year, despite a 50 percent increase in the total releases of dioxin and dioxin-like compounds.

In today's prepared statement, the EPA wrote that the overall long term trend is that levels of dioxin are decreasing and suggests that the increase in 2001 was in part due to one time maintenance at several facilities.

The reporting industries managed a total of 26.7 billion pounds of toxic waste, with Texas, Louisiana and Illinois accounting for 30 percent of nation's total.

The chemical industry was responsible 40 percent of the nation's toxic waste, with the primary metals industry accounting for 12 percent and the metals mining industry for 11 percent.

Some 1.68 billion pounds of toxic chemicals were released into the air in 2001. (Photo courtesy [Lake Michigan Federation](#))

Lead and lead compounds accounted for 96 percent of the 1.23 billion pounds of PBT related waste.

The 22 percent decrease in toxic waste of from 2000 to 2001 comes on the heels of a 25 percent increase from 1999 to 2000.

Mercury is one toxic that increased from 2000 to 2001 both in totals released and managed. The EPA reports that 4.9 million pounds of mercury and mercury compounds were released into the environment and 5.8 million pounds of mercury contaminated wastes were managed in 2001, compared to 4.3 million pounds released and 4.9 million pounds managed in 2000.

This finding comes as environmentalists and some Democrats continue to criticize the Bush administration for its "Clear Skies" initiative, which they believe would relax federal efforts to curb mercury pollution. There is increasing evidence that mercury poses health risks to pregnant women and their children.

Some fear that some pollution from the mining industry might not be included in future TRI reports, as the Bush administration is not fighting a judge's decision to allow mining companies to stop reporting non PBT toxic chemicals in waste rock if they do not exceed a concentration of one percent.

"We expect that the Bush administration's decision will allow the nation's most toxic industry to just stop reporting half their pollution," said Baumann. "But half of 2.8 billion pounds is hardly trifling. EPA should issue new rules eliminating the exemption or clarifying that it cannot be used to hide millions of pounds of pollution." The entire TRI database is available and searchable at <http://www.epa.gov/tri>.

Expert Panel Warns Females of Dioxins in Food

By J.R. Pegg

WASHINGTON, DC, July 1, 2003 (ENS) - The health risks from dioxins in foods are too unknown for regulatory limits, an independent panel of experts said today, but a federal interagency group should speed efforts to reduce human exposure to dioxins in foods.

These efforts should focus specifically on reducing exposure to girls and women, encouraging stricter compliance with dietary recommendations to consume less animal fat, and improving data collection of dioxins in human food and animal feed, according to the report released by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies.

Dioxins - and dioxin-like compounds - are persistent organic pollutants produced by waste incineration and other industrial processes. They accumulate in the body fat of animals and people, and the fats in animal whole milk and full-fat dairy products are the principal sources of most people's exposure.

The European Union has set limits for dioxins in food, as high levels of dioxins have been linked to endocrine-related conditions, developmental problems, and susceptibility to cancer, among other health hazards.

But the Institute of Medicine panel determined that the data gaps are too great to determine whether small amounts of dioxins are toxic and at what levels they begin to pose risks.

"It is not a question of there being no data, there is good data and the report quantifies and presents it," said committee member Julie Caswell, a resource economics professor at the University of Massachusetts.

Dioxins accumulate in the body over time, so reducing exposure at an early age is critical. (Photo by Ken Hammond courtesy [U.S. EPA](#))

"But if you want to reduce dioxin exposure the data to choose strategies to do that is inadequate," she explained.

As a result, the panel is "recommending simple, prudent steps to further reduce dioxin exposure while data are gathered that will clarify the risks," said Robert Lawrence, associate dean at Johns Hopkins University's

Bloomberg School of Public Health and chair of the committee that wrote the report.

The report, "Dioxins and Dioxin-like Compounds in the Food Supply: Strategies to Decrease Exposure," requested by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Food and Drug Administration and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The most direct way for humans to reduce dietary exposure to dioxins, the report finds, is to reduce consumption of animal fat. As dioxins are persistent and long lived compounds that accumulate in human tissues over a lifetime, the panel recommends that aggressive action be taken to reduce exposure in girls and women.

This is the only practical way to reduce dioxin exposure in fetuses and breast feeding infants, which are most susceptible to the harmful effects of dioxins, the report finds.

Given the health and social benefits of breast-feeding, the committee recommended strategies to reduce accumulated body levels of dioxins, rather than to discourage breast-feeding.

The panel recommends the government examine the levels of saturated fats in school lunch and breakfast programs, and collectively provide meals to more than 30 million children. (Photo by Ken Hammond courtesy [USDA](#))

The panel says the government-sponsored food programs, such as the National School Lunch Program, should increase the availability of foods low in animal fat. In particular, low-fat milk should be made more widely available in the school lunch program and the USDA should analyze the impact of setting limits on the amount of saturated fat that can be present in meals served in the school breakfast and lunch programs.

The committee calls for the promotion of compliance with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans on the consumption of saturated fats as a way to minimize dioxin exposure without compromising nutrition.

"We are recommending that the current USDA guidelines that call for 10 percent saturated fat and 30 percent total fat be followed," Lawrence said.

The panel found that dietary changes to reduce dioxin exposure may have additional benefit of reducing risks of cardiovascular disease and other health risks associated with excessive consumption of saturated fats.

Because of the health benefits associated with omega-3 fatty acids in fish and the difficulty of trimming fat from fish, the committee did not recommend that people reduce their consumption of fatty fish below the currently recommended two servings per week.

Lawrence told reporters that "some of the same guidelines that have been released to reduce our exposure to mercury would apply" to setting limits on the intake of fish at the top of the food chain.

The report recommends that an interagency group make serious efforts to collect data on the actual level and distribution of dioxins in the food supply and calls for the establishment of a nationwide data collection system and a single repository for data on dioxin levels in animal forage and feed.

Getting a handle on how, where and to what extent dioxins get into animal feed "presents the greatest opportunity to reduce dioxin levels in food," said committee member Michael Taylor, senior fellow and director of the Risk Resource and Environmental Management Division at Resources for the Future, a nonprofit environmental think tank.

"A high priority should be placed on reducing contamination of animal forage and feed," Taylor said, "and

interrupting the recycling of dioxins that results from the use of animal fat in animal feeds."

Until there is enough data to shed light on whether there should be regulatory limits, the committee recommends the interagency coordinating group engage the private and public sectors on programs to reduce exposure in human foods and animal feed.

The committee says better data is needed of dioxin levels in animal feed and human food. (Photo by Bill Tarpenning courtesy [U.S. EPA](#))

For example, federal agencies should work with food producers to develop voluntary guidelines for animal feeding and food-production practices that would minimize animals' exposure to dioxins.

The panel says further improvements in analytical tools and methods will enable researchers to better characterize any possible risks associated with low-level exposure. The report concludes that the "most pressing need is for the development of low cost analytical methods to detect dioxins," Taylor said.

The current expense of \$1,000 per sample is an obstacle to collection of data need for comprehensive risk management strategy, Taylor told reporters.

A positive sign, Lawrence says, is that dioxin levels in the environment have declined dramatically in recent decades - by as much as 76 percent since the 1970s, according to some measurements.

The panelists available at today's press briefing were unable to comment on Monday's release of toxics data by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that indicated a 50 percent increase in the total releases of dioxin and dioxin-like compounds in 2001 compared to 2000.

In Monday's prepared statement, the EPA wrote that the overall long term trend is that levels of dioxin are decreasing and suggests that the increase in 2001 was in part due to one time maintenance at several facilities.

The full Institute of Medicine report on dioxins in foods can be found [here](#).