

Background

Tracking and Reducing Chemicals in Toronto:

ChemTRAC Annual Report – 2010 Reporting Year June 2012

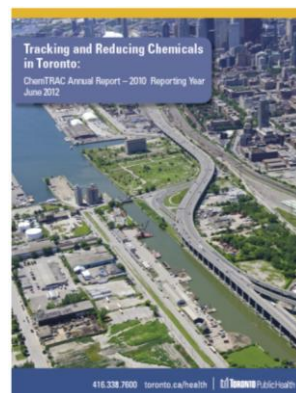
In an urban environment like Toronto, the public's health may be affected by a number of environmental factors, including chemicals that pollute the air, water and land. Exposure to chemical sources can occur outdoors and in homes and workplaces.

ChemTRAC is a City of Toronto program designed to protect public health and stimulate the greening of local businesses by tracking and reducing 25 chemicals found in Toronto's environment. A key part of ChemTRAC is Toronto's Environmental Reporting and Disclosure Bylaw (Municipal Code Chapter 423), which requires facilities to report each year if they use any of the priority 25 substances above specified thresholds. This is the first bylaw of its kind in Canada.

To date, data has been collected and analyzed from the first collection year (2010). Since the bylaw is being phased in over three years to allow time for smaller and medium sized facilities to familiarize themselves with the bylaw, current data are from business sectors required to report in the first year. This includes printers, chemical product manufacturers, food and beverage manufacturers, and all facilities operated by the City of Toronto.

Key Findings

- 274 facilities reported the manufacture, processing or other use of approximately 66,000 tonnes of these substances. Of this, about 8 per cent (5,000 tonnes) were released to the environment, mostly to air.
- The substances reported in the highest amounts were volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), which contribute to smog.
- When toxicity is taken into account using Toxic Equivalency Potentials, the relatively small amounts reported for substances like polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, mercury, lead and cadmium are of health concern because they are much more toxic than the other more common substances.



Tracking and Reducing Chemicals in Toronto: ChemTRAC Annual Report – 2010 Reporting Year is a report by Toronto Public Health on priority substances (chemicals) used and released by Toronto facilities. This is the first annual report of data collected under the City's ChemTRAC program.

Backgrounder

Emerging Priorities

Data from the ChemTRAC program is helping Toronto Public Health and its partners in government, business, labour and the environment develop new programs and approaches to supporting and promoting health, environmental and economic sustainability.

- ***Identifying actions to protect health***
ChemTRAC is helping to identify the substances of concern as well as the locations of sources, which can in turn inform and support pollution prevention programs for specific substances, geographic areas, sectors or industrial processes.
- ***Studying how pollutant sources contribute to local air quality***
ChemTRAC is providing new data on industrial/commercial sources of pollutants, which can be used to conduct new, comprehensive air modeling studies. This information can improve how air quality is monitored and reported as well as inform programs and action.
- ***Supporting environmental innovation in business***
Tracking and reporting to the ChemTRAC program helps businesses identify the major sources of chemicals in their facility. With the major sources identified, businesses can develop plans to reduce their use and release of the pollutants.

Pollution prevention can benefit businesses by increasing profitability, differentiating their product in the market, improving efficiencies, reducing business risk, increasing employee retention and improving community relations. ChemTRAC data is providing key details to help Toronto Public Health and its partners work with businesses to identify pollution prevention options and set priorities for future work.

Stay Informed

Visit www.toronto.ca/chemtrac to search the data by neighbourhood, substance and business, to download a summary report and the entire data set, and to find information on reducing chemicals in your home or business.

Tracking and Reducing Chemicals in Toronto: ChemTRAC Annual Report – 2010 Reporting Year is available at <http://www.toronto.ca/chemtrac>

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