



Using the Federal Reading Rooms To Research Worst-Case Chemical Release Scenarios

Across the country 13,000 chemical manufacturers, oil refineries, paper mills, power plants, water utilities and other industrial facilities are required to prepare Risk Management Plans (RMP) because they use large amounts of extremely hazardous substances. The purpose of these plans is to save lives, protect property, and prevent pollution during chemical emergencies. By law, you can obtain full RMP information, including worst-case chemical release scenarios, through 52 public reading rooms operated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or Department of Justice (DOJ). You can use the information to work with others for safer solutions ó such as reducing or eliminating the hazard through the use of safer and more secure chemicals or processes.

Steps for Using Federal Reading Rooms

1] Identify the chemical facilities that you are interested in from www.rtknet.org under "Risk Management (RMP)".

2] Define your research request. At the reading rooms, you can obtain RMP information on either:

- a) Up to ten facilities anywhere in the country per calendar month, or;
- b) All of the facilities potentially impacting the jurisdiction of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) where you live or work.

For a nationwide list of these LEPCs, see:

yosemite.epa.gov/oswer/lepcdb.nsf/HomePage?openForm

3] Find general information and your nearest reading room through www.epa.gov/oem/content/rmp/readingroom.htm or call EPA at 800-424-9346 or DOJ at 888-442-9267.

4] Make your reading room appointment in advance. **Reading room staff will need to know which facilities you want to research.** Be aware that DOJ is not always responsive. Be persistent if needed. Get a name and phone number at the local reading room you want to visit, and **confirm your appointment in advance with the local contact.**

5] Take to your appointment government issued photo identification, such as a driver's license or passport. EPA and DOJ may not release your information except in certain cases, such as a law enforcement investigation.

6] Photocopy the blank form at the end of this fact sheet and take enough copies for each facility that you plan to research. At the reading room you may read and write down any information from the RMP. However, you may *not* remove the official paper copies, or mechanically reproduce or photocopy the information.

7] **Note that while you may be interested in the entire RMP, the off-site consequences analysis (OCA) information in sections 2 through 5 is only available in reading rooms.** The most telling data about potential risk are from the worst-case scenarios: *chemical name, quantity released, distance to endpoint* (how far away a release could cause serious harm), and *residential population within distance to endpoint*. Some facilities report scenarios for both toxic and flammable chemicals; some report only one or the other. Always record the name of the facility and its twelve-digit EPA identification number. Double check what you have written for accuracy.

8] Note that certain covered persons (e.g., government employees) who use RMP information in their official duties may not directly communicate the OCA information in its original form or create state or national rankings based on OCA data. **However, there is no such restriction on workers at covered facilities, union representatives, or other members of the public who use the reading rooms and want to communicate this information to co-workers or the public.**

9] Remember, worst-case scenarios are not forecasts of harm. Not everyone within a worst-case vulnerability zone would typically be at risk at the same time. The scenarios also use worst-case weather conditions that are not always present, namely dense, slowly moving air. But these scenarios can also underestimate risks, such as if multiple processes or chemicals are involved in the same incident.

10] Use the RMP information to understand vulnerabilities in our workplaces and communities and to work with others to adopt safer, more secure chemicals or processes. Such options are already widely used in many industries. For examples, see the report, Chemical Security 101: What You Don't Have Can't Leak, or Be Blown Up by Terrorists, from the Center for American Progress.

www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/11/chemical_security.html

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More information about WEC is at www.njwec.org

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RMP Submissions Data Report Summary

Today's Date _____

RMP ID No _____

EPA ID No 1000-_____

Full Facility Name _____
(print clearly as written)

Parent Company _____

City _____ State _____
(facility location, **not** mailing address)

Receipt date _____
(see box, page three)

De-registration date (if any) _____
(see box, page three)

Number of Employees on site: _____

2. TOXICS: WORST CASE
(Not alternative case.)

2.1 Chemical name _____

2.4 Scenario: _____

2.5 Quantity released _____ lbs

2.7 Release Duration _____ min

2.11 Distance to endpoint _____ miles

2.12 Residential population within distance (number) _____

2.13 Public Receptors in area:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| ____ Schools | ____ Recreation Areas |
| ____ Residences | ____ Major Commercial/Office/Industrial Areas |
| ____ Hospitals | ____ Other |
| ____ Prisons | |

_____ ***If there is more than one TOXICS worst case, use the back of this page to record all of the toxics worst cases (not alternative cases).***

FLAMMABLES: WORST CASE

(Not alternative case.)

4.1 Chemical _____

4.3 Scenario _____

4.4 Quantity released _____ lbs

4.6 Distance to endpoint _____ miles

4.7 Residential population within distance (number) _____

_____ If there is more than one FLAMMABLES worst case, use the back of this page to record all of the flammables worst cases (not alternative cases).

6 ACCIDENT HISTORY

7.4 (d) Date of Last Hazard Review - _____
(date)

Major Hazards Identified:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toxic Release | <input type="checkbox"/> Contamination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire | <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment Failure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Explosion | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of cooling, heating, electric, instrument, air |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Runaway Reaction | <input type="checkbox"/> Earthquakes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Polymerization | <input type="checkbox"/> Flood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overpressurization | <input type="checkbox"/> Tornado |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corrosion | <input type="checkbox"/> Hurricanes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overfilling | |

9. EMERGENCY RESPONSE:

Last Review of Facility Emergency Response Plan: _____

Last Emergency Response Training for Employees: _____

FROM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Please note any plans for overall safety or comments saying no changes planned.