

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND COMMUNITY RIGHT-TO-KNOW (EPCRA)



## EPA Region 8 Program Quick Facts

### What is EPCRA?

EPCRA is the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986, as part of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) which amended the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA).

It was created to help communities plan for emergencies involving accidental releases of hazardous substances. EPCRA requires emergency planning by federal, state and local governments, Indian tribes, and industry.

### What is the scope of EPCRA?

EPCRA establishes Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), State Emergency Planning Commissions (SERCs) and Tribal Emergency Planning Commissions (TERCs) for the purpose of Emergency Planning. In addition, EPCRA also requires reporting by facilities that store hazardous and extremely hazardous substances above designated threshold quantities.

The Community Right-to-Know provisions help increase the public's knowledge and access to information on chemicals at individual facilities, their uses, and releases into the environment. States and communities, working with facilities, can use the information to improve chemical safety and protect public health and the environment.

### Key elements of EPCRA:

- creates local committees and state commissions for emergency planning
- requires the LEPC to maintain and update a plan for responding to accidental releases of hazardous chemicals
- creates a requirement for facilities to report any acquired chemicals and quantities being stored over the designated threshold quantity
- requires annual reporting of all hazardous chemicals being stored by a facility over the designated threshold quantity
- threshold levels are on the List of Lists and on the EPA EPCRA 311-312 website
- establishes processes and requirements for notification to the community and fire departments of accidental releases
- gives enforcement instructions and capabilities to the EPA.

### The importance of EPCRA

Several examples of deadly chemical explosions, gas releases and accidental spills of hazardous substances world wide emphasize the urgent need for reporting, planning and communication. The purpose of EPCRA is to help communities have the information needed and plans in place to protect their citizens.



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