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## Inventory of National Rural Health Research Related Databases

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Database name: **National Pollutant Release Inventory**

Thematic Coverage: This inventory collects data on substances of concern in Canada for the primary purpose of providing Canadians with access to pollutant release information for facilities, both on-site release and off-site transfer, located in their communities. It is the only legislated, nation-wide, publicly-accessible inventory of its kind in Canada.

Maintained by: Environment Canada

Availability: Access to all NPRI data and program information is provided on the NPRI website at: <http://www.ec.gc.ca/pdb/npri/>

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Start Date: 1992  
Release Date: Within 5 months of the June 1<sup>st</sup> of reporting  
Frequency of collection: Annual

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Data Collection: The Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999 (CEPA) requires that owners or operators of facilities which meet certain criteria to file a report with Environment Canada declaring the amounts of any of the 266 NPRI pollutants released on site to the environment or transferred off site for treatment, disposal or recycling. An overview of changes to the Year 2000 and Year 2001 reporting criteria can be found at:  
[http://www.ec.gc.ca/pdb/npri/NPRI\\_2000changes\\_e.cfm](http://www.ec.gc.ca/pdb/npri/NPRI_2000changes_e.cfm)  
[http://www.ec.gc.ca/pdb/npri/NPRI\\_2001changes\\_e.cfm](http://www.ec.gc.ca/pdb/npri/NPRI_2001changes_e.cfm)

Sample size: In 2001, over 2600 facilities that meet the reporting criteria

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Geographic coverage: All provinces, excluding residents of the Territories and full-time residents of institutions

Lowest geographic level collected: Postal code of Facility  
Lowest geographic level of release: Facility  
Existing rural variable: No

Rural definitions that can be constructed from this database include (building block):

- ✓ Although the rural definitions in Appendix A can be theoretically constructed from the postal code of the facility, a classification using an environmental perspective for the purpose of environmental analysis would be more suitable. For example, information on activities which affect water quality could be presented by drainage area. Geocoding could be used to develop a linkage between the postal codes of the establishments of the drainage area and ecozone geographies.
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Data Elements:

In 2001 there were 266 substances on the NPRI list, chosen through a consultation process by a multi-stakeholder committee. Fifty-five of the NPRI substances for 2001 are classified as toxic under the CEPA, 1999 or carcinogenic by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).

Notes:

The NPRI defines an **on-site release** as a discharge of a pollutant to the environment within the boundaries of a reporting facility.

**Off-site transfer** is defined as the shipment of a listed pollutant to an off-site location. This material may be destined for final disposal, treatment prior to final disposal, recycling, or recovery.

NPRI data represent only a portion of all pollutant releases and transfers to the environment in Canada. Other significant pollutants such as greenhouse gases, common air contaminants, ozone-depleting substances, and many pesticides are not on the current NPRI list

Not all sources of NPRI pollutants are captured by the inventory. For example, the NPRI does not include releases from mobile sources (vehicles and vessels) which are known to be major contributors of certain hazardous air pollutants on the NPRI list.

Facilities that do not meet the reporting requirements because of their size are not required to report to the NPRI. Collectively however, releases from these sources may account for the majority of releases of some NPRI pollutants.

Risk to human health and the environment from on-site releases of pollutants cannot be determined from NPRI data alone. Risk depends on many factors such as the toxicity of the pollutant, the extent of the exposure, the type of release or transfer and the environmental medium receiving the pollutant.