

Transportation Spills and Releases under EPCRA

Transportation of substances or storage of chemicals while in transit, are the only exemptions for EPCRA Section 302. Although Section 302 reporting requirements do not apply to the transportation of any Extremely Hazardous Substances (EHS), including transportation by pipeline, storage of EHS under active shipping papers, or other transportation activities within a community, they should still be addressed in local emergency plans.

In addition to EHSs, there may be other hazardous chemicals that pass through each planning district via railroads or highways. EPCRA Section 304 requires facilities to provide notification of releases that occur during transportation, so it is important to include transportation routes for EHSs in the local emergency plan.

The analysis of this transportation is often done through commodity flow studies. LEPCs and TEPCs may request that facilities in the community, trade associations, and/or university students assist you in conducting a commodity flow study.

Chemical Release During Transportation

If any chemical releases occur during transportation or while chemicals are in storage while in transit, facilities and/or the vehicle operator are **required to contact 911 or the local telephone operator** as provided in Section 304(b)(1) of EPCRA.

Sharing of any information on releases that affect community water systems, especially releases involving transportation, is strongly encouraged from AIWA provisions. However, under the federal EPCRA regulations, facilities (or transportation operators) are not required to submit the usually required follow-up reports for transportation related releases.

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LEPC and TEPC Considerations

LEPCs and TEPCs should consider the following actions to plan and prepare for chemical spills during transport:



LEPCs and TEPCs should consider the chemicals being transported through the community via highways, local roads, pipelines, or railroads and routes in their plan and then assess the potential impacts.



LEPCs and TEPCs should also train local telephone and 911 operators, as well as dispatch system or other personnel, on how to get complete information from the caller so they can notify emergency responders appropriately.



The development of a form outlining the needed information that operators can use to record information from the person providing the release notification would be highly useful.

Planning Information Resources

In conjunction with commodity flow studies, LEPCs and TEPCs can gain much needed information for their planning through the following:

- Information regarding hazardous chemicals transported via railroads can be obtained from your SERC or TERC as required by Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations.
- DOT's Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) also has information about hazardous materials on the rail lines.
- The LEPC/TEPC can also work with its state truck inspection service's agency to get information.
- The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) of the DOT requires railroads to provide the SERC and the TERC or other state-delegated agency with certain information regarding High Hazard Flammable Trains (HHFTs) passing through the state or tribal region.