



OFFICE OF ADVOCACY *FACTSHEET*

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Advocacy Urges EPA to Reduce Small Business Reporting Burdens under the Toxics Release Inventory

On September 2, 2003, the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy (Advocacy) filed a comment letter in response to a renewal of Information Collection Request (ICR) filed with the Office of Management and Budget by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The ICR renewal was for the Form A Certification statement (Form A) under the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) program. The TRI program requires facilities to report annually on releases and related chemical waste activities for more than 600 chemicals. Information about the TRI program can be found on the EPA website: www.epa.gov/tri.

Form A is the shorter of two reporting options under the TRI program. Form A is currently available to only a minority of TRI reporters, while the majority of reporters must file the longer Form R. A significant number of reports filed each year (as many as 60 percent for some chemicals) show zero to very small amounts of chemical waste. Many of these reports are filed by small businesses. To reduce their annual paperwork burden, Advocacy suggested a number of specific revisions to Form A that would provide substantial paperwork burden relief for small businesses.

- Advocacy urges that the thresholds for eligibility to file a Form A be revised upward. These threshold revisions would expand the number of reports eligible for Form A significantly. Raising the most significant threshold, total reportable waste quantities, from the current 500 pounds to 5,000 pounds would expand Form A eligibility from 26 percent to 40 percent of all reports in the currently eligible class of chemicals.
- Advocacy also suggests implementing an Enhanced Form A to ensure that the usefulness of information that is collected is maintained. The Enhanced Form A allows qualifying reporters to report their waste activities over a range by checking an appropriate column rather than entering a precise number. This lessens the information collection burden on reporters while ensuring that quality data on chemical activities is available to communities.
- Advocacy also proposes creation of a new reporting option called No Substantial Change, with an appropriate Form NS to substitute for Form R or Form A. A significant paperwork and recordkeeping burden reduction could be achieved by allowing reporters to certify that the data have not changed from the prior year. Limiting this option to smaller reporters, Advocacy estimates that more than 50 percent of all reports could be filed as Form NS.

For more information, visit Advocacy's web page at <http://www.sba.gov/advo> or contact Kevin Bromberg at (202) 205-6964.