

# Mapping industrial pollutants

The CEC's new map layer for *Google Earth* lets users explore pollution data from over 30,000 industrial facilities in North America

With new information on chemical releases and transfers from Mexican industrial sources now available to the public, the CEC has created the first seamless, North America-wide map layer connecting citizens with point-specific industrial pollutant data in Canada, Mexico and the United States.

Using the *Google Earth* mapping service—an innovative and free computer program that allows users to explore geographic data projected over satellite images and aerial photography—the CEC's map layer plots over 33,000 North American industrial facilities that reported releases and transfers of pollutants in 2004, the most recent data available from all three countries.

This mapping tool allows anyone in our three countries—whether in Manitoba, Mississippi, or Michoacán—to find industrial facilities located near their homes, their workplaces, or their schools. They can learn about the pollution profile of each facility, including which pollutants are generated and how the facility handles them. Users can also compare the performance of facilities in their community to similar facilities locally, nationally, and, now, across North America.

Information used in the mapping tool comes from publicly accessible "pollutant release and transfer registers," or PRTRs, maintained separately by the three North American countries: the National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI) in Canada, the *Registro de Emisiones y Transferencias de Contaminantes* (RETIC) in Mexico, and the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) in the United States.

Combined, the 33,000 individual facilities in communities across the continent provide over 100,000 individual chemical reports with information on the management of over five million metric tons of potentially hazardous chemicals each year (see table).

PRTRs provide society with a valuable resource for setting priorities, promoting environmental improvement and tracking progress. Since 1995, the CEC has been working closely with the three countries to enhance comparability of the data, expand the information—including both the number of facilities and of chemicals, and assist Mexico in developing its new mandatory reporting system.

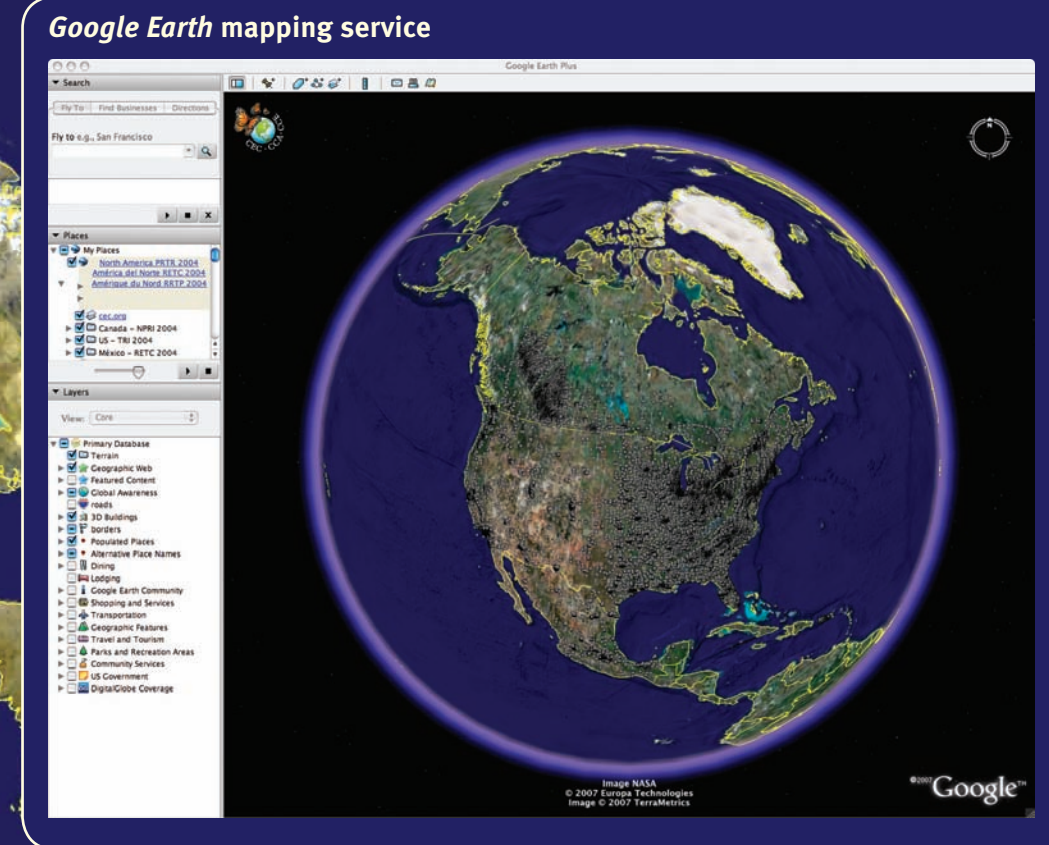
Each year, using these same data as a starting point, the CEC publishes *Taking Stock*—a highly anticipated report that provides a unique "apples-to-apples" picture of North American industrial emissions and trends. For the first time in its 10 years, the current *Taking Stock* will be able to feature a detailed analysis of comparable pollutant data from all three countries.

The PRTR mapping tool is one of the first products to be produced through the CEC's North American Environmental Atlas project. It is available from the CEC website as a downloadable file, as is a list of frequently asked questions about the tool. *Google Earth* can be downloaded free-of-charge from <<http://earth.google.com>>.

## Industrial Pollutant Reporting in 2004, An Overview

	FACILITIES	CHEMICAL REPORTS	TOTAL RELEASES AND TRANSFERS (TONNES)
Canada NPRI	3,500	16,000	1,800,000
US TRI	24,000	90,000	3,500,000
Mexico RETC	1,300	4,400	19,000
<b>North American Total</b>	<b>28,800</b>	<b>110,400</b>	<b>5,319,000</b>

Note: National totals are rounded. Canada and Mexico also have substantial facility-based reporting of greenhouse gases and criteria air pollutants, which brings the total number of facilities above 33,000.



**WHITECOURT POWER PARTNERSHIP**  
Whitecourt, Alberta  
Canada  
[NPRI 2004 Report](#)

**RUSSELL STATION**  
Rochester, New York  
United States  
[TRI 2004 Report](#)

**GENERAL MOTORS DE MÉXICO S. DE R.L. DE C.V.**  
Cerritos, Guanajuato  
México  
[RETIC 2004 Datos](#)

- ### Features of the CEC's Mapping Tool
- Quickly find facilities in your area using search functions of *Google Earth*—by postal code, city name, etc.—or just zoom in using the navigation tools.
  - Clicking on a facility displayed in *Google Earth* generates an information balloon with the name and address of the facility, along with a direct hyperlink to full details on pollutant releases and transfers on the corresponding national PRTR website.
  - Explore industrial pollution placemarks in conjunction with other map layers developed by the *Google Earth* community of interest.