



# NEWS RELEASE

## Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### EPA releases Toxic Release Inventory

*For the third year, DEC puts TRI into perspective for Alaska*

**April 12, 2006**—Today, the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued its annual “Toxics Release Inventory” (TRI) report for the year 2004. The TRI compiles the total estimated weight of toxic chemicals that have been “released” to the nation’s air, land and water. As a result of the large amounts of waste rock generated at Alaska’s operating mines, the report will again list Alaska as having the greatest weight of toxic “releases” in the nation for 2004. The rock contains small concentrations of metals that EPA refers to as a “toxics release” in TRI terminology.

“The TRI report gives a distorted picture of Alaska’s environmental quality,” said Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Kurt Fredriksson. “The vast majority of Alaska’s TRI ‘releases’ are actually permitted activities controlled by state and federal laws and well-engineered plans to protect human health and the environment. Alaska’s air, land and water continue to be the cleanest, healthiest and most productive in the Nation. In light of that, it is frustrating that EPA’s report lists Alaska as number one when it comes to these so-called ‘toxic releases.’”

Chemical wholesalers, electric utilities, federal facilities such as air force bases, dairies, seafood processors, metal mines, oil refineries and petroleum bulk terminals with ten or more employees are all required to submit reports on the amount of more than 650 chemicals their facilities may have released into the environment or otherwise managed as waste.

DEC has prepared a guide to TRI for Alaskans, available online at [www.dec.state.ak.us](http://www.dec.state.ak.us). The guide explains the TRI process and the reasons Alaska’s numbers are larger than other states. More than 90% of the total pounds reported in 2004 was waste rock. Waste rock from the largest zinc mine in the world, Teck-Cominco’s Red Dog Mine near Kotzebue, was the largest reported “release” in Alaska.

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