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Press Release

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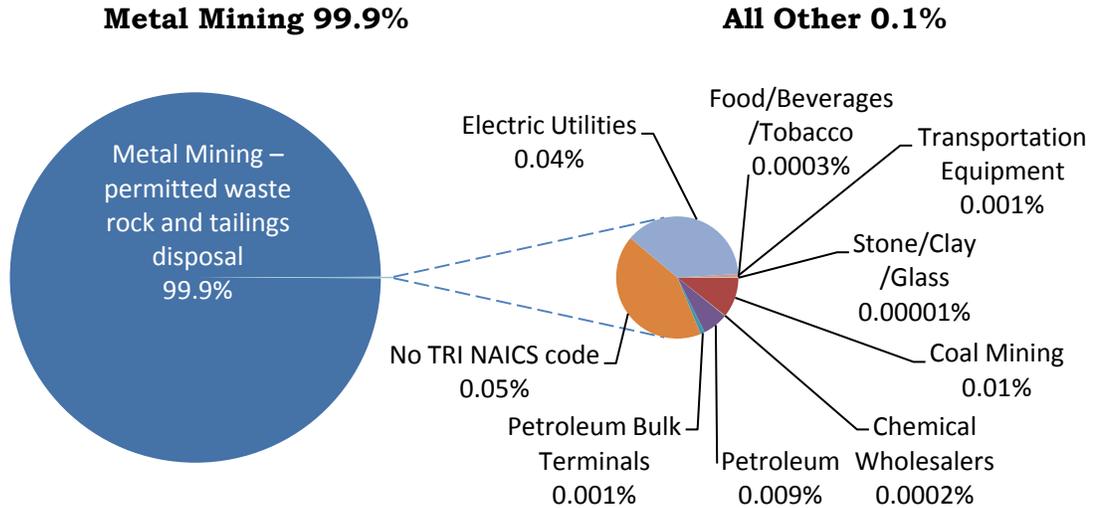
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EPA Issues Toxics Release Inventory Analysis for 2011 *Increase in Permitted Metal Mining Leads State Releases*

(JUNEAU, AK)—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today published the annual Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) National Analysis. The report provides information about chemicals released to the environment. The term “release” includes permitted air emissions and wastewater discharges, management of wastes in regulated disposal facilities, as well as accidental spills and releases. Almost all of the releases from TRI facilities in Alaska are regulated under strict EPA and State of Alaska permits with monitoring and compliance requirements designed to prevent human and environmental harm.

Total TRI releases in Alaska increased in 2011 from the previous year, mainly attributed to a 25 percent increase in metal mining waste rock and tailings disposal. Since 1998, when metal mining was added to TRI, the vast majority of Alaska’s reported releases – more than 99.9 percent – have consisted of naturally occurring trace minerals in waste rock and tailings excavated from mine sites. Mining waste rock and tailings are disposed of in state-permitted, engineered, and monitored disposal sites. Due to extensive mining activity, Alaska had the highest reported TRI volumes in the nation. For releases from all industries other than metal mining, Alaska ranks 48th in the nation. Total releases in Alaska from industries other than metal mining decreased slightly from last year.

Total Alaska Releases Reported by Industry Type



The TRI program collects information on certain toxic chemical releases to air, water and land, as well as information on waste management and pollution prevention by facilities across the country. TRI data are submitted annually to EPA, states and tribes by facilities in industry sectors such as manufacturing, metal mining, electric utilities, and commercial hazardous waste facilities. Facilities must report their toxic chemical releases to EPA under the federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) by the beginning of July each year. The Pollution Prevention Act of 1990 also requires information on waste management activities related to TRI chemicals.

Chemicals are placed on the TRI list based on their potential to cause adverse effects to human health or the environment; however, the TRI data alone do not reflect actual exposures to these chemicals or risk posed by releases, since almost all of the releases are regulated under permit conditions designed to limit human and environmental exposure.

For more information regarding TRI in Alaska, visit:

<http://www.dec.alaska.gov/spar/perp/tri/tri.htm>. More information on 2011 TRI in Alaska will be available soon.

For more on the 2011 TRI analysis and TRI Web-based tools, visit:

<http://www.epa.gov/tri/NationalAnalysis>.

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