



An example from the United States

In the United States, companies are obliged by law to report to the authorities the types and quantities of toxic chemicals that they release annually into the land, air and water. This is entered into a toxics release inventory (TRI) that is available to the public. Here are some of the ways that that information has been used.

- In 1990, after 12 years of unanswered complaints from residents in Brooklyn about fumes from local factory, the TRI revealed that its owner, the Ulano Corporation, was the top toxic air polluter in New York. The outcry forced Ulano to reduce its emissions.
- In San Jose, TRI information enabled a local environmental watchdog to identify an IBM plant as the state's largest emitter of ozone-destroying chemicals. A public campaign forced IBM to replace the chemicals with safer substitutes.
- Citizens in Asheville, North Carolina, voted to reject funding for a \$400 million drinking water treatment plant because TRI data showed that the water would still contain highly toxic contaminants from local Dupont and General Electric plants.
- Community organisation in San Diego used TRI information to press for local planning rules that would create toxic-free zones.
- Information from the TRI enabled citizens of Lima, Ohio, to identify a BP plant as the largest toxic air polluter in the state. They secured state funding to monitor BP's toxic emissions.

Bass and Moulton (2002)