



News Release:

**Toxic releases down from North American industry leaders, increasing from other facilities  
New Mexican data support first trilateral analysis of pollutant release and transfers**

**EMBARGO: 12:01 am Eastern, 18 October 2007**

Montreal, 18 October 2007—The latest *Taking Stock* report from the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) reveals that a continued decline in releases of toxic chemicals to the environment—15 percent for the United States and Canada from 1998 to 2004—is being driven by a group of industrial facilities that are the largest generators of emissions.

The CEC report, however, also reveals that the leading role of the largest waste-producing facilities stands in stark contrast to a substantial increase in chemical releases and transfers by a much larger group of industrial facilities that report lower volumes of emissions.

Released today, the annual report compares industrial pollution from a matched set of facilities in Canada and the United States—three million tonnes of chemicals released or transferred in the two countries in 2004. Over one-third of that amount was released at the location of reporting facilities, including over 700,000 tonnes released to the air, with another third transferred to recycling. For the first time, the CEC report also provides data from Mexico. Across the three countries, metals and their compounds—lead, chromium, nickel and mercury—were reported by the highest proportion of facilities.

“The evidence is clear that industry and government action to limit chemical releases is showing steady progress,” said Adrián Vázquez-Gálvez, CEC’s executive director. “It is equally clear that a large number of small and medium-size industrial facilities need to do a better job in reducing their waste and emissions if we are going to see even greater progress in North America. We trust the progress shown by industry leaders and the fact that pollution prevention is a proven strategy will encourage everyone to tackle pollution issues at the source.”

The CEC’s analysis demonstrates that facilities from Canada and the United States that reported pollution prevention activities—product and process redesign, spill and leak detection, and substituting raw materials—showed reductions from 2002–2004. Facilities not engaged in these activities did not show similar progress.

A new chapter provides a detailed look at industrial recycling, finding that over one-third of US and Canadian releases and transfers reported in 2004—more than 1 million tonnes—were recycled. Recycling has increased in recent years due to increases in production and in scrap metal prices. Most of the materials were metals, including copper, zinc, lead and their compounds.

The trilateral analysis is based on matched data from some 9 industrial sectors, 56 chemicals, and 10,000 facilities, comparing releases and transfers for similar facilities in Canada, Mexico and the United States. The report identifies a different pattern of releases and transfers in each of the three countries.

Comparisons of the three countries' industrial emissions will continue to improve as the CEC works with governments, industry and NGOs to expand the number of chemicals and facilities that are comparable.

*Taking Stock* compiles data from Canada's National Pollutant Release Inventory, the United States' Toxics Release Inventory, and, starting with its first year of mandatory reporting in 2004, Mexico's pollutant release and transfer register, the *Registro de Emisiones y Transferencia de Contaminantes*.

- 30 -

Do you have a question about a particular facility, industrial sector, province or state? The *Taking Stock Online* website <[www.cec.org/takingstock](http://www.cec.org/takingstock)> allows users to customize reports by chemical, facility, sector or geographic region.

Note as well that with new information on chemical releases and transfers from Mexican industrial sources, the CEC has created the first seamless, North America-wide map layer displaying point-specific industrial pollutant data in Canada, Mexico and the United States. Using the *Google Earth* mapping service, the CEC's map layer plots over 33,000 North American industrial facilities that reported releases and transfers of pollutants in 2004. You can access this information at: <<http://www.cec.org/naatlas/prtr>>.

For more information, please contact:

Danielle Vallée  
Commission for Environmental Cooperation  
Tel: (514) 350-4333

Media Relations  
Environment Canada  
Tel: (819) 934-8008

Francisco Parra  
Semarnat  
Tel: + (52) 55 5628 0891

Suzanne Ackerman  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
Tel: (202) 564-7819

Terry Collins  
Tel: (416) 538-8712