

Fact Sheet

Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy

What are air toxics?

Air toxics, which are also known as hazardous air pollutants (HAP), are those pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health problems or cause adverse environmental and ecological effects. EPA is required by the Clean Air Act to address 188 toxic air pollutants. We are exposed to some of these pollutants often in the form of gasoline, dry cleaning chemicals, cleaning solvents, and paint strippers. A complete listing of the pollutants can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/188polls.html>.

What has EPA done about air toxic emissions so far?

To date, EPA has issued 50 air toxic standards for many of the major industrial and commercial sources, including chemical plants and steel mills, as well as some categories of smaller sources, like dry cleaners. When fully implemented, these standards should reduce air toxic emissions by almost a million tons per year. In addition, we have developed tighter standards for tailpipe emissions from cars and trucks, for refueling vehicles, and for substantially cleaner gasoline highway diesel fuel. In addition, diesel vehicles and most nonroad engines have been substantially redesigned to reduce emissions. The indoor environments program is of particular relevance to the Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy (described below) because people in urban settings spend as much as 80% of their time indoors. EPA is currently developing an indoor air toxics strategy which will assess indoor air exposures and present next steps in our strategic approach, building upon the current information and relying heavily on voluntary, nonregulatory efforts to reduce risks from air toxics indoors.

What is the Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy?

Congress instructed EPA to develop a strategy for air toxics in urban areas that includes specific actions to address the large number of smaller, area sources, and that contains broader risk reduction goals encompassing all stationary sources. The Strategy is EPA's integrated framework for addressing air toxics in those urban areas by looking at major, mobile, and indoor source emissions. Air toxics can pose special threats in urban areas because of the large number of people and the variety of sources of toxic air pollutants, such as cars, trucks, large factories, gasoline stations, and dry cleaners. Individually, some of these sources may not emit large amounts of toxic pollutants. However, all of these pollution sources combined can potentially pose significant health threats, particularly to sensitive subgroups such as children and the elderly. We are also concerned about the impact of toxic emissions on minority and low-income communities, which are often located close to industrial and commercial urbanized areas.

What are the goals of the Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy?

We have three goals for the Strategy: 1) attain a 75% reduction in incidence of cancer attributable to exposure to HAPs emitted by large and small stationary sources nationwide; 2) attain a substantial reduction in public health risks (such as birth defects and reproduction effects) posed by HAP emissions from small industrial/commercial sources known as area sources; and 3) address disproportionate impacts of air toxics hazards across urban areas, such as geographic “hot spots,” highly exposed population subgroups, and predominantly minority and low-income communities.

What does the Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy cover?

As a first step, we have identified 33 (see attached list) of the 188 toxic air pollutants as the greatest threat to public health in urban areas in terms of their various sources, toxicity, and emissions. These 33 pollutants are responsible for an estimated 38% of all emissions of air toxics. We have also identified 29 area source categories that contribute to the emissions of the 33 pollutants. We are developing or have completed regulations for 16 of these area source categories and plan to develop regulations for the remaining 13 area source categories over the next 5 years. In addition, we plan to revise the area source category list, which could result in the listing of additional source categories, by 2003. (See attached tables for list of the 29 area source categories.) The Strategy also identifies the need for further studies of mobile and indoor sources in urban environments.

What will we do to achieve our goals?

We have and will continue to: 1) develop regulations addressing sources of air toxics at both the national and local levels; 2) initiate projects at both the national and local level to address specific pollutants (such as mercury) and to identify and address specific community risks (through pilot projects); 3) conduct air toxic assessments (including expanded air toxics monitoring and modeling) to identify areas of concern, to prioritize efforts to reduce risks, and to track progress; and 4) perform education and outreach to inform stakeholders about the Strategy and to get input into designing programs to implement it.

Who will be affected by the Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy?

The Strategy will cover most of our major metropolitan areas. EPA is making every effort to address the unique perspectives of the state, local, and tribal governments, public health groups, environmental justice communities, small business communities, and environmental interest groups. We feel that if the goals identified in the Strategy are to be achieved, partnerships and working relationships must be formed with these groups.

As a result, EPA is developing infrastructure and programs to address urban air toxics. To learn more about risks at local levels, we have become involved in community assessment and risk reduction

projects by providing technical support, risk assessment tools, and supplemental funding to several existing, regionally led, community projects. In addition, to develop methods to characterize local risks (including indoor, stationary, and mobile sources) and to implement risk reduction measures, an integrated effort is under way with the City of Cleveland, Ohio, and various industry, citizen, and community groups. This project is a case example which we hope can be used for other urban air projects initiated throughout the Nation. We are also developing a framework of implementation options for state, local, and tribal air toxics programs to assist in their development.

How can you get involved or find out more information?

You'll find current information about the Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy on our website at <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/urban/urbanpg.html>. For more information contact Yvonne W. Johnson with the U.S. EPA, Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, Emission Standards Division, at (919) 541-2798 or johnson.yvonnew@epa.gov.

List of the 33 Urban Air Toxics

acetaldehyde	ethylene oxide
acrolein	formaldehyde
acrylonitrile	hexachlorobenzene
arsenic compounds	hydrazine
benzene	lead compounds
beryllium compounds	manganese compounds
1, 3-butadiene	mercury compounds
cadmium compounds	methylene chloride
carbon tetrachloride	nickel compounds
chloroform	polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
chromium compounds	polycyclic organic matter (POM)
coke oven emissions	quinoline
dioxin	1, 1, 2, 2-tetrachloroethane
ethylene dibromide	perchloroethylene
propylene dichloride	trichloroethylene
1, 3-dichloropropene	vinyl chloride
ethylene dichloride	--

16 Area Source Categories Already Subject to Standards or That Will Be Subject to Standards

Chromic Acid Anodizing	Industrial Boilers
Commercial Sterilization Facilities	Institutional/Commerical Boilers
Other Solid Waste Incinerators (Human/Animal Cremation)	Medical Waste Incinerators
Decorative Chromium Electroplating	Municipal Waste Combustors
Dry Cleaning Facilities	Open Burning of Scrap Tires
Halogenated Solvent Cleaners	Secondary Lead Smelting
Hard Chromium Electroplating	Stationary Internal Combustion Engines
Hazardous Waste Combustors	Portland Cement Manufacturing

New Area Source Categories Being Listed

Cyclic Crude and Intermediate Production	Municipal Landfills
Flexible Polyurethane Foam Fabrication Operations	Oil and Natural Gas Production
Hospital Sterilizers	Paint Stripping Operations
Industrial Inorganic Chemical Manufacturing	Plastic Materials and Resins Manufacturing
Industrial Organic Chemical Manufacturing	Publicly Owned Treatment Works
Mercury Cell Chlor-Alkali Plants	Synthetic Rubber Manufacturing
Gasoline Distribution (Stage I)	--