

The National Pollution Release Inventory, NPRI, is a program initiated by the Federal Government to keep track of the release of pollutants across the country. The program is administered by Environment Canada. From the Environment Canada web site (www.ec.ca/pdb/npri) we learn that:-

“The NPRI is Canada's legislated, publicly-accessible inventory of pollutants released, disposed of and sent for recycling by facilities across the country. Industrial, institutional and commercial facilities which meet NPRI [reporting requirements](#) are required to report under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* (CEPA 1999).

Information collected by the NPRI is included in the national inventory of [Criteria Air Contaminant \(CAC\)](#) emissions. This inventory also includes emission estimates for facilities that are not required to report to the NPRI, and non-facility emission sources such as forest fires and motor vehicles.”

Effectively, this means that businesses that use and/or dispose of pollutants must assess whether or not they meet the reporting requirements, and if so, they must collect the required data from the previous year, prepare the report and, on or before June 1 of the current year, submit it to Environment Canada via the Internet using the OWNERS web site. The onus is on the company management to decide whether or not the reporting criteria are met; however Environment Canada has local inspectors and they have the authority to see what efforts have been made by the company in complying with the Act.

Many larger companies have the resources on staff to undertake the assessment of the data and to organize it in the format required for uploading onto the OWNERS web site. However to undertake this work properly requires chemical expertise, as well as a good understanding of the processes involved, so most small and medium sized companies rely on specialist consultants to do this work for them: Spectrum Environmental is very adept at performing this work and can be relied upon to fulfill your NPRI requirements correctly, and in a timely fashion and at a reasonable cost.

Particulate matter

Air borne Particulate matter is now regarded as a pollutant, so that facilities which produce this in the course of their operations are also now required to report. This includes quarries, and also facilities which have unpaved access roads and yards from which road dust is produced by vehicular activity.

How Spectrum Environmental can help you

Spectrum Environmental has been assisting clients complete their NPRI returns since 2002. Thus we are familiar with the program and have developed procedures for dealing with the data.

The steps involved in making a report to the NPRI are as follows:-

1. Examine the processes taking place at a plant, and identify potential substances that meet the criteria.
2. Obtain data from the client concerning the use of pollutants to see if the quantities meet the criteria. This means that the client has to provide accurate quantities of materials brought on site during the previous calendar year, and also details of waste materials sent off site for disposal and/or recycling.
3. Evaluate emission factors for air emissions. This is the crucial step in the process, because emission factors are used to determine the reportable amount of emissions for the different pollutants. There are several different ways by which emission factors can be evaluated, and the Consultant has to decide the appropriate method in each case. An incorrectly estimated emission factor can result in gross errors being made in the quantities of materials being emitted, and this will usually result in a query from Environment Canada several months after the submission date, when many of the details of the submission have been forgotten. Spectrum Environment has evaluated emission factors from a wide range of industrial processes including: metal melting furnaces, plasma cutting and welding operations, spray painting lines and operations, and galvanizing plants. Because of the experience we have gained in undertaking many different NPRI reports from a wide variety of industrial processes, we now have the in-house data bases and knowledge to determine emission factors for new clients accurately and in an efficient cost-effective manner.
4. Consolidate the data in the correct format, and then upload it to OWNERS. This operation is somewhat intricate in that the site is not very user friendly.
5. Print off the report generated by OWNERS and send this in PDF format to the client. The client is now ready to formally submit the report – i.e. review the PDF file, and if there are no apparent errors, to electronically sign the report on OWNERS.
6. Prepare a text report of what was submitted to OWNERS for the client's retention, explaining how the reported values were arrived at.

Contact us at 905 842 6411 (1 888 290 9236) or at spectrum@chaltis.ca if you would like further information on our services in completing NPRI reports.