



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **MADIGAN AND COALITION OF STATES SUE EPA TO REQUIRE STRONGER REPORTING ON TOXIC CHEMICALS**

*Current EPA Rule Increases Risks to Workers, Residents and the Environment*

Chicago - Attorney General Lisa Madigan and a coalition of 11 other states filed suit against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) seeking to reverse new regulations that, among other things, allow thousands of companies to avoid disclosing information to the public about the toxic chemicals they use, store and release into the environment by rolling back chemical reporting requirements.

The lawsuit seeks to invalidate the EPA's revised Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) database regulations and return to the former reporting requirements so that public access to environmental information is not restricted. Madigan and the other Attorneys General filed the lawsuit today in federal court in New York.

In January 2006, Madigan filed comments opposing the new TRI reporting requirements and continues to take a leading role in addressing environmental concerns both on the state and national level.

"I vigorously opposed changing the rules last year and am continuing to fight to change these rules," Madigan said. "The public has a right to know as much as possible about the toxic chemicals that may be stored in and near their communities."

The new regulations, which took effect in January 2007, significantly weakened the TRI by reducing the amount of information companies must report for most of the toxic chemicals covered by the program. For most toxic chemicals, the EPA's new regulations increased by ten-fold the quantity of chemical waste a facility can generate without providing detailed TRI reports. The EPA also weakened TRI reporting requirements for the vast majority of the most dangerous toxic chemicals including chemicals such as lead and mercury. As a result, thousands of companies can now avoid filing a complete report on harmful chemicals.

The TRI is the only comprehensive, publicly available database of toxic chemical use, storage and release in the United States. Prior to adopting the new regulations, under TRI, companies were required to provide the EPA and the states in which the company's facilities are located with information critical to public health and safety, and the environment. This information included the

types and amounts of toxic chemicals stored at the company's facilities and the quantities they released into the environment.

Under the former regulations, TRI information was a highly successful tool used by communities to protect public health and safety, and the environment:

- Citizen groups used the information from the TRI to monitor companies in their communities;
- State and local government entities used TRI data to track toxic chemicals;
- Labor and other organizations used TRI data to ensure the safety of their workers; and
- The TRI data was an effective incentive for companies to voluntarily reduce their toxic chemical releases.

Madigan said the EPA's rollback of TRI regulations severely weakens the ability of the public and governments to monitor and respond to the presence of toxins in their communities.

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the Toxics Release Inventory, passed by Congress after the Bhopal toxic chemical catastrophe in India . In 1984, a deadly cloud of methyl isocyanate accidentally released from a Union Carbide plant in Bhopal , India killed or seriously injured more than 2,000 people. Shortly thereafter, a serious chemical release occurred at a sister plant in West Virginia.

In addition to Illinois , the states in the lawsuit include Arizona , California , Connecticut , Maine , Massachusetts , Minnesota , New Hampshire , New Jersey , New York , and Vermont . The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection also is a plaintiff in the lawsuit.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Gerald Karr is handling the case for Madigan's Environmental Bureau.

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