

A collaborative project by:

ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENCE

**CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL
LAW ASSOCIATION**

PollutionWatch
www.PollutionWatch.org

PollutionWatch Fact Sheet **British Columbia Pollution Highlights**

Most pollutants in British Columbia dumped into the air

- Most pollutants released by companies in British Columbia were dumped into the air in 2003, according to the latest data from Environment Canada.
- **More than 286 million kilograms (286,504,537) of pollutants were released into the air from industrial facilities in British Columbia in 2003**, including Criteria Air Contaminants and toxic contaminants.
- Some of these pollutants are associated with asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, stroke, heart attacks and cancer, and environmental effects such as smog and acid rain.

Alcan Inc. facility led British Columbia in reported air releases

- Alcan Inc's Kitimat Works facility reported the largest combined toxic (such as mercury and lead) and Criteria Air Contaminants (smog-causing pollutants) air releases of any facility in British Columbia in 2003 (52,841,252 kilograms). Duke Energy's Pine River Gas Plant was ranked #2, Canfor's Prince George Pulp and Paper Mills #3, Duke Energy's Fort Nelson Gas Plant #4 and Cariboo Pulp and Paper facility #5.

British Columbia Overview

- Total releases and transfers of pollutants reported in British Columbia in 2003: 392,655,322 kilograms, ranked #5 in Canada.
- Combined air releases of toxic pollutants (such as mercury and lead) and Criteria Air Contaminants (smog-forming pollutants): 286,504,537 kilograms, ranked #6 in Canada.
- Total water releases in 2003: 16,276,785 kilograms, ranked #3 in Canada.

British Columbia profile of releases and transfers by potential health effects:

- Air releases of pollutants with suspected respiratory effects in 2003: 271,788,101 kilograms, ranked #6 in Canada.
- Air releases of pollutants suspected of causing cancer in 2003: 734,938 kilograms, ranked #4 in Canada.
- Air releases of pollutants with suspected developmental and reproductive effects in 2003: 124,523,007 kilograms, ranked #4 in Canada.
- Air releases of pollutants considered toxic under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* in 2003: 79,647,341 kilograms, ranked #5 in Canada.

Other health effects lists, such as endocrine disrupters, are available on www.PollutionWatch.org.

Environmental Defence [t] 416 323-9521 [f] 416 323-9301 [e] info@environmentaldefence.ca

Canadian Environmental Law Association [t] 416 960-2284 [f] 416 960-9392 [e] pollutionwatch@ccla.ca

British Columbia Trends (1995-2003)

- PollutionWatch trends are based on analyses of 158 core pollutants that have been consistently reported to Environment Canada's National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI) program since 1995.
- Criteria Air Contaminants, which cause smog and acid rain, are not included in the trend analysis because facilities only started reporting them in 2002. Recycling and energy recovery are also not included in these time trends as reporting only became mandatory in 1998.
- The PollutionWatch trends are presented in two ways: first, using all facilities that reported in each year; secondly, using only those core facilities that reported in each year between 1995 and 2003. Both trends use core pollutants – only those pollutants that have been consistently reported between 1995 and 2003.

Releases and Transfers of Core Pollutants (1995-2003)

- Reported releases and transfers of toxic pollutants are increasing in British Columbia. From 1995-2003, releases and transfers of pollutants in British Columbia increased from 26,178,320 kilograms to 31,445,665 kilograms, an increase of 20%.
- Air releases increased from 7,060,345 kilograms in 1995 to 12,897,111 kilograms in 2003, an increase of 83%
- Air releases of pollutants with suspected respiratory effects increased from 6,122,531 kilograms in 1995 to 11,891,214 kilograms in 2003, an increase of 94%.

Releases and Transfers of Core Pollutants from Core Facilities (1995-2003)

- Total releases and transfers of core pollutants from core facilities increased from 10,819,499 kilograms in 1995 to 22,168,754 kilograms in 2003, in increase of 105%.
- Air releases of core pollutants from core facilities increased from 5,926,569 kilograms in 1995 to 11,132,888 kilograms in 2003, an increase of 88%.
- Air releases of core pollutants with suspected respiratory effects from core facilities increased from 5,000,938 kilograms in 1995 to 10,307,278 kilograms in 2003, an increase of 106%.

Notes on PollutionWatch analysis

- The analysis was generated using the PollutionWatch web site (www.PollutionWatch.org), which provides Canadians with the most complete picture to date of reported releases and transfers in their communities and across Canada between 1995 and 2003, the latest data available. PollutionWatch uses data from Environment Canada's national reporting program – the National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI).
- Because NPRI data only reflect a portion of pollution in Canada, the PollutionWatch analyses are very conservative estimates of the total amount of pollutants released and transferred across the country. NPRI data do not include all pollutants (only 323 pollutants are reported) or all sources (mobile sources such as cars and trucks, agricultural sources and small facilities are some sources not included in NPRI).
- Environment Canada notes that the number of facilities reporting increased from 2001 to 2003 due to changes in reporting requirements (including the addition of Criteria Air Contaminants) and increased compliance promotion activities.
- This increase in the number of facilities may be a factor in some time trends. In addition, a number of sectors (such as pulp and paper) have changed their reporting methods over time, which may be a factor in some time trends.
- Facilities may also report increases or decreases over time for a variety of reasons: change in process, chemical use or production; recently started or gone out of business; change in reporting requirements, estimation methods or guidance materials; and, increased education, outreach and enforcement of the NPRI reporting program.

PollutionWatch has produced a series of fact sheets outlining releases and transfers of pollutants in 2003 nationally and in five provinces: British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick. Detailed facility and company information for all provinces and communities across Canada is available on the PollutionWatch web site – **www.PollutionWatch.org**.

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About PollutionWatch (www.PollutionWatch.org) is a collaborative project of Environmental Defence and the Canadian Environmental Law Association. The web site tracks releases and transfers of pollutants across Canada based on data collected by Environment Canada through the National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI). NPRI does not include data from all pollutants or sources. Visitors to the PollutionWatch web site can identify facilities in their home towns by searching by postal code, access “quick lists” of the facilities reporting the largest releases and transfers of pollutants in the country, get trends from 1995-2003, or create their own ranked lists of facilities by province, industrial sector, or corporation.

The data used in this PollutionWatch Fact Sheet is based on the federal National Pollutant Release Inventory, a publicly available database administered by Environment Canada. PollutionWatch classifies releases, disposals and transfers differently than Environment Canada’s NPRI program. These varying methods of presentation will yield different perspectives on the data. PollutionWatch makes no warranties or representation of any kind with respect to its contents and disclaims all such representations and warranties. Neither PollutionWatch nor any other person acting on its behalf makes any warranty, expressed or implied, or assumes any legal responsibility for the accuracy of any information or accepts liability from the use or damages from the use.

For more information, or to arrange an interview, please contact:

Jennifer Foulds, Environmental Defence, (416) 323-9521 ext. 232; (647) 280-9521 (cell)

Fe de Leon/Paul Muldoon, Canadian Environmental Law Association, (416) 371-3219 (cell); (416) 960-2284 ext. 223 (office)

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