

Rocky Mountain Arsenal and the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act



Overview

The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986 (EPCRA) requires reporting on the storage, use, and releases of hazardous chemicals, if the chemical quantities exceed defined thresholds. Under the law, sites with chemicals above the threshold quantities must submit annual reports to state and local emergency planning officials, as well as the public, to inform them of the general types and locations of hazardous chemicals present at the facility during the previous calendar year.

The Army has provided these reports annually to the Colorado Emergency Planning Commission and the Adams County Local Emergency Planning Committee. For the reporting year 2023, there were no hazardous chemicals stored or used at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal (RMA) that exceeded the threshold reporting quantities, therefore no report was required.

1. What is the purpose of EPCRA?

Congress enacted EPCRA following a chemical release in Bhopal, India, to reduce the likelihood of similar chemical disasters in the United States. The purpose of the law is twofold: First, it imposes emergency planning requirements on federal, state, and local governments, as well as on tribes and industry; and, second, it outlines reporting requirements that equip emergency responders with information they can use to improve chemical safety and protect public health and the environment. (To learn more about ECPRA, visit the EPA [here.](#))

2. Why has the Army been storing chemicals at RMA, if the environmental cleanup is complete?

The surface environmental cleanup of RMA's soils and structures was completed in 2010. Groundwater treatment and ongoing operation and maintenance of the two on-site landfills and two waste consolidation areas continue. The Army stores and uses limited chemicals on site as part of this ongoing work.

3. Why did the Army store smaller quantities of chemicals at RMA in 2023 than it had in the past?

Over the last several years, the Army has worked to reduce the number and quantity of chemicals stored on site. That effort included safely transporting and disposing of chemicals that were no longer needed, as well as purchasing and storing smaller quantities of chemicals used for ongoing work.

4. What are the chemicals stored and used on site?

In addition to miscellaneous office cleaning supplies and propane for heating at the water treatment plants, the Army uses and stores sulfuric acid to help maintain pH levels in a sanitary sewage discharge basin.

5. Does this mean the Army won't file annual reports with the state and Adams County in the future?

Not necessarily. The Army will inventory its on-site chemical supplies annually, as required by ECPRA, and submit reports if RMA supplies exceed the reporting quantity thresholds.