

# JUNIOR POSTER COMPANION GUIDE

CANADIAN INSTITUTE FOR  
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY

L'INSTITUT CANADIEN DU  
DROIT ET DE LA POLITIQUE  
DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

For Teachers  
Grades 6-9

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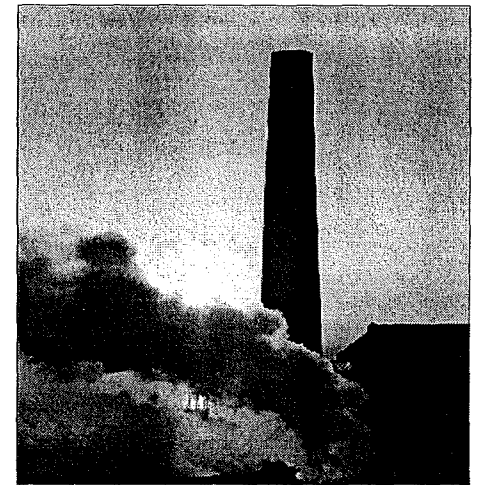
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**Order maps online!**  
[www.cielap.org](http://www.cielap.org)

## Introduction

Do you want to know how much pollution is being released in your community? As a teacher, do you want to be able to use this information in a meaningful way? Do you want to empower your students to take a stand against pollution? The Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy (CIELAP) has undertaken this project to help you carry out all of the above. This guide, and the accompanying poster, will give you:

- A basic understanding of the National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI)
- An explanation of how to read the information found on the maps
- The tools to find out where pollutants are being released in your community
- An understanding of the importance of using the NPRI in the classroom
- Details about additional information found on the Internet



## What is the National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI)?

The National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI) was created by Environment Canada in 1992 to provide Canadians with information on pollutants released into the environment or transferred off-site for release or treatment. It is the only legislated, publicly accessible database of its kind in Canada.

There are 268 substances currently on the list for the 2000 reporting year. Under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA), owners or operators of facilities that manufacture, process or otherwise use one or more of the NPRI-related substances under prescribed conditions must report.

All NPRI information and data are accessible on the internet at Environment Canada's National NPRI website: [www.ec.gc.ca/pdb/npri](http://www.ec.gc.ca/pdb/npri)

## Who has to Report?

The NPRI is far from a complete listing of every source of pollution in Canada. It only covers pollution coming from facilities that meet reporting requirements. Those requirements are:

- The facility must have at least 10 full time employees
- The substance being reported must be manufactured, processed or otherwise used at a concentration of 1%
- The facility used at least 10 tonnes of the substance being reported

Currently, 2,419 facilities report to the NPRI every year. Facilities report their releases to air, water, land or underground injection, as well as their transfers off-site for treatment, release or recycling of substances. This is facilitated through free reporting software and assistance from regional Environment Canada offices.

There are plans to add different requirements (including the addition of greenhouse gases) to the NPRI in the coming years.

## The Purpose of the NPRI Poster

Why should you use the NPRI in the classroom? How can you make all the data found in the NPRI relevant to your students?

CIELAP has developed the map in your hand to help give students a better understanding of where pollution is released and transferred in Canada. CIELAP undertook this project to highlight the importance of educating for sustainability. The information on the map can be used in many subject areas, in many different age groups and for many different purposes.

The map also speaks to important curriculum objectives. This guide will help you find the connections between the NPRI map and curriculum. It will help you translate the data found on the map into fun, exciting and meaningful activities for your students.

## How to Use This Poster

Using this poster is very easy. The following sections will explain to you, the teacher, the different elements of the poster.

### *The Main Releases Map*

The majority of the poster is taken up by the large map of Canada depicting the releases of pollutants. This map shows the location of the facilities reporting the largest toxic and non-toxic pollutants to the NPRI. It gives students an idea of where in Canada the top polluters are located, giving them some important context. Are there any facilities located near your hometown?

### *Treatment Map*

The map in the top right-hand corner shows the location of the facilities that transfer the largest quantity of pollutants for treatment. Transfers for treatment are quite common — instead of releasing pollutants directly to the air, water or land, some facilities send the pollutants off to be treated first. At this point, sometimes its environmental impact is changed. Have a look to see where the concentration of facilities that transfer pollutants are located.

### *Recycling Map*

The map in the bottom left-hand corner shows the location of the facilities that send the most pollutants for recycling and energy recovery. Reporting transfers for recycling is only a small part of the NPRI, but can help students understand the diversity of a facility's activities. This map can lead to a discussion about the importance of recycling both at a personal level, and a facility level.

### *Regional Descriptions*

The purpose behind the regional descriptions is to give students important context regarding the nature of their region's pollution activities. Within each region, there is a summary of the types of prevalent industries, as well as a chart which shows regional releases, transfers and recycling. Here is where students can jumpstart their investigation into comparing the releases and transfers where they live to other parts of the country.

The poster also shows a chart of the total number of facilities reporting to the NPRI. This is broken down by province.

### *Health Implications*

The health effects associated with the release of pollutants are well-documented. Our physical environment has a significant impact on our health, both in the short term and over time. You may want to explore this aspect in your classroom. This map, and the NPRI in general, only gives you a starting point to find out about pollutants being released in your community.

*“Around 2,400 facilities report to the NPRI every year.”*

*“The Map gives students and idea of where in Canada the top polluters are located.”*

For Teachers  
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## More Information

There is a lot of information out there to help you and your students better understand pollution releases and transfers in Canada. Below is a list of some supplementary materials and websites you can use:

- "Citizen's Guide to the NPRI" — CIELAP published this booklet in 2000 to give citizens a better understanding of the tools available to find out what toxics are being released in your neighborhood (<http://www.cielap.org>)
- Pollution Watch website (<http://www.pollutionwatch.org>) — together with the Canadian Environmental Law Association and Environmental Defence Canada, CIELAP is set to re-launch [www.pollutionwatch.org](http://www.pollutionwatch.org), a website that allows users to simply enter their postal code to discover who is polluting in their neighborhood
- Environment Canada's Website (<http://www.eg.gc.ca/pdb/npri>) — the official site of the NPRI, allowing users to do data searches based on chemicals, companies and communities.
- Eco-Kids Online Website (<http://www.ecokidsonline.com>) designed to inspire children to become life-long environmental stewards, EcoKids Online is an invaluable resource for educators, youth group leaders and parents.

If you'd like more information on the impact of pollution on human health, please visit:

- Canadian Institute for Child Health - <http://www.cich.ca/project-safe.htm>
- Canadian Health Network - [http://www.canadian-health-network.ca/environmental\\_health.html](http://www.canadian-health-network.ca/environmental_health.html)
- Environment Canada Kids Page - [http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/kids\\_e.html](http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/kids_e.html)
- Health Canada's Environmental Health Program - <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ehp/>