

## Letting Goad

### White House pressured EPA to ease toxics reporting requirements, GAO says

Congress' investigative arm, the Government Accountability Office, has concluded that the Bush White House pressured the U.S. EPA to ease toxics reporting requirements for businesses. The Toxics Release Inventory was born in 1986 and serves as a community right-to-know tool, requiring that companies report annually on their toxic pollution. However, the EPA, apparently under pressure from the White House Office of Management and Budget, recently revised the TRI reporting requirements, allowing companies to file less-informative reports and eschew reporting altogether if they emit less than 5,000 pounds of toxic chemicals, up from the previous trigger of 500 pounds. The reporting changes, the GAO said, mean that industry will have to file 22,000 fewer reports a year. The EPA's own analysis found that the relaxed reporting changes would save industry a paltry \$6 million a year, but the GAO countered that the agency's estimate was off the mark and overstated the savings by up to 25 percent. More important, the GAO said the EPA's calculations "masked the disproportionately large impacts" that the eased reporting rules would have on communities.

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**source:** [Associated Press](#)

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