Exercise

Overview

Tools are available to access data about emissions to air, water and land in your neighborhood.

Objectives

1. Access electronic resources to find local information.
2. Demonstrate the use these resources to identify location of emission sources and types of emissions from facilities in your zip code.

Resource: MyEnvironment

The US Environmental Protection Agency maintains several web portals for use by citizens to gather information about private and public facilities.

MyEnvironment will be demonstrated by the facilitator and then you will use it find information. In addition, a description of how to access other helpful website resources utilizing myRTK and ECHO are in the 'More Information' section of this exercise.

At *MyEnvironment* you can access environmental data for a local community.

Access: www.epa.gov (see *MyEnvironment*, lower left of home page) or type http://www.epa.gov/myenvironment/ into your browser.

Enter: [zip code]

You will see the zip code you selected and a scrolling screen of topics.

Just below the scrolling section is a blue tool bar of icons. Each is a short cut to a specific topic on the site. Hover over each to display the name of the resource at the site, and scroll down the page as needed to match the icon to a resource. This toolbar also is displayed at the left of the page; this will move as you use the site and speeds moving to another part without going back to the home page. Clicking on the 'home' icon returns you to this page.

The site shows eight screens (each represented by an icon in the tool bar):

MyMaps: display or download a map of the EPA-regulated facilities for the selected area; customize your mapping, using Map Contents.

Hover over a site, and use icons at each site to display other reports:

Chemistry flask: EPA Site Report

Hard Hat: Inspection and Compliance Report (detailed ECHO report for the facility)

Bulls eye: 2010 census data for 1 mile around the facility

RSS feed and Google Earth links also shown.

MyAir—air quality index (AQI), radon and UV radiation information

MyWater—water quality and source information

MyEnergy—energy production and consumption; how to conserve

MyHealth—cancer and infant mortality and low birth weight

MyLand—locate emergency incidents, Brownfields, NPL and hazardous waste links; Cleanups in my Community mapping

MyCommunity—locate green actions and activities

MyEnvironmental Reports—published reports relevant to the zip code

Work in small groups to complete the worksheet using *MyEnvironment*.

One member of the group should be prepared to provide feedback to other participants.

Discuss

Discuss information reported by each group.

Identify needs for more information, as appropriate; use the contact icon to e-mail EPA. Agency representatives provide timely response to input.

Work Sheet

Zip Code: _____

Examples of Facilities Identified: _____

_____

_____

I/my group accessed (circle all that apply):

MyMaps
MyAir
MyWater
MyEnergy
MyHealth
MyLand
MyCommunity
MyEnvironmental Reports

Most useful part(s) of the site:

_____

_____

_____

How I may use this in the community:

_____

_____

_____

How could this exercise be improved?

_____

_____

More Information

Help to use MyEnvironment

Click on '*how to use this page*' (upper right hand side of page, near the '*select a new location*' box'.

More useful background for *MyAir*:

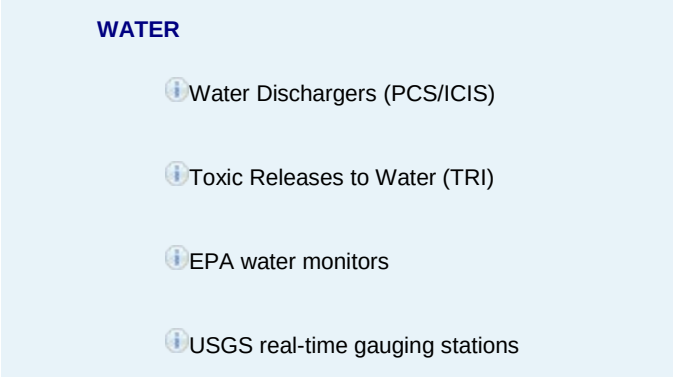
More definitions and links at http://www.airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=aqibasics.aqi#underaqi

More useful background for *MyWater*:

States and Tribal Nations set standards, and then monitor the water to determine if the standard is met.

If the quality criteria is/are not met after implementing minimal levels of pollution technology then the source is categorized as 'water quality limited' or 'impaired water'. These sources go onto the 303(d) list and a TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) for pollutants is calculated and monitored.

Water sources can also be listed if the quality data shows that the water is approaching non-compliance and might be expected in the next two year reporting cycle. See http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/lawsguidance/cwa/tmdl/index.cfm.



For an explanation of PCS, TRI, USGS term, click on the blue "i" ( ) for information.

More useful background for *MyEnergy*:

BTU—British Thermal Unit. The amount of energy needed to heat or cool a pound of water 1 degree Fahrenheit. A ton of coal is about 20 million BTUs (varies by type of coal); a gallon of #2 heating oil is about 140,000 BTUs; a thousand cubic feet of natural gas is about 1 million BTUs.

More useful background for *MyHealth*:

Click on 'more information' or 'show the entire list' for useful definitions and data.

More useful background for *MyLand*:

Click on 'EPA Brownfields Program', 'Waste Program Homepage' or 'Superfund Hazardous Waste Sites' and other links shown in blue type for details and definitions.

Tools—myRTK, ECHO

myRTK (**my R**ight-**t**o-**K**now)—Toxic Release Inventory information for facilities in a selected area. This tool answers your questions about toxic chemicals released to the air, water and land at a specific facility, what health effects may result from exposure and the history of regulatory compliance at a facility.

This tool links to the Toxic Release Inventory data for a specific facility, where you can find the quantities of chemicals that are released, how the facility ranks compared with others and additional compliance data.

English and Spanish versions are available.

For use with a mobile device:

Access: http://www2.epa.gov/toxics-release-inventory-tri-program and then click on '*Find tools for TRI data analysis'*

OR http://www2.epa.gov/toxics-release-inventory-tri-program/tri-data-and-tools

For use with a desk top/tablet:

Access: http://myrtk.epa.gov/info/

Enter: address/zip code

Help to use myRTK

Guide to Using myRTK:

http://www2.epa.gov/toxics-release-inventory-tri-program/guide-using-myrtk

ECHO—Enforcement and Compliance History Online.

This resource shows enforcement and compliance data for air, surface water, hazardous waste and drinking water systems. Approximately 800,000 regulated facilities nationwide are included. You can create maps and show trends, including pollutions sources, greenhouse gases, toxic chemicals and waste water discharges.

Access: http://echo.epa.gov/

Enter: city/state or zip code for all facilities

Enter: facility for specific information

Help to use ECHO

Keep up to date on changes: http://epa.cove/echo_modernization

Advanced uses: http://epa.gov/echo_pro

For more information on generating Comparative Maps and the State Dashboard:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gV9nuFdhn8&noredirect=1

Websites and Webinar Resources

http://www2.epa.gov/toxics-release-inventory-tri-program/tri-resources-communities

http://www.epa.gov/enviro/ *EnviroFacts*, one-stop data access, links to other resources

http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/mapping.html a tool to map demographic, health, environmental and facility-level data relevant to environmental justice

Webinars
http://www.dscej.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=79&Itemid=262 (click on TRI webinar archives)

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