



Air Pollution: EPA May Not Fully Achieve Toxic Air Deposition Goals: Rced-91-102

By -

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Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO reported on toxic bioaccumulation and the extent to which air deposition contributes to this problem. GAO found that: (1) air deposition of toxic pollutants, particularly in water, may significantly contribute to bioaccumulation problems; (2) American industry reported emitting about 2.4 billion pounds of toxic chemicals into the atmosphere in 1988; (3) bioaccumulation of certain chemicals has adverse impacts on birds, fish, and other wildlife; (4) the Great Lakes, coastal estuaries, and other bodies of water are the areas most susceptible to bioaccumulation problems; (5) health effects of bioaccumulation appear to be manifested in the offspring of both human and wildlife populations rather than in adults; (6) toxic substances travel great distances in the atmosphere before being deposited and accumulated in different species; and (7) the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 require the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to assess and report on the air deposition problem, but data limitations may make it difficult to develop a comprehensive report in 3 years.



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