

Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Act (TURA)

The Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Act (TURA), adopted in 1989, is designed to protect public health and the environment while promoting the competitiveness of Massachusetts businesses.

Under TURA, facilities that use large amounts of toxic chemicals are required to report on their chemical use, conduct toxics use reduction planning every two years, and pay a fee. The fees paid by TURA filers support the work of the TURA implementing agencies, and are used to provide a wide variety of services, including training, technical assistance, and grant programs.

TURA Implementing Agencies



The Massachusetts Office of Technical Assistance and Technology (OTA) is a non-regulatory agency within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. OTA provides free, confidential, on-site technical assistance to Massachusetts manufacturers, businesses, and institutions.



The Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI), located at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, provides education and training for companies and Toxics Use Reduction Planners; sponsors research into the development of cleaner, safer materials and technologies; provides grants to businesses, community organizations, and municipalities; convenes business working groups to address specific environmental challenges; conducts policy research and analysis; and provides laboratory and library services.



MassDEP
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Environmental Protection

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) is the regulatory body for the program. MassDEP certifies Toxics Use Reduction Planners, collects and analyzes chemical use information and other data submitted by companies, provides compliance guidance, and takes enforcement actions.

How does TURA work?

Businesses regulated by TURA are subject to three requirements:

- **Reporting:** TURA-covered businesses must report their use of listed toxic chemicals each year.
- **Planning:** TURA-covered businesses must conduct a toxics use reduction planning process every two years. In the toxics use reduction planning process, businesses conduct a systematic review of how and why they are using toxic chemicals and identify opportunities to adopt safer technologies or processes.
- **Fee:** TURA-covered businesses must pay a fee each year. These fees are used to support the services provided by the implementing agencies.

TURA results

Massachusetts businesses subject to TURA have reduced use and emissions of toxic chemicals steadily over time. From 1990 to 2016, Massachusetts companies reduced toxic chemical use by 66 percent, byproduct by 72 percent, and on-site releases by 92 percent, based on preliminary analysis.

Competitiveness

TURA enhances the competitiveness of Massachusetts companies. The savings in operating costs generated from implementation of toxics use reduction projects was estimated in a recent independent survey of Massachusetts companies to be approximately \$4.5 million annually. Technical assistance from OTA and TURI is credited with helping many Massachusetts businesses retain customers and stay in business despite changing market conditions.

Work with large and small businesses

The TURA program works with a wide range of business sectors, including metal finishing and plating, aerospace and defense, plastics compounding, electronics and others. In addition to its work with large manufacturers, the TURA program provides assistance to a range of small businesses, such as dry cleaners and auto repair and auto body shops. TURA training programs and supply chain work groups help Massachusetts companies stay ahead of the regulatory curve, ensuring they are prepared for emerging regulations in national and international markets.

Saving energy and water

Companies have significantly reduced energy and water use and have achieved significant cost savings by applying the techniques of TUR.

Community benefits

Projects at the local level have helped municipalities to reduce the use of toxic chemicals in a wide variety of applications, ranging from schools to janitorial cleaning to pesticide reduction.

National and international recognition

TURA is considered a model environmental policy nationally and internationally. TURA won the prestigious Innovations in American Government Award for excellence in the public sector in 1999, and the National Pollution Prevention Roundtable (NPPR) Most Valuable Pollution Prevention Program award in 2008. In 2014 and 2015, several Massachusetts businesses received awards from NPPR and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for projects they conducted with support from the TURA program. California, New York, the Canadian province of Ontario, and other jurisdictions have used TURA as a model in developing their own programs to manage toxic chemicals.

How are decisions made under TURA?

Three groups of state officials, scientists and citizens determine policy under the Toxics Use Reduction Act:

- **Administrative Council:** Composed of the heads of 6 state government agencies or their designees, the Administrative Council makes policy decisions for the TURA program. This includes making decisions about what chemicals are included on the TURA list, and which chemicals are designated as Higher and Lower Hazard Substances, among other activities. The Council is also responsible for ensuring interagency coordination related to toxic chemicals throughout Massachusetts government.
- **Advisory Committee:** The Advisory Committee provides the Administrative Council with the perspectives and expertise of a range of stakeholders, including large and small businesses, toxics use reduction planners, labor organizations, health and environmental organizations and others.
- **Science Advisory Board (SAB):** The Science Advisory Board is a board of experts who provide scientific input to the TURA program, including providing advice on chemical listings and delistings and Higher and Lower Hazard designations.

The Massachusetts TUR program involves companies, government agencies, and communities working together to develop and implement better systems and reduce wastefulness through improved quality of products and manufacturing processes.

"Our profitability increases with market advantage gained from customers with preference for socially-responsible companies. Our big brand electronic customers demand that we comply with environmental regulations, use safer substances, be transparent and promote energy-efficient operations and products. The TURA Program helped get us here."

Elizabeth Tshudy
Environmental, Health and Safety
Manager, Analog Devices, Inc.

For more information about the TURA program, go to: www.turi.org/tura



Toxics Use Reduction Institute
The Offices at Boott Mills West
126 John Street, Suite 14 (2nd Floor)
Lowell, MA 01852
Tel: 978-934-3275