

Toxics Use Reduction Institute Overview

The Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI) at the University of Massachusetts Lowell provides resources and tools to help make the Commonwealth a safer place to live and work. Established by the Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Act (TURA) of 1989, TURI collaborates with businesses, community organizations, and government agencies to reduce the use of toxic chemicals, protect public health and the environment, and promote the competitiveness of Massachusetts businesses.

TURI Programs Help Companies and Communities Reduce Toxics

Education: TURI provides an annual course that trains professionals to become certified Toxics Use Reduction Planners. Since 1990, over 1,000 TUR Planners have been certified. TURI also provides a range of workshops, seminars and conferences to equip businesses with the tools and technical information needed to reduce toxics and boost efficiency.

Business Working Groups: TURI convenes workshops and peer mentoring groups to help Massachusetts businesses meet environmental challenges. For example, TURI is working with companies in the aerospace and defense sector to identify and use safer alternatives to hexavalent chromium and other chemicals.

Grant Programs: TURI provides grants to large and small businesses, academic researchers, municipalities and community organizations.

Industry Grants provide funding to qualified Massachusetts manufacturers to implement process modification or modernization opportunities that would otherwise not be economically feasible.

Small Business Grants provide funding to qualified small businesses in Massachusetts to change processes or replace toxic chemicals with safer alternatives.

Academic Research Grants provide seed funding to UMass faculty and graduate students to conduct research intended to help Massachusetts companies develop solutions for some of the more challenging uses of toxic chemicals.

Community Grants support community organizations and municipal departments in creating and promoting healthier communities by raising awareness and educating people about safer alternatives to toxics.

Laboratory: The TURI laboratory helps companies identify safer alternatives to toxic cleaning chemicals. The laboratory works with large and small businesses, product formulators and public agencies to test the performance of safer cleaning products.

Policy Research and Analysis: TURI develops policy analyses to support regulatory decision-making within the TURA program, and provides information and analysis on state and national toxics policy issues relevant to Massachusetts companies and communities.

Library: The TURI library is a specialized collection that focuses on toxic chemicals and safer alternatives. The library provides information and research services to businesses, communities, government agencies, university researchers, and individuals.

About the Toxics Use Reduction Act Program

The Toxics Use Reduction Act (TURA) program is a nationally and internationally recognized program that supports Massachusetts businesses with a wide range of services.

From 1990 to 2016, Massachusetts companies have reduced toxic chemical use by 66%, byproduct by 72% and onsite releases by 92%, based on preliminary results.

Amendments to TURA in 2006 made a number of changes, including promotion of energy, water and materials conservation, in addition to the focus on reducing toxic chemicals.

The TURA program is implemented by:

- Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI)
- Office of Technical Assistance and Technology (OTA)
- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)

These three agencies provide a range of services to support reduction in use of toxic chemicals and help make Massachusetts a safer and healthier place to live and work.



Program Highlights

ChemGenes Corporation

- Reduced the use of chloroform by more than 55% and hexane by more than 35%
- Improved manufacturing efficiency, saving \$215,000 in chemical purchases, regulatory fees and disposal costs
- Reduced solid waste from 25,000 to 8,000 pounds per year

“Toxics use reduction is a tool that we use continuously in our facility because we’ve found that the benefits are extensive – we are protecting worker health and the environment, improving efficiencies and saving money.”

~ Anuj Mohan, Chief Operating Officer



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