**ENVSC 352 – Environmental Justice**

Prof. Darby

**Toxic Release Inventory Assignment**

Due in class on September 26

In class we have discussed environmental justice as a subject of activism. EJ activism can be driven by concerns about moral obligations, equity and fairness, but it is primarily motivated by concerns about the human health risks in activists’ communities. In 1986, the U.S. government passed the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) to both protect communities from hazardous waste emergencies and also to provide information about hazards in those communities. In this exercise, you will gather data about two counties: Crawford County and your hometown county. If you grew up in Meadville or outside of the U.S., please choose any county in the U.S. Please conduct research in the following areas:

**A:** Please choose 5 census data categories (e.g. % Hispanic) of interest to EJ researchers. For the Crawford County and your hometown county, find the 2010 census data for those 5 categories. When you present this information, include the name of your hometown county.

**B:** Based on the information gathered for Part A, which community would you expect to contain more toxic waste facilities? Why? Please include evidence and citations from your class readings and do not write more than a few sentences.

**C:** Look up the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) data for the two counties. What were the top three facilities in each town in terms of total onsite disposal (by pounds) in 2010? Include the names of those facilities, a one-sentence description of each facility, total pounds of onsite disposal by facility, the year the data was collected and any other pertinent information. What were the top 3 point source air pollutants emitted in each county (by pounds) in 2010? Include the names of these air pollutants, total pounds of point source air emissions by pollutant, the year the data was collected and any other pertinent information.

**D:** If you are a community member searching for information about health hazards, you might want to know the health impacts of the air pollution in your community. RSEI provides one way to measure the relative risk of pollutants. In a few sentences, define RSEI. What were the top three chemicals released by RSEI in 2010 for each county? Include the names of these three chemicals and their respective RSEI’s. (HINT: The RTK Network provides RSEI information.) In a few sentences, describe why these pollutants are different than those described in Part C.

**E:** If you are a community member searching for information about health hazards, RSEI gives you a sense of relative risk of pollutants, but you might also like to know the potential health effects of pollutants in your community. Describe the potential health impacts of the pollutants identified in Part C. Please indicate how you gathered this information and cite relevant resources.

**F:** The goal of the TRI is to inform communities of local chemical hazards (i.e. to address a community’s “right-to-know”). Based on this data gathering exercise, do you think TRI effectively informs people about hazards in their communities? You may want to consider the availability and accessibility of the data, as well as the ease of data interpretation. Please address these questions in a short paragraph.

Some websites to aid in your search (Note: For Part E, you will need to look beyond these websites.):

U.S. Census: <http://www.census.gov>

EPA’s TRI Explorer: <http://www.epa.gov/triexplorer/>

EPA’s Envirofacts: <http://www.epa.gov/enviro/>

The Right-To-Know Network: <http://rtknet.org/>

This is an INDIVIDUAL assignment; please include the honor pledge on your final copy. Please type your lettered responses and present your responses in the order described above. Use complete sentences, check your grammar and spelling, and cite relevant sources using APA format. I encourage you to present your information in the form of tables or graphs instead of text where that is appropriate.