



New Jersey
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NEWS RELEASE

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Report finds 63 million Americans endangered by chlorine bleach plants Nearly 9 million in New Jersey area could be impacted by a potential disaster.

Today, Greenpeace and the New Jersey Work Environment Council co-released a new report on the safety and environmental performance of chlorine bleach plants across the United States. According to the findings, 86 facilities throughout the U.S. continue to needlessly use huge quantities of chlorine gas in their manufacturing process and endanger more than 63 million people living in nearby areas.

New Jersey is home to Kuehne Chemical Company Inc., which is cited in the report for being one of ten bleach plants that, should a disaster happen, could put more than one million people at risk.

Kuehne Chemical is located in South Kearny, Hudson County, where a worst-case chlorine gas release could impact up to 8.9 million people in the New Jersey-New York area. This is according to Kuehne Chemical's own data that is submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

“The New Jersey Work Environment Council has been following Kuehne Chemical for years. In our 2013 Failure to Act Report, we noted a worst case release of chlorine there could impact up to 12 million people. Kuehne Chemical decreased the number of people in the vulnerability zone to 8.9 million. This may be due to the opening of a brine to bleach plant in May of 2015. While WEC acknowledges this reduction is a step in the right direction, we believe the goal for Kuehne Chemical should be zero people in the vulnerability zone, as other bleach manufacturing facilities have achieved,” said Debra Coyle McFadden.

“In spite of the evident risks and availability of safer alternatives, our latest report on the industry shows that some chlorine bleach manufacturers continue to use chlorine gas, putting almost one in every five Americans in danger of a potential release from a substance so toxic it has been used as a chemical weapon in the past,” said Rick Hind, Legislative Director at Greenpeace.

The problem goes beyond the use of the chlorine gas in the manufacturing process, as chlorine bleach manufacturers frequently ship and receive their supply in 90-ton rail cars vulnerable to accidents.

“Every day, rail cars crisscross the country delivering hundreds of tons of chlorine gas and endangering the communities through which they travel. Just one of such rail cars can put much of an entire city in danger,” said Hind.

“The public is in the dark about rail car hazards, whether they are transporting crude oil, chlorine gas or some other highly toxic material,” said Dan Fatton, WEC Executive Director. “To truly protect public safety, bleach manufacturing facilities should prioritize a transition from chlorine gas to liquid bleach and eliminate the transport and storage of bulk chlorine gas.”

Bleach manufacturers can produce chlorine on-site on an as-needed basis to remove the need for transport and dangerous bulk storage. And many chlorine gas consumers, such as drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities, can switch to safer alternatives for water treatment including liquid bleach and ultraviolet light.

To read the full “Chlorine Bleach Plants Needlessly Endanger Millions” report, including recommendations to reduce the storage, transport, and use of chlorine gas click [here](#) or copy the following link into your browser: <http://www.greenpeace.org/usa/bleachreport2016>

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The New Jersey Work Environment Council (WEC) is a membership alliance of labor, environmental, and community organizations working for safe, secure jobs and a healthy, sustainable environment. WEC links workers, communities, and environmentalists through training, technical assistance, grassroots organizing and public policy campaigns to promote dialogue, collaboration, and joint action. Formed in 1986, WEC is the nation’s oldest state labor/environmental (or “blue/green”) coalition and has played a key role in winning and defending landmark state policies for worker and environmental protection.

Greenpeace is an independent campaigning organization that uses peaceful protest and creative communication to expose global environmental problems and to promote solutions that are essential to a green and peaceful future. In the U.S. Greenpeace has approximately 250,000 members who provide virtually all of its funding through individual contributions.