Right to Know Filing: What to Do if Youâ€™re Filing Late

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So now it appears youâ€™re going to be late submitting your annual Community Right-to-Know filing. Thatâ€™s not the best tactic, but filing late is far better than failure to comply. And if you act fast, you may still be able to sneak in under the newly-extended online filing deadline of April 1.

First, assess your situation:

Do you have someone -- you or another designated representative -- who is specifically assigned to getting this done? No matter how you cut it, the Right-to-Know filing will take time and requires concentration, so someone has to set aside the time necessary to complete the questionnaire and assemble the attachments.

The actual filing process is one thing, but to get it done you have to be prepared to answer the questions. Do you have everything you actually need to submit your Facility Inventory Form (FIF)? Among other things, youâ€™ll need an MSDS for each chemical substance or mixture youâ€™ve had on hand throughout the filing year.

Many answers require performing specific math calculations to determine the answers. Depending on how many reportable substances you have dealt with during the past year (and it only takes one instance at or above the Threshold Reporting Quantity), you may be facing quite a lot of work. If you have all the information you need at your finger-tips, youâ€™ll be able to proceed much more efficiently.

Take responsibility for your tardiness.

Consider contacting officials at the Department of Environmental Protection to let them know your Right-to-Know filing will be late. Sure, they may not notice at first, but you donâ€™t want them to think you arenâ€™t going to file at all. If they know your paperwork is on the way, they may be less inclined to take action against you. Especially if you get it done soon.

Get professional help.

An experienced consultant is used to working with all the details associated with a Right-to-Know filing. They are also used to working with local officials, so they may be in the best position to smooth the way if youâ€™re filing late, providing added assurance that you are, in fact, in the process of completing your filing

Hiring a professional brings you the expertise to finish your filing as quickly as possible, minimizing stress and allowing you to concentrate on managing your business. You may be filing late, but you know it will be done right.

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