

Minnesota

37 Percent of Students at Risk of Chemical Catastrophes

In Minnesota, 337,171 students attend school within the vulnerability zone of a high-risk chemical facility. That means that nearly 2 in 5 students from preschool to high school face chemical leaks, gas clouds, or explosions.

The April 2013 fertilizer plant explosion in West, Texas demonstrated the unseen dangers of chemical facilities. That explosion killed 15 people, injured hundreds of others, and destroyed three schools. If the explosion had occurred during the day, many schoolchildren might have been harmed as well.



But many students and schools could be better protected from danger. Safer chemicals and technologies exist that would reduce or eliminate these vulnerability zones and leave significantly fewer children at risk, and some facilities have already made the switch. However, since these changes are not required, many other facilities continue to use dangerous chemicals and leave schools, children, and neighbors at risk. The Obama administration could require facilities to switch to safer technologies and reduce the risk to Minnesota's students.

Minnesota's kids should not have to go to school each day with the looming threat of a chemical disaster when safer technologies exist.

Top Five Counties Where Students Are Most at Risk

County	Number of Students in Vulnerability Zones	Number of Schools in Vulnerability Zones
Ramsey	86,187 (95%)	245
Pennington	2,070 (91%)	5
Dakota	70,245 (89%)	155
Washington	38,605 (84%)	84
Nobles	2,776 (72%)	8

Every state has locations where chemical facilities place more students at risk. The first table lists the counties in Minnesota that have the highest percentage of students attending schools in vulnerability zones. Students in Ramsey County are more likely to attend school in a vulnerability zone than anywhere else in the state as its facilities put 86,187 students at risk – 95% of all school-aged children in the county.

Top Five Schools at Risk of a Chemical Disaster

School Name	City	Number of Vulnerability Zones	Number of Students
Heritage Middle School	West St. Paul	5	738
St. Joseph's School	West St. Paul	5	635
St. Croix Lutheran High School	West St. Paul	5	448
Somerset Elementary	Mendota Heights	5	412
BlueSky Charter School	West St. Paul	5	369

View other state factsheets at: www.foreffectivegov.org/kids-in-danger-zones-state-factsheets

The known vulnerability zones in Minnesota put a total of 890 schools at risk, some of which are in more than one vulnerability zone. The second table lists the Minnesota schools that are currently located in the most known vulnerability zones in the state. Overlapping vulnerability zones, which increase the risk to the schools and communities covered, often occur around larger cities and heavily industrialized areas. In Minnesota, the schools bearing the greatest risk from such overlapping vulnerability zones include Heritage Middle School in West St. Paul, St Joseph's School in West Saint Paul, and St Croix Lutheran High School in West Saint Paul.

Top Five Facilities Putting the Most Students at Risk

Facility Name	City	Number of Students in Facility's Vulnerability Zone	Number of Schools in Facility's Vulnerability Zone
Saint Paul Park Refining Company	St. Paul Park	270,386	702
Hawkins Water Treatment Group - Red Rock	St. Paul	121,042	307
St. Paul Regional Water Services-McCarron	Maplewood	98,838	279
DPC Industries, Inc.	Rosemount	75,212	160
Fridley Complex	Minneapolis	28,804	75

The facilities listed in the third table place the most students in Minnesota at risk of a chemical disaster. Saint Paul Park Refining Company LLC in St. Paul Park, which stores 193,000 pounds of hydrofluoric acid (conc >50%), has 270,386 students studying in its vulnerability zone, thereby putting more students at risk than any other facility in Minnesota. Hawkins Water Treatment Group - Red Rock in St. Paul is in second place, with 121,042 students in its vulnerability zone. Any efforts in Minnesota to better protect schools from chemical risks should include changes to reduce the vulnerability zones of these top facilities.



What Can You Do?

First, [take action](http://bit.ly/kids-in-danger-zones-action) (<http://bit.ly/kids-in-danger-zones-action>) and urge the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to protect our children by requiring facilities to adopt safer chemical alternatives. Act now and urge others to stand up for children in Minnesota.

Second, use our [interactive map](http://tesla.foreffectivegov.org/KidsAndToxins/bin-release) (<http://tesla.foreffectivegov.org/KidsAndToxins/bin-release>) to learn more about the dangerous facilities in your area and the schools they place in harm's way.

Third, contact facilities in your area and your local officials. Demand that they establish a plan to shift to safer technologies or store smaller quantities of hazardous chemicals to reduce the vulnerability zones that place children, schools, and communities at risk.

