

Texas

61 Percent of Students at Risk of Chemical Catastrophes

In Texas, 3,206,006 students attend school within the vulnerability zone of a high-risk chemical facility. That means that 3 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 Texas's students.

Texas'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
Dallas	496,875 (100%)	844
Nueces	64,500 (100%)	131
Jefferson	44,637 (100%)	89
Brazos	28,124 (100%)	55
Potter	26,573 (100%)	52

Every state has locations where chemical facilities place more students at risk. The first table lists the counties in Texas that have the highest percentage of students attending schools in vulnerability zones. Students in Dallas County are more likely to attend school in a vulnerability zone than anywhere else in the state as its facilities put 496,875 students at risk – 100% 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
San Jacinto Elementary School	Deer Park	41	691
Deer Park Junior High	Deer Park	39	835
Harris County J J A E P	Deer Park	39	1
Deer Park Elementary	Deer Park	38	772
Leo Rizzuto Elementary School	La Porte	38	598

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The known vulnerability zones in Texas put a total of 5,658 schools at risk, some of which are in more than one vulnerability zone. The second table lists the Texas 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 Texas, the schools bearing the greatest risk from such overlapping vulnerability zones include San Jacinto Elementary School in Deer Park, Deer Park Junior High in Deer Park, and Harris County J J A E P in Deer Park.

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
Central Regional Wastewater System	Grand Prairie	766,761	1,265
Solvay USA Inc., Houston Plant	Houston	714,446	1,167
Agrifos Fertilizer L.L.C.	Pasadena	605,554	1,004
Houston Ammonia Terminal, L.P.	Pasadena	539,602	903
Village Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant	Arlington	496,858	826

The facilities listed in the third table place the most students in Texas at risk of a chemical disaster. Central Regional Wastewater System in Grand Prairie, which stores 360,000 pounds of sulfur dioxide (anhydrous), has 766,761 students studying in its vulnerability zone, thereby putting more students at risk than any other facility in Texas. Solvay USA Inc., Houston Plant in Houston is in second place, with 714,446 students in its vulnerability zone. Any efforts in Texas 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 Texas.

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.

