

LEPC MEMBERSHIP AND COMPOSITION

By federal statute, each LEPC must include, at a minimum, representatives from each of the following groups or organizations.

- 1) Elected officials
- 2) Law enforcement, civil defense, fire fighting, first aid, health, local environmental, hospital and transportation.
- 3) Broadcast and print media. (These entities are needed to get the word out about a release or for providing a channel for public education about LEPCs and their projects and goals.)
- 4) Community groups. Community groups, especially environmental activists and advocates can raise issues and be very effective in representing public concerns about chemical risks and hazards. It is a good idea to look for participation from community groups that are active in EPCRA issues. The LEPC can help channel their energy and concerns into useful suggestions and honest work. By inviting these groups to the table, LEPCs will find it far easier to achieve the intent of EPCRA.
- 5) Owners and operators of facilities subject to the requirements of this article.

Sometimes it is difficult to attract LEPC members from each of these areas. The purpose of the diversity of stakeholders is to get a grasp on the complexities of the job assigned to an LEPC and to ensure each point of view and expertise lends more substance to the planning effort. Each area of interest and expertise represented on the LEPC membership adds to the depth of the LEPC effort.

Each LEPC appoints a chairperson and adopts procedural rules by which the LEPC will function, with focus on the required tasks and duties of an LEPC. These rules must include provisions for public notification of committee activities, public meetings to discuss the emergency plan, public comments, response to such comments by the committee and distribution of the emergency plan.

Each LEPC must establish procedures for receiving and processing requests from the public for EPCRA information, including Hazardous Substance Information available through the Office of State Fire Marshal, Emergency Planning & Response Section. Such procedures shall include the designation of an official to serve as the coordinator for information.

Federal law requires each LEPC to review its emergency plan at least annually in a public meeting, or more frequently as changed circumstances in the community or at any facility may require.

YOUR ROLE AS AN LEPC MEMBER

Your active role as an LEPC member can make a difference in the successful functioning of an LEPC. As an LEPC member, you may be asked to serve on a subcommittee to help coordinate emergency planning activities that are consistent with your particular area of expertise or interest. For example, a hospital official who is an LEPC member may serve on a subcommittee with fire department and county officials that review notification procedures for emergency rooms impacted by hazardous materials incidents.

LEPCs are expected to help coordinate various entities in both pre-incident planning and post incident recovery, to review the effectiveness of emergency procedures and to make recommendations to improve the emergency response system when necessary. The LEPC is also the designated entity that the public turns to in the case of a significant chemical release to answer any questions concerning the response and address any problems associated with the response.

The effectiveness and success of the LEPC is entirely dependent on its members and the commitment they bring to the LEPC to provide the best planning and response possible. Having moved from the age of “accidental release” to the age of “terrorist act,” it is more important than ever to take response efforts to a new level with each LEPC member a key component to the overall success or failure of the LEPC.

LEPC members should try to answer the following questions:

- ✓ What are the goals of the LEPC this year?
- ✓ Do certain topics require much discussion / research?
- ✓ Is it necessary to establish subcommittees – Are there enough people, expertise, and leadership among LEPC members to maintain subcommittees?

SUBCOMMITTEES

Dividing the work among subcommittees can facilitate planning and data management. Subcommittee allow members to specialize and help the process move forward more quickly, because the LEPC can work on several projects at one time. The appointment of a subcommittee chairperson may ensure that work progresses efficiently. The number and type of subcommittees that an LEPC creates depends solely on the needs of the LEPC and its members. Subcommittees may be formed and disbanded as occasions arise to accomplish initial and on-going tasks.

Subcommittee membership need not be limited to LEPC members. The LEPC is encouraged to invite persons from various sectors of the jurisdiction for additional input and enhanced expertise. In determining the type and number of subcommittees to establish, the LEPC should examine a number of factors regarding current LEPC status and future expectations and goals.

The LEPC might appoint subcommittees for the following:

- ✓ Gathering and reviewing existing community and facility emergency plans annually;
- ✓ Coordinating emergency response capabilities of LEPC member organizations;
- ✓ Checking existing response equipment in the community;
- ✓ Identifying financial resources;
- ✓ Coordinating with other LEPCs and the SERC;
- ✓ Conducting a hazard analysis;
- ✓ Managing and providing information for citizens;
- ✓ Providing information to facilities;
- ✓ Promoting public awareness of EPCRA, community chemical hazards, and emergency response expected from the public.

SUGGESTED SUBCOMMITTEES FOR THE LEPC

1) A Planning Subcommittee whose responsibilities may include:

- ✓ Developing and assisting in the revision of the hazardous material response portion of the emergency operations plan;
- ✓ Establishing a vulnerability zone determination methodology;
- ✓ Reviewing the site-specific Hazardous Materials Response Plans submitted for each facility with EHS; and
- ✓ Reviewing the LEPC plan annually.

2) A Public Information Subcommittee, whose responsibilities may include:

- ✓ Writing and publishing public notices;
- ✓ Establishing an information retrieval system; and
- ✓ Performing citizen / neighborhood outreach to inform them of plans and other information that is available.

3) A Training and Exercising Subcommittee, whose responsibilities may include:

- ✓ Conducting a training needs assessment;
- ✓ Requesting training grants to provide needed training;
- ✓ Coordinating training programs; and
- ✓ Establishing an exercise schedule.

Once an assessment has been done by the LEPC and basic subcommittees have been formed, the LEPC may desire to create additional subcommittees to respond to expanded needs / ideas generated from the current LEPC membership. Some examples are included on the following page.

- 1) An Executive Subcommittee, whose responsibilities may include:
 - ✓ Developing LEPC long-term goals;
 - ✓ Tending to LEPC member needs;
 - ✓ Reviewing LEPC membership terms and soliciting volunteers to fill vacancies;
 - ✓ Being familiar with state, local, and federal laws which impact the hazardous material planning process; and
 - ✓ Developing a work plan with timetables for the other subcommittees.

- 2) A Resource Development Subcommittee, whose responsibilities may include:
 - ✓ Researching the community's resources for emergency response (e.g., various types of equipment, facilities, and expertise available);
 - ✓ Identifying alternative resources upon which the community may draw in time of emergency or disaster;
 - ✓ Updating the local Resource inventory;
 - ✓ Identifying other volunteer or in-kind assistance contributions (e.g., private sources such as local business / industry, non-profit agencies, etc.), which may be used for various types of response.

- 3) An Emergency Response Subcommittee, whose responsibilities may include:
 - ✓ Developing emergency response procedures for local government personnel that may be utilized in hazardous materials responses; and
 - ✓ Establishing local Incident Command System (ICS) procedures to review, strengthen, and coordinate local government emergency response.

- 4) A Finance Subcommittee, whose responsibilities may include:
 - ✓ Management of the LEPC budget and
 - ✓ Examining and recommending the use of these funds.
 - ✓ Developing the annual business plan

- 5) A Business / Industry Outreach Subcommittee, whose responsibilities may include:
 - ✓ Developing initiatives that will encourage active participation by the community's commercial businesses and industrial facilities.
 - ✓ Updating reports on Sub-Committee meetings can be made at the regularly scheduled LEPC meetings.

BY-LAWS

Rules or by-laws for the LEPC should be established as set forth in EPCRA Section 301. The by-laws should include the following minimum provisions:

- ✓ Public notification of committee activities;
- ✓ Public meetings to discuss the emergency plan;
- ✓ Public comment and response to these comments;
- ✓ Distribution of the emergency plan;
- ✓ Election of officers.

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY LEPC

Research shows that the most successful LEPCs have the following attributes:

- ✓ They have clearly defined goals;
- ✓ Members are trained in the law and know what is expected of them;
- ✓ The right people with responsibilities and interests from broad-based community representation (not dominated by one segment) are appointed;
- ✓ Members are committed and interested because they:
 - * Feel useful and believe they are helping the community;
 - * Have been given tasks according to their interests and expertise;
 - * Have been given challenging tasks;
 - * Are recognized for their contributions; and
 - * Have a chance to develop or enhance their skills.