Minutes - ECHO Meeting – October 13, 2011 - @ Galvanizers

Brian Bailey opened the meeting with introductions and announcements.

CertainTeed (Saint-Gobain) is putting in the largest solar array in the Northwest. It has reduced its energy consumption last year by 33%. CertainTeed is working with the energy trust of Oregon.

Darise Weller reported that the NW Toxics Coalition and the Portland Harbor Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) are working to build a restoration area for fish at the Alder Creek Mill site along the Willamette River. This will help the fish in a 10-mile area at a time when we are losing large and small fish in the Willamette.

Mike Eyer, who has retired from ODOT, reported that the Feds are quiet now but will be busy soon with end of the year regulatory notices. For small and intermediate bulk packaging firms, there is an advisory saying that inspectors need to pay more attention to exemptions and special permits during inspections. A company making ammonia "nurse" tanks in the Midwest received a $4 million fine because many of their tanks were failing. The hours of service rule is still in place – the 8th final rule will come out in December. Every time a rule comes out there is a lawsuit. Go to the Federal Motor Carriers website to see the chart of number of hours & record keeping requirements.

Sue Otjen of the Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) said they remained hopeful until June 20th that the Planning and Training Assistance program could be saved. They lost 3 positions but had other open positions in the OSFM for these people (Terry, Krista, and Bill). They continue to look for funding for the Planning and Training Assistance Program. They have found funds for a grants coordinator. The Fire Marshal's Office will continue to maintain the LEPC website. The State Fire Marshal is still the SERC for the State and Sue Otjen is the designee. The new State Fire Marshal started July 1st: He is Mark Wallace and he comes from Texas and Colorado.

There will be a Multnomah County LEPC meeting tomorrow at the PF&R Training Center at 4800 NE 122nd Ave, Portland, from 9-11am. Yumei Wang of DOGAMI will be speaking at the December LEPC meeting about earthquake risks. Highly recommended you attend if possible. The Multnomah County LEPC has a new website which is under construction. The planning committee is up and running and will be the ones that goes through facility plans (Phase one assessments). Several of our members have already had their plans reviewed, Alpenrose Dairy, Siltronic Corp., and Ashland with several others on the agenda. The LEPC is also working on the training sub-committee.

John Ratliff of Kanto Corp. described their annual ammonia training – they did a small release to test their system – their ERT are Level B certified (SCBA). They have 2 level A suits but they are unused. Consensus seems to be that Level A should be left to the HazMat teams (but you can never be too prepared). John reported on a cyclohexane spill due to valve failure at the plant. Apparently operators put valves in the wrong position. 0.4 ppm is the odor threshold; the TLV is 20 ppm. 2 organic vapor full-face cartridge respirators were used and broke through (the point were the cartridge no longer scrubs the gas). Vendor says the cartridges will protect to the TLV, but only to 6ppm for the smell. Our take on this is that the cartridges filtered our much of the gas/vapor but not all. There was an inadvertent release to city water treatment – they called the city to report. Cyclohexane is a combustible liquid, respiratory irritant, "not terribly toxic" but we can get drunk on it (narcotic). This was a slug release – it went through the company's water treatment and then went to the city. There was not enough that reached the city to cause a fire hazard. A quick internet search found this disaster involving Cyclohexane.

At 16:53 on Saturday 1 June 1974, the temporary bypass pipe (containing cyclohexane at 150°C (302°F) and 1 MPa (10 bar)) ruptured, possibly as a result of a fire on a nearby 8 inch (20 cm) pipe which had been burning for nearly an hour. Within a minute, about 40 tonnes of the plant's 400 tonne store of cyclohexane leaked from the pipe and formed a vapour cloud 100–200 metres (320–650 feet) in diameter. The cloud, on coming in contact with an ignition source (probably a furnace at a nearby hydrogen production plant) exploded, completely destroying the plant. Around 1,800 buildings within a mile radius of the site were damaged.

The fuel-air explosion was estimated to be equivalent to 15 tonnes of TNT (60 gigajoules) and it killed all 18 employees in the nearby control room. Nine other site workers were killed, and a delivery driver died of a heart attack in his cab.

Today's Speaker is Carmen Merlo, Director of the Portland Bureau (Office) of Emergency Management. The name was recently changed to the Bureau from Office to harmonize with the City's Bureau system. Ms. Merlo described the First Call Emergency Notification system for Public Alerts, the new system for Portland and Multnomah County.

The need for a new system was made apparent by last year's Thanksgiving Day Boil Water Incident The old system was inadequate as the City could not call people to tell them to boil their water and/or not to drink it. The city needed a system to call people and the Water Bureau needed a way to call crew to respond. The new Public Alert system can notify people within a certain mile radius, either by phone, email, or text message. Ms Merlo demonstrated the computerized system which is based on telephone numbers associated with addresses, so that a certain area of town or the whole town can be alerted in emergencies, depending on the circumstances. This theoretically could be

linked up with a plume map for a chemical release. The main problem is that people have to sign up if they do not have a land line telephone from a phone company (cable land line telephones are not listed in the system automatically as the lists come from phone companies.) People need to know that they need to sign up to get alerts, so a lot of outreach by the City is needed to make the system effective.

One question was raised about emergency plans for companies: how to incorporate the Portland system into the plant's emergency plan to notify neighbors of an incident? The Bureau of emergency management would get the order to launch from the incident command, not an affected company.

The costs of the system are $120 thousand 1st year costs and $80 thousand per year ongoing costs to the City. Also, $10,000 per year for quarterly updates of lists of published and unpublished phone numbers from the phone companies.
For a situation where the location of an incident is on the border of two counties, such as was the case with Precision Cast Parts, Multnomah and Clackamas counties would have to coordinate the notification of residents. The Portland Water Bureau and the Police Bureau are contributing funds to support this project.

Many thanks to Carmen from the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management for the very interesting and informative presentation. It is recommended that everyone go to the City website and sign up their phone numbers. Also, spread the word to employees and family members. www.publicalerts.org. It's easy and takes only one minute. You can enter two phone numbers, perhaps a cell and a land line at work.

Thank you to Galvanizers for their continued kind hospitality and wonderful pastries and coffee. Big thanks to the IT guy who got us going and to Theodora for these wonderful minutes.

ECHO will be taking November off. Siltronic Corp is being audited for ISO 14001 EMS and OHSAS 18001 recertification, 4 day audit during the second week of November. We shall return in December with a vengeance like Portland rain so stay tuned.