



# OSWER Environmental Justice Success Stories Report (FY 2002-2003)

## Partnerships for Environmental Justice





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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response  
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## Note from OSWER's Acting Assistant Administrator

I am pleased to share the second issue of OSWER's Environmental Justice Success Stories Report (2002-2003). This updated report highlights successful environmental justice projects throughout the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's waste programs. We've joined with many partners over the last two years to bring these successes to you.

OSWER's commitment to environmental justice is more than a decade old. An OSWER directive, in place since 1994, requires that environmental justice be considered in all of its programs, rulemakings, and activities. Prior to the first Environmental Justice Success Stories Report (FY 1999-2001), OSWER tracked its environmental justice accomplishments in "Waste Programs Environmental Justice Accomplishments Reports." In 2002, OSWER began to document the program's environmental justice successes differently, focusing on ways to promote partnerships, assess benefits, and incorporate lessons learned into program activities.

We are proud of the successes compiled in this report. They represent OSWER's continued support, commitment, and accountability in addressing environmental justice issues. By applying the concepts of environmental justice to all activities sponsored by our waste programs, OSWER has gained a reputation as a trailblazer in the eyes of the public and other EPA offices. Consequently, we believe that the projects and partnerships represented in the success stories you are about to read are worth emulating more widely across the Agency.

**Thomas P. Dunne**  
Acting Assistant Administrator



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## About This Report

The Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) Environmental Justice Success Stories is an update of the first report published two years ago. It recounts activities that occurred during fiscal years 2002-2003. The compilation of these projects illustrates OSWER's continued support, commitment, and accountability in addressing the issue of environmental justice and its integration into all activities sponsored by our waste programs. A close reading of this report will offer insight into the broad range of lessons and tools available to EPA.

Since September 2002, annual Environmental Justice (EJ) Action Plans have been developed by each regional office and Assistant Administrator's office as part of the updated Agency policy. In OSWER, each program office prepared its own EJ Action Plan as part of the Assistant Administrator's five priorities. This Success Stories Report highlights OSWER's ongoing efforts to incorporate environmental justice into its programs by documenting our accomplishments, the benefits of these experiences, and key lessons learned.

This report details 30 success stories organized into five different sections: (1) Brownfields Training and Revitalization; (2) Superfund; (3) Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA); (4) Environmental Justice Awareness Training; and (5) Community Involvement, Outreach, and Planning. The common threads among the success stories detailed in this report include: (1) communicating with EJ communities in the decision-making process; (2) developing effective partnerships with all stakeholders; and (3) understanding that communities believe environmental protection is holistic, and therefore effective outreach may involve providing tools not directly related to the program at hand.

These are but a few of the important lessons we've learned from successful projects in environmental justice communities. These inspiring stories demonstrate OSWER's successful integration of environmental justice into its programs. OSWER hopes that by sharing these stories others will learn from our experiences and strive to emulate our success.



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## What is Environmental Justice?

Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including a racial, ethnic, or a socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies.

Environmental justice communities are minority and/or low income communities that often are excluded from the environmental policy setting and/or decision-making process and are subject to a disproportionate impact from one or more environmental hazards. These communities experience a disparate implementation of environmental regulations, requirements, practices, and activities.

Environmental justice is about real people facing real problems and designing practical solutions for challenging environmental problems. The environmental justice movement advocates programs that promote environmental protection within the context of sustainable development. Using various methods, including traditional knowledge about the ecosystem and community mobilization, the environmental justice community has become an imposing force in the protection of both urban and rural environments.

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## Brownfields Revitalization

OSWER's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders to work together to cleanup abandoned properties that bring blight and decay to their surrounding communities. Many of these sites are brownfields, which means, by definition, that all or a portion of them have actual or perceived contamination and a real potential for reuse after cleanup. Through this initiative, OSWER provides grants of up to \$200,000 for assessment demonstration pilots and job training pilots. The assessment demonstration pilot grants are used to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models. The job training pilot grants provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field. In the projects described below, EPA worked with States, communities, and other stakeholders to deal with Brownfields. EPA's role was generally to fund the assessment and cleanup of contamination, while the other stakeholders worked to redevelop and reuse the sites.



## Region 2

### EPA Seed Funding Helps Elizabeth, New Jersey, Grow Affordable Housing

#### Project Activity

The City of Elizabeth, New Jersey, is an urban industrial city located south of Newark with 66 brownfields sites listed on its brownfields inventory. In June 1997, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) selected the City of Elizabeth to receive a Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot grant. With this grant, the City was able to assess seven of its 66 brownfields sites. City stakeholders selected the Pilot's sites and assisted in formulating redevelopment plans. The project was completed in June 2002 and a final report was submitted to EPA by the City of Elizabeth Department of Policy and Planning.

One of the sites that was assessed and investigated during the Pilot consisted of several auto repair garages and a dilapidated tavern. The Housing Authority, in partnership with the City, became interested in this property in 1999, and the environmental assessments and investigations were performed under a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJ DEP) through the State's Voluntary Cleanup Program.

The site was eventually redeveloped into Marina Village, a development with 35 units of affordable, attractive housing, including 34 low-income housing tax credit units, 20 of which are dedicated to families eligible for public housing, and one of which is dedicated for housing an on-site superintendent. Construction of Marina Village was completed in Fall

2002 and by March 2003, the development was 100% occupied. The EPA funds were critical to igniting the development process and ultimately contributed to increasing the availability of affordable housing in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

As part of its outreach efforts, the City used existing mechanisms to communicate with residents, including cable news, city council meetings, newspaper articles, neighborhood council meetings, and the City's public information line. Community meetings were held in conjunction with other meetings in the neighborhoods surrounding the selected sites. Community outreach activities were intended to provide an open forum for Elizabeth residents to express their views and concerns about brownfields properties. Community outreach literature included a Brownfields Pilot Program Poster Board, a Brownfields Informational Handout, and a glossary of terms with acronyms in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.

The Marina Village housing development is part of the Elizabethport HOPE VI Neighborhood Revitalization Program, which is supported by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The acquisition and clean-up process was a true multi-agency effort. According to Jose Sabater with the City of Elizabeth Housing Authority, "Without any one of the components the project would not have happened. In addition, the Elizabethport HOPE VI program has a 1:3 leveraging ratio; therefore every leveraging



opportunity had to be taken advantage of or else the program would not reach completion.”

## Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The Elizabeth Housing Authority held monthly meetings with tenants of the Pioneer Homes and Migliore Manor to update them on Pilot progress. These housing complexes are the largest in the Elizabethport area of the City, and are located in the vicinity of the approved brownfields properties.



The members of the Urban Coordinating Council Neighborhood Empowerment Program include The Boys and Girls Club, The Tenant Association, Councilman Manny Grova, and various other community-based organizations. This group of concerned constituents held public meetings in the Elizabethport area of the City to inform the community of any new Pilot developments.

The Elizabethport Neighborhood Preservation Residence Organization held public meetings to deal with any issues that directly or indirectly affected the community of the Elizabethport area. This community-based organization meets once a month.

Brand New Day and Urban Renewal Associates provided input to the redevelopment process.

## What Are the Project Benefits?

EPA's assessment grant helped the City leverage funds, improved urban environments, and created new affordable housing.

## Lessons Learned

- Through focused effort, municipalities can coordinate resources and put brownfield properties back into uses that meet community needs.
- Brownfield sites can provide opportunities for creating new affordable housing.

## Project Contacts

*Nuria Muniz*  
U.S. EPA Region 2  
(212) 637-4302  
[muniz.nuria@epa.gov](mailto:muniz.nuria@epa.gov)

*Susan McKeown*  
City of Elizabeth  
(908) 820-4177



## Region 2

### North Hempstead, New York: Brownfields Redevelopment Defined by Community to Serve Community

#### Project Activity

The Town of North Hempstead, a fiscal year 2000 brownfields assessment grant recipient, partnered with Sustainable Long Island, an environmental justice organization, to hold a community planning charrette. A charrette is a participatory planning exercise that

helps to develop a shared vision among participants. The planning and partnership building work seeded by Sustainable Long Island helped to lay the foundation for an unprecedented Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Town and a resident based non-profit, Unified New Cassel Community Revitalization Corporation, regarding the nature of

redevelopment at seven brownfields sites that were EPA grant-funded assessment sites. Subsequently, the Town issued a Request for Development Proposals (RFPs) and more than 50 people attended the meeting with prospective developers.

## Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The Town of North Hempstead, Sustainable Long Island, and Unified New Cassel Community Revitalization Corporation were involved with this project.

## What Are the Project Benefits?

- Assessment and reuse planning was accomplished for seven priority brownfields sites.
- The project increased local knowledge and opportunity to creatively and proactively address other brownfields.
- The project provided a forum to define locally appropriate development.
- The project's demonstrated success has encouraged the Town and community organization to apply for other federal and state funding.

## Lessons Learned

Intensive community involvement does not necessarily prolong a project's time frame. In fact, early and on-going involvement seems to expedite the process. The Town's participatory methods and use of tools, such as visioning and the MOU, enhanced the viability of this project.

## Project Contacts

*Jenny Tsolisos*  
EPA Region 2  
(212) 637-4349

*David I. Wasserman*  
Town of North Hempstead  
(516)869-7679  
[ngd@northhempstead.com](mailto:ngd@northhempstead.com)

*Reverend Patrick Duggan*  
Sustainable Long Island (SLI)  
(631) 424-1799

## Region 2

### Trenton, New Jersey: Magic Marker Land Revitalization Demonstration Project


#### Project Activity

The City of Trenton has been working closely with the Northwest Community Improvement Association (NCIA), a resident-based organization, in the cleanup and redevelopment planning process to reclaim the former Magic Marker site and revitalize the surrounding Monument neighborhood. The location of a lead acid battery manufacturer for fifty years, this seven-acre site briefly housed the Magic Marker company in the 1980s. Later, the property was abandoned and taken over by the City of Trenton. The now unproductive site is in the center of a community that today is 93.5% African American; 27.4% of residents are living under the poverty level.

The City began environmental work at the Magic Marker property with funds from one of the first Brownfields Assessment Pilot Grants made by EPA in 1995; community involvement dates back to that original activity. In 1997, EPA conducted a significant

removal action that cleaned up 24,000 pounds of lead-contaminated debris, over 1,300 gallons of hazardous liquids, and thousands of pounds of other contaminants. In 1999, the Magic Marker building, a former battery factory, was taken down. Activities included demolition of the slab and removal of the lead-contaminated soil underneath. In Fall 2003, the Agency conducted another removal action, taking away over 250 tons of lead-contaminated soil, an underground storage tank, and more than 5,100 gallons of oil, which was threatening the ecosystem of the nearby Assupink Creek. In total, EPA has contributed over \$1.1 million to Trenton for the Magic Marker cleanup.

The Magic Marker site was one of four targeted brownfield sites in Trenton. Through EPA's Brownfields grant, Trenton provided funds to Isles, Inc., to conduct education and outreach at these four sites. This activity was strongest with the community surrounding the Magic Marker site, as Isles found a receptive



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community anxious to make a difference in their neighborhood. Isles and the New Jersey Institute of Technology facilitated the informed involvement of residents through capacity building workshops. EPA and a number of state agencies provided funding and technical assistance. Work with the New Jersey Institute of Technology helped provide the leadership and environmental education the citizens needed to participate effectively with the responsible party and government officials working on the project.

In 1998, Trenton formed the BEST committee to function as an advisory group to the City in matters of brownfields redevelopment. Isles and NCIA both have seats at this table, and from the outset, the Magic Marker site has been a primary topic of discussion at the monthly meetings.

The partnership works because all parties are dedicated to reaching the same goal; the cleanup and redevelopment of this particular brownfield site. Isles and the NCIA are organized, dedicated groups that ensure the redevelopment of this community remains a City priority. City and often State representatives attend every NCIA monthly meeting to ensure continuing communications between the residents and the government.

The State has provided funding to create the redevelopment plan, and will be providing funds to develop the elementary school on the adjacent parcel. They also oversee the environmental work at the site, and are targeting the site as a State demonstration pilot for area-wide brownfields redevelopment efforts, a designation that would provide increased visibility and resources to the redevelopment efforts here. The City, as the property owner, has the lead role in developing the redevelopment plan, which should meet the needs of the neighborhood and the City, identify the resources necessary to implement it, and sustain the partnerships necessary for carrying out the community's vision and orchestrating the plan's implementation.

Jane M. Kenny, EPA Region 2 Administrator, commented on the progress, saying, "I am gratified that EPA has been able to provide funds to help the City assess, clean up and redevelop the Magic Marker site and others like it. Working together, we are eliminating community eyesores, cleaning up contamination, and contributing to the rebirth of once blighted neighborhoods."

## Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The project was supported by the combined efforts of multiple federal agencies, including:

- U.S. EPA;
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- the State of New Jersey, particularly the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), the Office of State Planning, and the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority;
- the City of Trenton; and
- two community organizations: Isles, Inc., and the Northwest Community Improvement Association.

Together these groups have taken the critical steps and secured the funding necessary to remediate and redevelop the area. The EPA's Brownfields Assessment Pilot Grant award to the City of Trenton in 1995 seeded these partnerships.

## What Are the Project Benefits?

- The initial site assessment grant activities blossomed into a comprehensive area-wide neighborhood revitalization effort leveraging city, state, federal, and private resources.
- The project is supporting redevelopment that meets residents' needs.
- Eliminating environmentally contaminated vacant parcels and replacing them with housing, employment, recreational, and educational uses improves the neighborhood in every way.
- This community, which for years has fought against the social, economic, and environmental injustices with which they live, is becoming a thriving example of smart growth and is a shining example of the ability of citizens to work cooperatively with government to improve their neighborhood.
- The Magic Marker redevelopment effort is a model for other brownfields projects because the results exemplify the value of implementing a participatory brownfields redevelopment process to revitalize a neighborhood.
- This project exemplifies the potential for continuing returns from early investment in technical assistance and capacity building workshops. In this case, the EPA-funded Technical Outreach Services for Communities (TOSC) program based at NJIT and



Isles held capacity building workshops in the late 1990's. Their activities led to the creation of the Northwest Community Improvement Association, a neighborhood based group that has championed the area's revitalization. The technical assistance strengthened the local initiative necessary to sustain the project.

## Lessons Learned

- Early, up-front, and ongoing community involvement is essential to sustain an area-wide initiative.
- Investment in local capacity building has continuing returns.

## Project Contacts

*Armando Jimenez*  
U.S. EPA Region 2  
(212) 637-4309  
[jimenez.armando@epa.gov](mailto:jimenez.armando@epa.gov)

*J.R. Capasso*  
City of Trenton  
(609) 989-3509  
[jcapasso@trentonnj.org](mailto:jcapasso@trentonnj.org)

*James Rolling*  
Northwest Community Improvement Association  
(609) 392-5490

## Region 2

### Brownfields Program Development in Puerto Rico

#### Project Activity

The Municipalities of Puerto Rico have grappled with the challenge of expanding or redeveloping abandoned, idled, or underused industrial and commercial facilities in their urban centers and industrial parks that have real or perceived environmental contamination. Since 1997, EPA has awarded the Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board (PREQB) more than \$1,000,000 through a cooperative agreement to implement a Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) to facilitate the remediation and reuse of brownfields sites with low to moderate levels of contamination in Puerto Rico.

Under the VCP, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico will provide municipalities, developers, investors, and property owners with an efficient and predictable program to clean up hazardous waste sites. Once a site has been cleaned up under the VCP in accordance to Puerto Rico standards, the owner will receive a certification of completion and some kind of liability relief.

#### Project Participants

The lead agency of the VCP is the PREQB. PREQB receives technical support from the Northeast Hazardous Substance Research Center and the EPA Region 2 Puerto Rico Brownfields Coordinator. PREQB also receives consultation from technical experts and policy and program managers from various states, such as Texas, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Florida.

PREQB formed an Inter-Agency Committee to draft regulations and develop technical guidelines. The goal is to coordinate all appropriate offices and to ensure that there are no conflicts with other regulations.

PREQB, in partnership with EPA, is reaching out to key stakeholders in public agencies, municipalities, the private sector, and community groups to seek input on implementing the VCP in Puerto Rico. During 2002 and 2003, numerous forums were held to gather stakeholder input about the development of a VCP.

#### Project Benefits

- PREQB has gained valuable information from researching state programs and from implementing Assessment Pilot activities.
- Stakeholder input is providing PREQB with the necessary information to design a program appropriate for Puerto Rico.
- The VCP program development is supporting the inter-agency coordination necessary for successful brownfields redevelopment.
- Stakeholders from the Governor's office, Puerto Rico's municipalities, the private sector, and community organizations all have a voice at the table.
- The outcome of these efforts will streamline brownfields redevelopment by providing model approaches, programs, and tools for public and private sector participation in hazardous waste site cleanup. Ultimately, this effort will allow Puerto

Rico to reclaim brownfields for a variety of uses, including open space, housing, and economic development.

## Lessons Learned

Open communication and early and ongoing broad stakeholder involvement has been a key factor in the smooth development of this program.

## Project Contacts

Ramon Torres  
U.S. EPA Region 2, Caribbean Field Office  
(787) 977-5844  
torres.ramon@epa.gov

Enid Villegas  
Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board  
(787) 767-8181 ext. 2229  
eyvillegas@hotmail.com

## Region 2

### The Seneca Nation of Indians, New York, Brownfields Revitalization

#### Project Activity

In 1999, the Seneca Nation of Indians successfully applied for competitive brownfields assessment pilot funding. The Nation is using the \$200,000 EPA award for environmental investigations to inform redevelopment planning of a former rail yard, which is at the centerpiece of its community revitalization effort. The rail yard is located at 20 Atlantic Street in the City of Salamanca. Since 1963, the Nation leased the rail yard to several successor railroads. The last lessee was the Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail), which ceased operations at the rail yard in the 1980s.

The Seneca Nation is conducting an environmental assessment of the rail yard in order to develop a cleanup plan that is conducive to reuse of the property. With community and partner input, the Nation is developing a comprehensive redevelopment plan that is consistent with the cultural and economic goals of the Seneca Nation. Due to the significant size of the property, the redevelopment plan is part of a larger regional revitalization effort.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

EPA is working closely with the Nation and has assigned a staff person to provide assistance. To support the Nation's overall community development activities, Region 2 coordinated a meeting with the Brownfields Inter-Agency Work Group, which brought Seneca Nation leaders responsible for environmental issues, public health, planning, and economic development together with more than 20 federal and state agencies to develop approaches and resources to meet local needs.

In order to address the rail yard site, the Seneca Nation, which has sovereign authority to regulate the natural and cultural environments in its territories, is working with the City of Salamanca. The Seneca Nation has also enlisted support from the Southern Tier West Regional Planning and Development Board, which represents planning and development efforts in the three-county area surrounding the rail yard site.

Community members have been very interested in environmental issues and in resolving the uncertainties about the potentially contaminated site on Seneca land. A Community Involvement Plan was created to keep the community involved and aware of the processes involved in the site assessment, cleanup, and reuse process. In the summer of 2000, the first public meeting was held to set the stage for ongoing community involvement. Since then, community meetings have been conducted throughout the Allegheny territory in order to engage Seneca Nation community members, City of Salamanca residents, and regional stakeholders. In addition, the general public is reached through local newspapers, the official Seneca Nation newsletter, and other outreach materials.

The community interest in the environment is based on three common principles shared among Seneca people: preserve Seneca culture, sustain the land, and protect the environment for future generations.

#### What Are the Project Benefits?

- The EPA brownfields funding and technical assistance is providing initial support for a project that is central to the economic development strategy of the Seneca Nation as well as the broader upstate New York region.



## Lessons Learned

- Multi-jurisdictional, multi-stakeholder cooperation is necessary to foster brownfields redevelopment.

## Project Contacts

Larry D'Andrea  
U.S. EPA Region 2  
(212) 637-4314  
dandrea.larry@epa.gov

Lisa Maybee  
Environmental Protection Department of the Seneca  
Nation of Indians  
(716) 532-0024 ext. 5471  
sniepd1@froggernet.com

Natalie Hemlock  
Seneca Nation Community Planning & Development  
Department  
(716) 532-4900 ext. 5021  
cppd@localnet.com

## Region 4

### ReGenesis Revitalization Project, Spartanburg, SC

#### Project Activity

The ReGenesis Revitalization Project, which was designated as EPA's national Revitalization Project by the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice, continued its efforts to transform the neighborhood's focus from negative environmental impacts to broad community revitalization. The disadvantaged project area in South Spartanburg includes the Arkwright, Forest Park, and Mill Village neighborhoods. This is a broad based public/private partnership led by ReGenesis, Inc., City of Spartanburg, County of Spartanburg, and EPA Region 4. As of February 2004, the ReGenesis project had leveraged more than \$7 million in public and private sector funding. There are eight revitalization project elements: 1) environmental cleanup/remediation; 2) transportation; 3) housing; 4) health; 5) public safety; 6) education/jobs/life skills; 7) economic/commercial development; and 8) recreation and green infrastructures.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

Since 2000, the number of collaborative partners has grown to more than 100. The stakeholders include 11 federal government agencies and more than 14 state and local government parties. EPA Region 4 is the lead federal agency for the project. Its role has been to help coordinate the effort, provide oversight of the remediation of the Superfund sites, assist with capacity building, and encourage redevelopment.

#### What Are the Project Benefits?

The historic issues that have been targeted for positive outcomes have been:

- Environmental (two Superfund sites, multiple brownfields sites);
- Health (concerns of abnormal/high disease incidences, lack of health care);
- Economic (lack of jobs, transportation access, business development, and retail establishments); and
- Social (crime, poor housing, and lack of green space, recreational facilities, and community involvement).

As of 2004, active tasks to address these specific issues are:

- Continued environmental cleanup and remediation;
- Expansion of the new community health center in 2003 to support special areas of research;
- Development of a sports complex and green space;
- Construction of Arkwright Parkway;
- New multi-use residential/commercial development on 130 acres and renovation of at least 300 homes;
- Creation of a business development center/incubator;
- Planning for a multi-generational learning center; and
- An ongoing mediated dialogue between ReGenesis, a local chemical company (Rhodia), and EPA to share concerns and minimize risks.

## Lessons Learned

To support the visioning process, it is critical to have: charrettes with input from community and major stakeholders; accuracy and partner buy-in of redevelopment master plans; and assurances that the right people are at the table. To do this, a structure that ensures that local government understands the community's vision needs to be designed. This is especially important when there is hesitancy about the direction of the vision.

The partnership processes are instrumental to:

- Creating an atmosphere that will allow people to share their input freely (this may include separating citizen dialogues from dialogues with officials);
- Taking the time to involve an extremely well organized 501(c)(3) non-profit, such as ReGenesis, which has three subdivisions—health center, redevelopment, and special “C2” for holding title to properties;
- Ensuring that a well-developed revitalization plan is in place that outlines what each potential funder can do for the project and what they are interested in;

- Maximizing use of in-kind resource options
- Identifying partners who need to be at the table; and
- Maintaining respect and communication.

Commitment is enhanced when partners have a mutual understanding, roles are clearly identified, quality time is invested with partners to help project buy-in, participation, and tie-in of partner resources, and project partners are able to take constructive criticism and be flexible to modify tasks, yet keep the same common goal.

## Project Contacts

*Brian Holtzclaw*  
U.S. EPA Region 4, Waste Management Division  
(404) 562-8684

*Cynthia Peurifoy*  
U.S. EPA Region 4, Regional Office of Environmental Justice  
(404) 562-9649

## Region 5

### Environmental Justice Revitalization Project in the City of Waukegan, Illinois

#### Project Activity

The City of Waukegan is an industrial “rustbelt” city on the shores of Lake Michigan in northeast Illinois. The Waukegan community is seeking ways to implement a City revitalization plan that includes transforming the City’s worn industrialized downtown waterfront into a vigorous and inviting waterfront with new residential condominiums, commercial establishments, recreational land use, and an adjacent community sports complex.

#### Project Initiative

A collaboration spearheaded by the Coalicion Latinos Unidos de Lake County, the City of Waukegan, the Waukegan Harbor Citizen Advisory Group (CAG), the Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. EPA, Illinois EPA, and local and regional government has been working to ensure that all Waukegan communities are both meaningful participants and beneficiaries of this revitalization process.

#### What are the Project Benefits?

- Establishes an environmental justice group that reports back to its constituency.
- Promotes coordination among the three Superfund sites in Waukegan (Johns-Manville site, Outboard Marine Corporation, and Yeoman Creek).

## Lessons Learned

The project will provide lessons about how better coordination and holistic decision-making can maximize community benefit, protect the environment, enhance community end use of the property, increase property values, and address environmental justice concerns.

## Project Contacts

*Mike Joyce*  
U.S. EPA Region 5  
(312) 353-5546

*Oliver L. Warnsley*  
U.S. EPA Region 5  
(312) 886-0442



## Region 7

### The Haven of Grace, St. Louis, Missouri

#### Project Activity

In a formerly run down, brownfields-laden section of St. Louis, a glimmer of hope for redevelopment has blossomed. Across the street from a senior citizen's living center, a shelter for pregnant homeless women has taken root. The Haven of Grace, a local non-profit shelter, purchased a one-acre property in Old North St. Louis from the City of St. Louis in order to expand its operations. The site, which had been abandoned for approximately 20 years, experienced a \$140,000 cleanup funded by the City of St. Louis prior to the sale.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The project participants included the St. Louis Development Corporation and the City of St. Louis economic development organization. Both participants cleaned up and marketed the property.

#### What Are the Project Benefits?

- The Haven of Grace's expansion created 11 jobs that were filled by nearby residents.
- The 7,000 square foot, one-story facility, which cost \$1.2 million to build, provides shelter for up to ten pregnant and homeless women and their children.

- The new shelter has become the heart of a social services campus. It is surrounded by a senior citizens' living center and the Grace Hill Neighborhood Health Center, which provides care for low income or uninsured residents.
- The shelter features classroom and office space, a common area for living and dining, and space to expand its Aftercare Program. The Aftercare Program provides former residents with daycare assistance, and helps them obtain college scholarships and permanent housing. ons Learned

#### Lessons Learned

- Transforming an abandoned property can help create jobs and revitalize economically-depressed communities.
- Coordination among partners, and opportunities to link partners, is an important component to the success of a program.

#### Project Contact

Kerry Herndon  
U.S. EPA Region 7, Brownfields  
(913) 551-7286  
Herndon.Kerry@epa.gov

## Region 7

### St. Louis Gateway Classic Sports Foundation, St. Louis, Missouri

#### Project Activity

Martin Luther King (MLK) Drive in St. Louis, Missouri, has recently become a magnet for brownfields redevelopment. In 2002, a \$2.8 million sports complex was completed at the St. Louis Commerce Center, a large, campus-style business park located on a former brownfield site along the drive. This 15,000-square foot sports complex features office space, computer labs, classrooms, banquet facilities, and a full-size gymnasium that is free and available for public use.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The project participants included the St. Louis Gateway Classic Sports Foundation and the St. Louis Development Corporation.

#### What Are the Project Benefits?

- Through local partnerships and shared goals, the St. Louis revitalization effort has created a domino effect. Single and multi-family housing units are being built nearby, replacing neglected and burned out houses.



- Funded almost entirely by the Foundation, the complex's construction involved mostly minority contractors. The complex created ten new jobs and employed local minority residents.
- The sports foundation provides educational scholarships to inner-city youth and sponsors sports programs. To date, the foundation has given more than \$4 million back to the community.
- Building the complex helped stabilize the MLK Drive neighborhood. The area was once blighted, but today people are moving back in.
- The new sports complex has joined the list of MLK Drive brownfields redevelopment successes that have improved the local environment and the lives of the local residents.

## Lessons Learned

- Through partnerships and shared goals, brownfields redevelopment efforts can help stabilize economically-depressed communities, provide local opportunities, and improve the local environment and the lives of the local residents.
- Coordination among partners and opportunities to link partners is an important component to the success of a program.

## Project Contact

Kerry Herndon  
 U.S. EPA Region 7, Brownfields  
 (913) 551-7286  
 Herndon.Kerry@epa.gov

## Region 10

### Enforcing the Lead Disclosure Rule to Protect Tenants, and Especially Young Children, from Potential Toxic Exposure

#### Project Activity

EPA Region 10 settled a Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) case against Portland landlords, John and Brenda Peak, for violations of section 1018 of Title X of the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992. The case involved interaction with HUD and the U.S. Attorney's Office. The complaint against John and Brenda Peak came from tenants living in apartments owned by the Peaks through the Portland Urban League, which had received a Region 10 Environmental Justice Small Grant for health-based outreach. The tenants were worried and concerned that lead-based paint could pose serious health threats to children or pregnant women and complained that they had not been informed of lead-based paint hazards when they moved in. Region 10 alleged violations at four different properties owned by the Peaks. The Peaks have agreed to pay a \$32,000 penalty to settle this case.

The Peaks own apartments throughout Portland that are classified by the EPA and HUD as "target housing." Target housing includes dwellings built prior to the 1978, when Consumer Products Safety Commission banned the manufacture and sale of lead-based paint. The properties are located in low-income

neighborhoods in Portland, Oregon, where there is an increased likelihood of children having elevated blood-lead levels from deteriorating lead-based paint present in apartments built prior to 1978. This area of Portland is considered to be an environmental justice area. EPA staff inspected the apartments and issued subpoenas to obtain required information.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

A multi-disciplinary team from EPA Region 10.

#### What are the Project Benefits?

- This environmental justice case serves as the region's first significant deterrent for failure to disclose lead based paint hazards where children and pregnant women are involved.
- Region 10 had its first significant lead administrative penalty.
- The Peaks paid a \$32,000 penalty.
- The tenants in the apartments throughout the Portland area now understand lead paint hazards associated with their old buildings.

## Lessons Learned

- As a preventative program, this action will encourage other landlords to provide the required notification about lead-based paint hazards and help prevent poisoning where children live and play.
- This case serves as an excellent example for EPA to follow in future similar circumstances.

## Project Contacts

Montel Livingston  
U.S. EPA Region 10  
(206) 553-1716

Barbara Ross  
U.S. EPA Region 10  
(206) 553-1985

## Office of Brownfields Cleanup and Restoration

### Negotiated Rulemaking Committee on All Appropriate Inquiry

#### Project Activity

The U.S. EPA established the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee on All Appropriate Inquiry (Committee) to develop a proposed rule to establish standards and practices for carrying out all appropriate inquiry as required by Section 223 of the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act (P.L. 107-118). A negotiated rulemaking is a process that brings together representatives of various interest groups and a federal agency to negotiate the text of a proposed rule. The Committee reached a final consensus on all issues on November 14, 2003. The Agency is using this consensus-based language in its proposed regulations. Following review by the Office of Management and Budget, a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) will be published in the Federal Register. A final All Appropriate Inquiry Rule will be developed by EPA after considering and responding to all public comments.

#### Who is involved in the Project Initiative?

The Negotiated Rulemaking Committee on All Appropriate Inquiry was comprised of more than 25 members who represented parties interested in the rulemaking. Members came from U.S. EPA, professional societies, non-profit organizations, states, and one tribe. These members ensured a balanced representation across affected and interested stakeholder groups. The Committee operated by consensus.

#### What are the Project Benefits?

- The Negotiated Rulemaking Committee for the All Appropriate Inquiry Rule allows affected parties more direct input into the drafting of a federal regulation, thus ensuring greater sensitivity to the

needs and limitations of both the parties and the agency.

- A final All Appropriate Inquiry rule will clarify requirements necessary to establish the innocent landowner defense under CERCLA and liability defenses and limitations for *bona fide* prospective purchasers and contiguous land owners.
- A final All Appropriate Inquiry rule will balance the need to put abandoned properties back into productive reuse while also addressing concerns for public health and the environment.
- A final All Appropriate Inquiry rule will provide clear and comprehensive standards that will ensure a high level of certainty in identifying potential environmental concerns without imposing time consuming and unnecessarily expensive regulatory requirements.

## Lessons Learned

- The inclusion of environmental justice advocacy groups as members of the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee resulted in increased communication and information exchange that promoted environmental justice perspectives and the opportunity to inculcate such perspectives into the rulemaking.

## Project Contact

Patricia Overmeyer  
U.S. EPA  
(202) 566-2774



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## Superfund

In 1993, EPA announced reforms for its Superfund program that addressed concerns expressed by affected members of the public. These reforms fundamentally changed Superfund. Through partnerships with states, tribes, other federal agencies, local governments, communities, land owners, lenders, developers, and potentially responsible parties (PRPs) for contamination, EPA has improved the cleanup process. Now, clean-ups are being done faster, without compromise to the principle that those responsible for pollution are held accountable.

Several of these reforms enhance public participation and prevent minority and low-income populations from bearing the brunt of pollution. This section of the report highlights environmental justice projects being conducted under the Superfund program to improve communication with stakeholders and to encourage greater involvement of all communities in the Superfund process. It includes projects where EPA is working in partnership with local governments, communities, developers, and others to rethink the reuse value of cleaned up properties.



## Region 1

### Fish Smart Campaign, New Bedford, Massachusetts

#### Project Activity

The New Bedford Harbor Superfund site is one of the most significant Superfund sites in New England. The primary human health risk is consumption of PCB-contaminated seafood, which has PCB levels 40 times higher than Superfund standards for carcinogenic and non-carcinogenic risk. Dermal contact with intertidal sediments is the secondary risk, which is four times higher than the Superfund standards.

In response to the human health risks associated with eating seafood from New Bedford Harbor, the Fish Smart campaign was developed. This campaign targets women of child-bearing age, the fishing community, and children and explains the health-based fishing ban in areas commonly used by low-income minority families and by subsistence fishermen. In developing the Fish Smart Campaign, EPA held focus groups with area social service providers and local fisherman to “truth-test” messages, educational materials, and outreach approaches. These conversations served to better shape the strategies for educating the public, and to refine the underlying understanding of each minority population group (Portuguese, Cape Verdean, Mayan Indian, and Latino) and the dynamics among them. The input received led to a broad-based, culturally sensitive educational campaign that will serve to protect vulnerable populations from consuming contamination seafood.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection partnered with the local Women, Infants, and Children’s office, the New Bedford Health Department, the Greater New Bedford Health Clinic, the New Bedford Immigrant Assistance Center, and the MA Department of Public Health. Local partners educated clients about the health risks associated with the consumption of PCB-contaminated seafood and distributed educational materials developed by the state agencies and EPA. The media outreach campaign included placing Public Service Announcements in bus stations and the entire bus fleet serving the New Bedford area and displaying posters in public housing and homeless shelters; a media print campaign; school programs; and a Grand Rounds approach to educate family practice physicians.

EPA secured agreements with local marinas and bait shops to display posters and distribute pamphlets aimed at educating the fishing community about the fishing ban due to the health risks from consuming PCB-contaminated seafood. Pamphlets will be mailed to a mailing list of more than 6,000 people residing in the vicinity of New Bedford Harbor and new, easier-to-understand signs will be posted along the shore in popular fishing locations.





## What Are the Project Benefits?

- New Bedford area residents are more aware of the health risks associated with eating PCB-contaminated seafood and are thus more likely to decrease their consumption behavior and, consequently, improve their health.
- The partners who are engaged in implementing the Fish Smart campaign have increased the number of educators armed with the needed information to influence human behavior and protect human health.
- The incorporation of local partners in developing and disseminating particular messages is critical to a successful outreach campaign. As different communication needs arise during the on-going cleanup of the vast New Bedford Harbor Superfund site, this approach will be employed and tailored to the specifics of the need and circumstances.

## Region 2

### Partnering with the St. Regis Mohawk Nation to Remediate Superfund Sites in Massena, New York

#### Project Activities

Massena, New York, which is on the St. Lawrence River, is the location of three Superfund sites, two of which have experienced remedial activities. The General Motors site, which is located immediately adjacent to the St. Regis Mohawk Indian Reservation, Akwesasne, where approximately 4,000 Mohawks live, experienced a large-scale removal of contaminated sediments, soils, and sludge. The Reynolds Metals Company site, located approximately one mile upstream from Akwesasne, experienced a large-scale sediment remediation effort.

#### Who is involved

Representatives of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe's Environment Division, through Support Agency Assistance grants, have worked hand-in-hand with EPA's Project Managers, and EPA's field oversight teams to monitor the responsible parties' performance during the remediation efforts. To date, working in a partnership with the Tribe has included the removal of contaminated soils, sediments, and sludges from areas in and around the General Motors and Reynolds Metals sites.

## Lessons Learned

Communication and coordination with both the residential and business community are extremely helpful in getting the message out.

## Project Contact

Stacy Greendlinger  
Region 1, OSRR  
(617) 918-1403

The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe has become a major partner in EPA's technical oversight team during the remediation of these sites. The Tribe provided support by taking EPA inspectors on the Tribe's research and enforcement boat, so that a joint inspection of the dredging activities at the Reynolds Metals site could be performed. The Tribe has performed sampling and analysis of suspected contaminants and coordinated the collection of air samples on Tribal lands. The Tribe also has done extensive outreach to inform local Tribal residents of excavation work near Tribal lands on the Raquette River, a tributary of the St. Lawrence River.

#### Project Benefits

- The 270-acre General Motors facility, which was originally built to produce aluminum cylinder heads for the Chevrolet Corvair, has been in operation since 1958. Volatile-organic- and PCB-contaminated wastes and sludges were disposed of throughout the site. The Region has continued oversight of cleanup activities at the site and the cleanup of PCB-contaminated sediments in the Raquette River.



- The 1,600-acre Reynolds Metals Company facility has been an active aluminum production plant since 1958. Various types of industrial waste resulting from production activities and plant expansion were disposed of throughout the facility. Major areas of contamination on the facility are being investigated and remediated under the authority of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. In addition to contamination throughout the facility, the Reynolds Metals Company also discharged contaminants to the St. Lawrence River through four permitted outfalls. These discharges contaminated sediments in the St. Lawrence River adjacent to the Reynolds facility with PCBs, aluminum, furans, and polyaromatic hydrocarbons. Under EPA's oversight, dredging and remedial activities have been undertaken.
- The cleanup plans for the General Motors and Reynolds Metals sites were designed with the consideration of fish consumption by the local population. By dredging and containing contaminated sediments in the St. Lawrence River system, the potential for continued contamination of edible fish and wildlife is reduced.

## Project Contacts

*General Motors site:*  
 Mark Granger, Remedial Project Manager  
 EPA Region 2  
 (212) 637-3351

## Lessons Learned

- Through daily contact and the development of a real partnership in the field, decisions regarding cleanup techniques and strategies can be made quickly. On a larger scale, day-to-day coordination and team work will hopefully result in a trust-based relationship between EPA and the Tribe. Having the Tribe's technical representatives as a point of contact for concerned community members also can bring some sense of ease to the community, knowing that Tribal concerns are represented and voiced during the cleanup.
- Disagreement need not entirely halt a project's progress. EPA and the Tribe were able to move forward on areas of agreement while wrestling with other issues. Agreeing to move forward with portions of the cleanup where controversy did not exist, and having the Tribe's day-to-day support in the field allowed for the removal of approximately 170,000 tons of PCB-contaminated soils, sediments, and sludges from areas in and around the General Motors and Reynolds Metals sites.

*Reynolds Metals Company site:*  
 Pam Tames, Remedial Project Manager  
 EPA Region 2  
 (212) 637-4321  
 Ken Jock, Director  
 Environment Division, Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe  
 (518) 358-5937

## Region 4

### Vision 2020: Anniston Children's Health Project, Anniston, Alabama

#### Project Activity

The Anniston Children's Health Project was designated a National Revitalization Project by the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice in 2003 and will serve communities surrounding the Anniston PCB Superfund Site. This project, which spans the educational and medical arenas, will guarantee that every child growing up in Anniston has the maximum opportunity to develop to his or her full potential. The major thrust of the project's work has been planning a program to:

- 1) Provide the children of Anniston with world-class screening, early detection, and remedial treatment for developmental delays and learning difficulties;
- 2) Provide the people of Anniston with state-of-the-art information to promote self reliance and optimize the use of community resources;
- 3) Develop programs that promote comprehensive pre-natal care and parental involvement;
- 4) Conduct rigorous scientific research on the association between environmental exposure and developmental delays, learning difficulties, and lung function; and
- 5) Be community-led and based on a true partnership of researchers and service providers of early detection and intervention for children's developmental, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral abnormalities.

## Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The highly effective coalition of diverse partners working on this project include those from local/state government, community groups, non-profits, the medical community, health and human service agencies, institutions of higher education, the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (PEHSU) at Emory University, local industry, business associations, U.S. EPA, and ATSDR.

## Project Benefits

From its early roots as an informal coalition, to a strategy-based, multi-stakeholder Mayor's Steering Committee in 2002, the Children's Health Project has developed into a freestanding non-profit entity in Anniston, collaborating closely with existing health, education, and social service agencies, and with the school systems and practicing physicians of the City.

The accomplishments include:

- The PEHSU provided continuing medical education to local physicians on environmental impacts on children's health and worked closely with grassroots community activists to create a collaborative position paper, which led to the Mayor's Steering Committee.
- Early developmental work included: community forums; articulation of a shared vision; a draft 15-page work plan that included objectives, milestones, expected benefits and a time-line; an Assessment/Available Resources Directory; and research on best practices/funding opportunities.
- Recent work has included: two children's health fairs with educational booths and health screenings; grant proposals; development of management and administrative structure; and the creation of a funding stream to provide on-going financial resources.
- After creating a comprehensive proposal (with 23 local letters of support) in 2003, the project was selected as one of 15 national revitalization collaborative-based projects by the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (IWG). The planned benefits are better leveraging of resources, strengthening partnerships, and identifying best practices of collaboration. A temporary Executive Director was hired in 2004.

To enhance resources, the project has acquired:

- In-kind resources from local organizations to fund the project plan and its outreach programs (e.g., health fairs and a new non-profit organization).
- \$180,000 from EPA Region 4's Waste Management Division for administering the Southeast activities of the PEHSU. Additionally, in 2003, the Division funded a CERCLA research grant of \$65,000 for the efforts of Vision 2020.

## Lessons Learned

- Hiring PEHSU as an independent facilitator helped the diverse local partners and EPA to coalesce into a distinct partnership. PEHSU was very instrumental in helping organize the collaborative partnership and keep the project on track with progress reports, minutes, and updates regarding on-going activities.
- Acquiring a high level of local political leadership in the project helped keep the momentum of the project going. The Mayor helped ensure high partner participation at forums, scheduled meetings, calls, and events and maintained visibility of the accomplishments. Personal commitments of every partner were key to the success of this project.
- The collaboration's strength was directly related to the diversity of its local, regional, state, and federal partners and a careful weighing in of grassroots citizens input.
- Establishing priorities, ground rules, and partner consistency in the children's health project was vital.

## Project Contacts

*Dee Rodgers-Smith*  
EPA Region 4, Waste Management Division  
(404) 562-8688

*Brian Holtzclaw*  
EPA Region 4, Waste Management Division  
(404) 562-8684

## Region 5

# Airborne Lead Contamination: Master Metals Superfund site in Northeast Detroit, Michigan

## Project Activity

The Master Metals Superfund site is a former lead smelter facility in Detroit that spewed lead particulate throughout the area northeast of the site for a number of years. EPA did an initial assessment of the site in 1998 by sampling approximately seven homes, and found little contamination at or above the 400 ppm threshold criteria. In January 2003, a week-long series of articles on lead contamination in Detroit by the *Detroit Free Press* prompted EPA to revisit the site and undertake immediate action. Using historic weather data and local records, an initial grid, two miles in a northeast direction and 1 mile in three other directions, established a “footprint” of contamination that mirrored a computer-generated model. A second round of testing within the original footprint narrowed the contamination down further and just less than 100 homes were sampled and excavated. Soil down to a depth of a foot in some places was removed and refilled and sodded. EPA continued to work through the summer of 2004.

The project tested residences within an approximate five block area. Areas tested outside the five-block area did not show evidence of any contamination and were deemed safe. Testing was only done for residual airborne particulates and not for automobile emissions or lead paint chips or dust.

## Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

On-Scene Coordinator James Justice of EPA’s Grosse Ile, MI, office headed the project, which involved state, county, and city environmental and health departments. Dave Novak, the lead Community Involvement Coordinator, was assisted by Cheryl Allen, Robert Paulson, and Don de Blasio, all from EPA Region 5. They, along with James Justice, helped to obtain access agreements for both the soil testing and, when necessary, for excavation.

Dave coordinated efforts with the neighborhood City Hall and 11<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct. Team members held two major public information meetings in the elementary school, attended a health fair at the same school, and attended weekly neighborhood group meetings.

Information on the long- and short-term effects of lead exposure on infants, children, and adults was provided at these meetings.

## What Are the Project Benefits?

The constant meetings and flow of information to the various community groups provided a wealth of information to residents. The activities prompted blood testing for all age groups, individual residential soil testing, and an increased awareness of the effects of lead particulates.

## Lessons Learned

- EPA and other outside agency personnel need to keep in mind the fear residents may have when learning that lead contamination has been detected in their yards. Extreme caution needs to be taken when approaching residents with information on lead poisoning and contamination to avoid putting fear into their minds. In addition, EPA needs to keep in mind that not every home will test high and need excavation work.
- Area residents should be communicated with in a concise manner and in a language they understand.

## Project Contacts

*James Justice*  
On-Scene Coordinator  
U.S. EPA Emergency Response  
Grosse Ile, MI  
734-692-7687

*U.S. EPA Community Involvement Coordinators*  
Region 5, Chicago

*Dave Novak*  
312-886-7478

*Cheryl Allen*  
312-353-6196

*Robert Paulson*  
312-886-0272

*Don de Blasio*  
312-886-4360

## Region 10

# Outreach to the Hispanic Community: Lower Duwamish Waterway Superfund Site

## Project Activity

The area around the Lower Duwamish Waterway site is an environmental justice community, with low income people, indigenous people, and people of color. During fiscal year 2003, two fact sheets on the Lower Duwamish Superfund Site were translated into Spanish. One focused on the community's health concerns related to the site, and the other discussed areas of the site that will be cleaned up first. Because a large number of the people living near the Lower Duwamish Waterway in South Seattle speak Spanish, EPA Region 10 and the Washington State Department of Ecology provided information on the Superfund site in Spanish. The revised community involvement plan for the site was also translated into Spanish. These translations were sent to everyone on a Spanish mailing list for the site and to a Spanish distribution list comprised of businesses and churches that serve a large number of Spanish-speaking people in the South Seattle area. The translations also were placed in the site information repository in the community, and on the web page for the site.

In addition to the Hispanic outreach effort at the Lower Duwamish Waterway site, EPA and its partners worked to inform and involve Asian and Pacific Islander immigrants affected by the site. An EPA intern went door-to-door to businesses in areas near the site to distribute copies of a fish advisory fact sheet that had been produced and translated into several Asian languages by the Washington State Department of Health. The health department also made revisions to its multi-lingual Duwamish fish advisory signs to include Russian, so that the message is now in English, Spanish, Russian, and six Asian and Pacific Islander languages. The department provided forty of these signs for posting along the waterway by the Port of Seattle and the Seattle Parks Department. In addition, the Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition, which is the community advisory group for the site, had its own brochure about the site translated into Chinese and Vietnamese during 2003.

In March 2003, EPA created a document called "Environmental Justice Resources for the Duwamish Community" to help respond to environmental justice concerns of the community. This listing of EPA and Washington State Department of Ecology resources

was provided to a number of community contacts for the site and posted on the EPA web page for the site.

Also in March 2003, six EPA employees met with the director of the local Community Coalition for Environmental Justice (CCEJ) to provide information about cumulative risk studies. After that meeting, EPA provided additional information to CCEJ, including a report on air toxics monitoring in the Georgetown community next to the Lower Duwamish Waterway site.

## Project Benefits

- Coordinated work with other agencies and organizations is very important for multilingual outreach efforts. These efforts contributed to the generally good relationship EPA has with a number of community organizations.
- Translations of fact sheets and multi-lingual Duwamish fish advisory signs enhanced the community's awareness of the Superfund site at the Lower Duwamish Waterway site.

## Lessons Learned

- Translations and other outreach for people who speak English as a second language, or not at all, require a lot more staff time than comparable outreach in English.
- People who speak English as their second language are likely to be less aware of a Superfund site than others in the community.
- Effective outreach may involve providing some assistance not directly related to the program at hand, such as providing area air toxics information requested by an organization involved at a Superfund site.
- There may be little feedback to help evaluate the outcome of multilingual outreach efforts.

## Project Contacts

*Allison Hiltner*  
EPA Region 10, Remedial Project Manager  
(206) 553-2140

*Cindy Schuster*  
EPA Region 10, Community Involvement Coordinator  
(206) 553-1815

## OSRTI

# The Development of the Contaminated Sediments Video: Impacts and Solutions

## Project Activity

Because contaminated sediment sites often involve difficult technical and social issues, the Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovations (OSRTI) created a balanced video that helps to dispel the “myths” about sediment cleanups. This video lays the groundwork in simple but technical terms for in-depth discussions on this issue. It explains clearly how sediments become contaminated and what this contamination means to both human health and community economy, and gives different approaches that can be used to remediate or reduce these impacts. Information in the video will help communities evaluate the contaminated sediment problem in their community and potential cleanup strategies. A key message conveyed in the video is that community involvement is important. One of the sites highlighted in the video is Lake Hartwell, South Carolina—a site for which EPA recommended a relatively aggressive cleanup approach of the lake’s 700 acres of PCB contaminated sediment. Community input helped guide EPA and state regulatory agencies in their decision making. Consequently, EPA altered its cleanup plan in response to the community’s preference.

It is especially important that a project manager ensure early and meaningful community involvement by providing community members with the technical information needed for their participation. A guidance document, “Principles for Managing Contaminated Sediment Risks at Hazardous Waste Sites,” lists six practices that site managers and community involvement coordinators should take into consideration. These practices were presented in OSWER Directive 9230.0-99, *Early and Meaningful Community Involvement* (October 12, 2001). This directive also includes a list of other useful resources and is available at: <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/pubs>.

## Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The project developers were EPA’s Office of Solid Waste, OSRTI, OSRTI’s Sediments Team Leader, and the Emergency Response Team and its contractor. OSRTI and EPA Regions 1, 4, 5, 6, and 10 reviewed the video and associated presenters’ manual. Several

community members were interviewed for the video, including an Ashwaubenon, Wisconsin, resident, representatives of the United Tribe Nation of Wisconsin, and staff in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

## What Are the Project Benefits?

- Enable community members to hold informed discussion about contaminated sediments and remediation options.
- Build capacity in communities by providing them with information about the different types of sediment remedies and the positives and negatives of each option.
- Encourage communities to get involved.
- Build capacity in the agency by giving staff the tools to educate communities on the issues surrounding contaminated sediment.
- Make a video available for distribution to all regions and program offices.
- Provide a presenter’s manual to assist in identifying key concepts, discussion topics, general information, and resources.

## Lessons Learned

- Utilize expertise from people who completed similar projects.
- Produce the video and manual concurrently.

## Project Contacts

Pat Carey  
EPA OSWER, OSRTI, CIOB  
(703) 603-8772

Steve Ells  
EPA OSWER, OSRTI, SPB  
(703) 603-8822

## Task Force Report on Ritualistic Uses of Mercury

### Project Activity

EPA convened the Task Force on Ritualistic Uses of Mercury in 1999 to complement the Agency's broader agenda to reduce mercury in the environment from sources such as releases from coal-fired power plants, consumption of methyl mercury in fish, and the use of mercury in schools and medical facilities.

Much is known about the health effects of mercury. Mercury can cause permanent damage to the brain and central nervous system. The developing fetus is the most sensitive to the effects of mercury, so women of child-bearing age are the population of greatest concern. Children of women exposed to relatively high levels of methyl mercury during pregnancy have exhibited a variety of abnormalities, including delayed onset of walking and talking, and reduced neurological test scores. Children exposed to far lower methyl mercury exposures in the womb have exhibited delays and deficits in learning ability.

It is known that botanicas sell mercury for individual use in homes as part of a variety of Latino and Afro-Caribbean traditions. There is a lack of data on the extent of mercury use for these purposes, the fate and transport of mercury indoors, and the exposure that might result from these uses. Nevertheless, indoor domestic exposure to mercury vapor is of significant concern because of its potential for direct impact on human health.

The Task Force believed that outreach and education measures would be most effective in addressing this issue, and made a series of recommendations designed to educate users about the hazards of mercury and encourage the use of safer alternatives.

### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The Task Force was comprised of approximately 18 organizations representing federal, state and local governments, national Hispanic organizations, and medical research institutions, including:

- EPA (HQ and regions)
- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)
- Consumer Product Safety Commission

- New York City Department of Health
- New York State Department of Environmental Protection
- Illinois Department of Public Health
- Chicago Department of Public Health
- New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services
- Connecticut Department of Public Health
- Florida Department of Health
- Puerto Rican Family Institute
- New York Academy of Medicine
- Mercury Poisoning Project
- Caribbean Women's Health Association
- National Alliance for Hispanic Health
- Medgars Evers College (City University of New York)

### What Are the Project Benefits?

- EPA is in the process of developing an Indoor Air Sampling and Monitoring Methodology Protocol for Mercury Vapors.
- A cooperative agreement between the National Association of City/County Health Officials (NACCHO), EPA, and ATSDR is being developed to support local outreach and education efforts to warn users of the hazards of mercury, and encourage the use of safer alternatives.
- EPA has conducted simulations of the use of mercury indoors, and has taken air measurements to help better understand the fate and transport of mercury when used for cultural purposes.
- EPA has developed a brochure on mercury describing its hazards and what to do if mercury is spilled. This brochure will serve as a template that can be used by local groups in designing their own communications.



## Lessons Learned

- There is a need for more studies on the ritualistic uses of mercury.
- The community plays a very important role in understanding the unique dynamics involved with this cultural and spiritual practice.

## Project Contact

*Karen L. Martin*  
EPA OSWER/OSRTI/CIOB  
703-603-9925

## Region 3

### 2003 Superfund Jobs Training Initiative Project at the Abex Superfund Site in Portsmouth, Virginia

#### Project Activity

In October 2002, EPA Region 3 nominated the Abex Site for Superfund Jobs Training Initiative (SuperJTI) Training, a program facilitated by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). SuperJTI provides residents living near or around Superfund sites with environmental health and safety training, and encourages the employment of trainees in the cleanup of their communities. The program was designed to train residents of communities surrounding the Abex Superfund site to prepare them for entry into the environmental remediation field. It was further hoped that some successful graduates of the program would be able to get jobs in the continuing cleanup of the Abex site.

The environmental training program designed by the Alice Hamilton Occupational and Health Center (AHOHC) for this project was tailored to the cleanup at the Abex site but provided a broader range of training in order to maximize the job opportunities available for the graduates. The training consisted of three discreet activities:

1. Recruiting potential participants for the program;
2. Providing the training program; and
3. Conducting job search assistance and placement activities.

In its recruitment efforts, the Virginia Employment Commission distributed literature about the upcoming training program, assisted AHOHC staff, provided conference room space, and promoted the program to its clients. The recruitment effort culminated in 21 participants being selected to start the program, which met the goals of targeting the residents of the affected neighborhoods surrounding the Abex site. The training,

including that for environmental health and safety, environmental justice awareness, and bio-terrorism cleanup, was completed in November 2002.

To facilitate job placement, AHOHC sponsored a Contractors' Day, when employers interviewed students. Within one week of graduation, five of nineteen participants had job offers; within three weeks, nine of the nineteen graduates were employed with environmental contractors. The following June, AHOHC contacted graduates as part of its follow-up program and found that nine of the nineteen graduates are working in the environmental industry.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

- The Virginia Employment Commission's Portsmouth Office
- The Alice Hamilton Occupational and Health Center (AHOHC)
- Norfolk State University/Old Dominion University Tri-Cities Center

#### What Are the Project Benefits?

- Encourages community organizations, universities, state agencies, and local employers to work together.
- Increases the skills of local workers.
- Provides job opportunities for qualified residents.
- Adds to the local economy by preparing local residents for employment.
- Contributes to the clean up of the community and the environment.



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## Lessons Learned

- Include substance abuse screening during the application process.
- Have nonprofit organizations on board and fully committed to the process before training commitments are made.
- Make certain the local jurisdiction has a local hiring clause to facilitate hiring from within the affected community.

## Project Contacts

Vance Evans  
EPA Region 3  
215-814-5526

Pat Carey  
EPA/OSRTI  
703-603-8772





## Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

Many environmental justice communities are located in areas with operating hazardous waste facilities that are regulated under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). RCRA's primary goals are to protect human health and the environment from the potential hazards of waste disposal, to conserve energy and natural resources, to reduce the amount of waste generated, and to ensure that wastes are managed in an environmentally sound manner.

This section of the report highlights EPA's environmental justice activities related to RCRA in the areas of corrective action, brownfields, and training. The RCRA Corrective Action Program allows RCRA facilities to address the investigation and cleanup of hazardous releases themselves. The RCRA brownfields projects address RCRA facilities that are not in full use, where there is redevelopment potential of the site, and where reuse or redevelopment of the site is slowed due to concerns about actual or potential contamination, liability, and RCRA requirements. The RCRA training projects include training for Native Americans to develop or improve solid waste management practices on their reservations.



## Region 2

### RCRA Partnerships to Address Solid Waste Landfills and Used Oil Management in the U.S. Virgin Islands

#### Project Activity

Two RCRA 7003 Orders require the Virgin Islands Government to achieve compliance with federal standards for municipal solid waste landfill operation and closure at its Anguilla and Bovoni Landfills. Required upgrades include groundwater contamination and explosive gas monitoring, storm-water control, and scrap metal removal. A third Order requires the reimplementation of a 1995 Virgin Islands Government Used Oil Management Plan, which involved the collection of "do-it-yourself" used oil and the establishment of on-island burning capacity for both do-it-yourself and commercially generated used oil. A public availability meeting was held prior to the issuance of each Order, and 30-day comment periods were provided for the public to submit written comments on each Order.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The Virgin Islands Department of Public Works owns the Bovoni Landfill and operates that, the Anguilla Landfill, and the Virgin Islands Port Authority, which owns the Anguilla Landfill. EPA is coordinating with the Federal Aviation Administration regarding the operation of the Anguilla Landfill, which poses a bird strike hazard to the nearby Henry E. Rohlsen Airport.

The Landfill Orders name the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works as respondents. The Used Oil Order names the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works and Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources as respondents.

#### What are the Project Benefits?

- The Landfill Orders seek to markedly improve operating conditions that pose a number of potential threats to human health and the environment, including the risk of fire, disease, and at the Anguilla Landfill, a bird strike hazard to the nearby Henry E. Rohlsen Airport.
- The Used Oil Order seeks to curtail the potential monetary incentive for illegal dumping posed by the high cost of off-island disposal by providing and publicly promoting a lower cost local alternative.
- The potential environmental benefits are substantial, as harm to a sensitive ecosystem, as well as damage to surface water and groundwater, will be minimized or prevented.
- The Virgin Islands Government has made significant progress in complying with all three Orders. A 2003 EPA inspection of the Anguilla Landfill confirmed that the Port Authority had constructed a fence and installed a closed circuit television



observation system, and that the Public Works Department was using this system to conduct random inspections of incoming loads and was applying daily earthen cover to the Landfill active face. A 2003 EPA inspection of the Bovoni Landfill confirmed that the Public Works Department had partially constructed a used oil storage building, constructed a fence, completed a temporary sewage sludge storage cell, was conducting random inspections of incoming loads, and was applying daily earthen cover to the Landfill active face. While underground fires have existed at both Landfills for years, neither fire nor smoke was observed at either Landfill.

## Lessons Learned

Although the Region had the authority to issue the Orders unilaterally, it succeeded in negotiating the issuance of all three Orders on consent. This, combined with Region 2's ongoing collaborative efforts with the Virgin Islands Government, has confirmed Region 2's understanding and appreciation of the benefits of the partnership approach.

## Project Contact

*Leonard Grossman, Project Coordinator  
EPA Region 2, DECA/RCB  
(212) 637-4153*

## Region 2

### 2003 Compliance Assistance and Environmental Enforcement Sweep, Paterson, New Jersey

#### Project Activity

The project goal was to perform a concentrated, multi-media enforcement initiative that focused on issues affecting the health and well being of the people in the Paterson, New Jersey, area. The sweep consisted of compliance assistance followed by targeted inspections of regulated facilities. Paterson was chosen because it is an environmental justice community and has a high number of regulated facilities in close proximity to residential neighborhoods. Compliance rates in Paterson are low compared to several other northern New Jersey cities.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The project partners, led by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), included EPA Region 2, the Passaic County Health Department, the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC), and the Paterson Department of Commerce. EPA Region 2 and NJDEP coordinated the effort, which included conducting inspections and providing compliance assistance prior to the sweep. The Passaic County Health Department and PVSC also conducted inspections while the Department of Commerce helped reach its members and hosted compliance assistance seminars.

#### What Are the Project Benefits?

Through cooperative efforts with all partners, EPA Region 2 provided compliance assistance to over 400 businesses before the inspection sweep began. Feedback from inspectors indicated that the EPA presence was expected and anticipated. Inspectors believed that many facilities brought themselves into better compliance knowing that inspectors were coming.

Inspectors conducted about 1,300 inspections and found over 150 major violations. Enforcement actions are being taken.

Examples of violations found and addressed included:

- A truck leaving a dye and chemical company was stopped with the help of a sheriff because it was believed to be leaking hydrochloric acid vapor. After stopping the truck, inspectors learned that the facility was using its basement as wastewater storage with potential leaks to groundwater.
- Several bodegas (convenience stores) were issued stop-sale orders for illegal, imported pesticides.
- Inspectors found at least two facilities in the City that were stockpiling drums containing toxic chemicals, some of which were leaking. Cleanup will commence at both facilities.

## Lessons Learned

The project demonstrated that interagency coordination increases efficiency among all programs involved. The concentrated outreach and enforcement effort in Paterson helped achieve a broader awareness of the area's environmental challenges and potential impacts to its inner-city residents.

## Project Contact

*Meghan La Reau Fedor*  
EPA Region 2, DECA  
(212) 637-4148

## Region 8

### Migrant Farm Worker Safety Notice

#### Project Activity

This project was designed to inform migrant farm workers of potential dangers from the destruction of chemical weapons at the Pueblo Chemical Depot (PCD). The PCD is a 15,000 acre military facility located east of Pueblo, Colorado, and is surrounded by a population that is more than fifty percent Hispanic. The Depot is tasked with the storage of chemical weapons. The site is slated for closure under the Base Relocation and Closure Act and is undergoing cleanup of soil and groundwater contamination under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA).

Currently, PCD stores nearly 800,000 rounds of deteriorating munitions containing mustard agent. These rounds are slated for destruction under the terms of the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty. The destruction will be carried out pursuant to the terms of permits issued and administered by the State of Colorado. For the past several years, local residents have been educated and prepared for the upcoming weapons destruction. Information and advice has been provided through news articles, community meetings, and home visits to deliver "Shelter In Place" kits.

While most of the affected population has been informed about the destruction of chemical weapons, one segment of the population was overlooked—migrant farm workers. More than 4,000 migrant workers are employed in the fields surrounding the Depot. No one had informed them of the potential dangers of weapons destruction or how they might respond to a release of airborne contamination.

EPA Region 8's Environmental Justice program, in partnership with the Army, the Pueblo County Emergency Management Office, and local advocacy/assistance groups for migrant workers, created a one

page Spanish-language brochure to fill this information gap. EPA Region 8's Environmental Justice office took the lead in designing the brochure and writing the text. The Army edited the text, the Emergency Management Office printed the brochure, and the Los Pobres Center distributed the document to the 1,500 migrant families that came through its doors.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The principal Regional participants were EPA Region 8's Environmental Justice, Federal Facilities, and Community Involvement programs. The Army Depot's staff provided editorial assistance and the Pueblo County Emergency Management program provided logistical support. Los Pobres Center carried out the distribution of 2,000 brochures and answered questions from the migrant community. Finally, community members concerned about the lack of information regarding the weapons destruction in the migrant farm worker community provided critical counsel and assistance.

#### What Are the Project Benefits?

- The migrant community has been afforded the same level of information as was available to the community at large.
- Nearly 4,000 migrant workers have been given information potentially critical to their safety in the event of a catastrophic release of a chemical agent.
- Migrant workers now have begun to ask questions about what they can do if there is an accidental release of a chemical agent.
- Participating government agencies have begun to consider the migrant community in the design and implementation of their communication and outreach plans.



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## Lessons Learned

The principal lesson taken from this activity is “Do not assume that all segments of a community are well informed about an environmental restoration activity, even if you have put in place a sound, community-wide communication strategy.” In this case, the issue was not one of simply translating material into another language. Rather, the primary challenge was identifying and addressing an unreached community. The secondary challenge was designing an appropriate strategy to communicate effectively with a partially literate population that was unreachable through standard communication channels.

## Project Contact

*Michael Wenstrom  
Environmental Justice Program  
Region 8, USEPA  
(303) 312-7009  
wenstrom.michael@epa.gov*



## Environmental Justice Awareness Training

As part of EPA's strong commitment to implement effective practices for addressing the needs of environmental justice communities, EPA gives training to its staff regarding environmental justice issues. This training focuses on environmental justice policies and learned and practiced tools for managing environmental justice issues effectively. It also addresses the need for staff to be aware and sensitive to environmental justice issues that may arise in the communities in which they work. This section highlights the projects that involve environmental justice training of EPA employees.



### Region 1

## Environmental Justice Guidance Compendium

### Project Activity

EPA Region 1's Environmental Justice Functional Guidance Compendium (EJ Guidance Compendium), which was finalized in February 2004, is the centerpiece of the Region's efforts to integrate environmental justice principles in the day-to-day work of the Region. It provides guidance for staff working in seven of EPA Region 1's major functional areas: 1) Contracts and Procurement, 2) Development and Approval of State Programs, 3) Federal Financial Assistance Agreements, 4) Inspections, Enforcement, and Compliance Assistance, 5) Performance Partnership Agreements (PPAs) with States, 6) Permitting, and 7) Waste Site Cleanup, Emergency Response, and Brownfields. A cross-office training plan has been developed for each functional guidance area, and training will begin during the second quarter of FY 2004.

As the developmental process for the EJ Guidance Compendium began, it became clear that the effort was larger and more complex than originally anticipated. Given its importance, the EJ Council chose to continue developing the Compendium, which is expected to change the way EPA Region 1's work is performed. The complexity of the task delayed the issuance of the Compendium by a year. The final EJ Guidance Compendium was issued in February 2004 and training on each of its function-specific chapters will begin during the second quarter of FY 2004. This guidance, together with the EJ Awareness Training and the EJ Mapping Tool that were also rolled out in FY 2003, provide staff with a solid foundation to build EJ goals and objectives into their day-to-day activities.

### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

EPA Region 1's Environmental Justice Council authored much of the Compendium with input from other staff and managers in Region 1.

### What Are the Project Benefits?

The document provides function-specific direction that will enable staff to integrate EJ principles into their day-to-day work. The EJ Guidance Compendium also includes guidance that should be applied by staff region-wide to assess and take action to address environmental justice issues, including the Brief Users' Guide to the EPA Region 1 EJ Desktop Mapping Tool, and guidance on conducting public involvement activities and working with tribes.

### Project Contacts

*Kathy Castagna*  
Region 1, OCR  
(617) 918-1429

*James Younger*  
Region 1, OCR  
(617) 918-1061



## Region 1

### Environmental Justice Mapping Tool

#### Project Activity

In May 2003, EPA Region 1 launched its new Environmental Justice Desktop Mapping Tool (EJ Mapping Tool), a computer mapping application available to all regional employees at their desktops. The tool provides EPA Region 1 staff a means to help identify and analyze potential EJ issues, and is the result of over a year of careful planning, development, and evaluation as part of the regional EJ Action Plans for FY 2002 and 2003.

The EJ Mapping Tool provides a visual representation of areas in New England where significant numbers of minority and low-income populations live. The raw data on race and income are drawn from the 2000 U.S. Census. The data are organized and presented visually by reference to geographic areas known as "block groups." Block groups are census-defined areas, generally containing between 600 and 3,000 people. The EJ Mapping Tool uses race and income thresholds to identify potential EJ areas of concern, since race and income are widely recognized as strong indicators of populations that might bear elevated environmental burdens.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The EPA Region 1 Environmental Justice Council's sub-workgroup, which is made up of Council members and EPA Region 1 IT staff, was involved.

#### What Are the Project Benefits?

The EJ Mapping Tool was designed to enhance the quality of EPA Region 1's work by providing easy access to consistent and reliable EJ-related data. By having demographic data readily available to help characterize communities throughout New England, staff and management can better ensure that EJ principles, such as fairness and meaningful involvement, are incorporated into EPA Region 1's everyday work.

#### Lessons Learned

Further work is necessary to give EPA Region 1's state partners access to the tool.

#### Project Contact

*Deborah Cohen*  
Region 1, OARM  
(617) 918-1145

## Region 3

### Environmental Justice All States Meetings

#### Project Activity

EPA Region 3 and the states of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia cosponsored the Environmental Justice All States meetings. These meetings were designed to provide a forum for discussion on topics of environmental justice concern for the purposes of providing information, insight, and consultation, and for building working relationships between federal and state agencies as they seek to address environmental justice issues. Presentations on significant issues of

interest with respect to environmental justice were made by invited guests.

Historically, speakers and presenters have been public interest lawyers, professionals from various public and private organizations, lawyers representing the regulated community, Regional and EPA Headquarters personnel, state and local representatives from EPA Region 3, and citizens representing areas of concern. Sessions have served as training opportunities for state, federal, and local personnel, and as mechanisms for building and maintaining positive

working relationships among partners. Recent topics of discussion have been the Saint Lawrence Cement case, cumulative risk, state environmental justice programs, identification of at-risk communities, health indicators, and collaborative problem solving.

In 2002, the meetings focused on health indicators, assessment tools, and environmental justice legislation as a means to address environmental justice concerns. In 2003, the meetings were expanded to include EPA Region 2 and the states of New York and New Jersey. The Winter 2003 meeting focused on Cumulative Risk, and the Summer 2003 meeting focused on the issues related to the Saint Lawrence Cement case that was before the U.S. Third Circuit Court. The Summer 2003 meeting included presentations by state and federal partners and by attorneys active in the Saint Lawrence Cement case, and included a site tour led by the citizens of the community.

## Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The Environmental Justice All States Meetings are jointly sponsored by the EPA Region 3's Office of Enforcement, Compliance, and Environmental Justice, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the City of Philadelphia. Each of these partners is involved in the planning of the meetings, identifying Environmental Justice issues of concern to be discussed, participating on monthly All States Environmental Justice conference calls, and serving as presenters during the meeting's informational sessions.

Charles Lee of EPA's Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) makes regular presentations at these meetings. Other participants have included:

- Larry Charles of ONE CHANE;
- Ann Goode, formerly of OCR;
- Arthur Ray, formerly of Exelon and MDE;
- Deehon Ferris; and
- Olga Pomar.

Public and private interest attorneys also provide information on cases of environmental justice concern, and provide insights into the trends and perspectives regarding environmental justice case law. Representatives from community and environmental groups participate as invited guests and provide information and insight into issues of concern.

## What Are the Project Benefits?

- The All States Environmental Justice Meetings led to the development of the Region 3 Cumulative Risk Workshop, which was conducted in May 2003. This Workshop provided the Region 3 community with an overview of the various aspects of Cumulative Risk as related to environmental justice. More than 100 persons from as far away as Oklahoma attended the workshop. Follow-up workshops and regional activities related to cumulative risk are planned for the future.
- Work started at the All States Environmental Justice Meetings is carried over into the work of the state Environmental Justice Councils in the Region, and has translated into better working relationships among the partners.

## Lessons Learned

Information provided on legal cases and issues of concern gives the partners new insight, and the meetings serve as a forum for training and capacity building among the partners.

## Project Contact

*Reginald Harris  
U.S. EPA Region 3  
Office of Enforcement, Compliance and Environmental Justice  
1650 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
(215) 814-2988*



## Region 3

### Cumulative Risk Workshop, Philadelphia, PA, May 2003

#### Project Activity

The states and citizens expressed interest in Region 3 holding informative workshops and seminars on topics of environmental justice concern. In 2003, Region 3 held a highly successful Cumulative Risk/Impacts Workshop in Philadelphia and an Environmental Justice Forum in the District of Columbia. A proceedings document was made available on EPA Region 3's Website at <http://www.epa.gov/reg3ceej/cumriskwshop.htm>, and the materials were also mailed to interested parties.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The Cumulative Risk Workshop was attended by more than 100 persons representing state, federal, and local agencies, community groups and organizations, academic institutions, professional organizations, and other interests. Participants came from all across the United States, and Region 3 received correspondence from Canada and Western Europe regarding the meeting. Representatives from the Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health and Hygiene, the Federal Drug Administration, U.S. EPA-Research Triangle Park, the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia, private law firms, WEACTION, the Philadelphia Asian American Community, Jefferson Medical College, Temple University, Exelon, and EPA Region 3 served as presenters and moderators for the workshop

#### What Are the Project Benefits?

- The Workshop provided an overview of the state of the science of cumulative risk for all stakeholders in attendance. EPA Region 3 and the states it represents are working toward developing more defined methodologies for the appropriate application of a cumulative approach to addressing environmental justice concerns.
- Several aspects of cumulative risk were identified as key areas for further investigation in future workshops, including: vulnerability, sensitive populations, susceptibility, multiple impacts, multiple sources, and biomarkers.

#### Lessons Learned

The group learned that the use of cumulative risk as an assessment tool may help provide a more effective means of proactively identifying areas of concern. However, cumulative risk assessment limitations and the appropriate use of cumulative risk assessment methodology need to be explored in greater detail.

#### Project Contact

*Reginald Harris*  
EPA Region 3  
Office of Enforcement, Compliance and  
Environmental Justice  
1650 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
(215) 814-2988

## OSWER

### OSWER Environmental Justice Training

#### Project Activity

OSWER has had a formal environmental justice (EJ) program since 1993. With the advent of the EPA EJ Fundamentals Course, OSWER saw yet another opportunity to expand its EJ efforts. OSWER began its EJ Training program by offering an abbreviated course for its senior management as a way of educating them and giving them insight prior to deciding how EJ training would be implemented throughout OSWER. Their involvement and satisfaction with the

training formed the basis for offering the one-day EJ training course to all OSWER staff.

Staff training throughout OSWER began in September 2003. At that time, 25 staff members from all of OSWER's program offices were trained. This was particularly encouraging because enrollment is on a voluntary basis. The initial training developed into a comprehensive "EJ 101: Fundamentals of Environmental Justice" one-day training course, which is now offered on a quarterly basis and conducted by trained OSWER program office representatives. This



EJ training course focuses on identifying and addressing environmental justice matters consistent with existing environmental laws and their implementing regulations. OSWER's goal is to train more than 200 people over the next two fiscal years.

## Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The EJ training team is comprised of representatives from various OSWER program offices.

## What Are the Project Benefits?

- Increasing environmental justice awareness among OSWER staff by training more than 200 people over the next two fiscal years.
- Better integrating environmental justice considerations into OSWER's programs, projects, and activities.
- Reinforcing the principles of environmental justice throughout OSWER and the Agency.

## Lessons Learned

- The key to the course's value is relating the material to the participants' work.

## Project Contact

*Kent Benjamin, Environmental Justice and State Liaison  
U.S. EPA, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response  
(202) 566-0185*



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## Community Involvement, Outreach, and Planning

OSWER is committed to improving communications with communities and establishing trust of EPA in those communities. To do this, OSWER works in partnership with community representatives, states, cities, and federal agencies to develop strategies for promoting public participation and community involvement in its decision-making processes. Part of this process includes the development of communication and outreach tools that are effective in reaching the environmental justice communities that EPA serves. This section highlights EPA's environmental justice projects that focused on the development of partnerships with communities and other entities to develop effective communication and outreach materials.



### FFRRO

## Examining Environmental Justice at Federal Facilities

### Project Activity

As part of the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC), the Federal Facilities Working Group (Working Group) identified and evaluated key issues of concern to environmental justice (EJ) communities regarding the cleanup activities at sites owned and/or operated by the Federal government, primarily the Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Energy (DOE). The Working Group has provided specific recommendations in their final report, which, if approved by the Executive Council of NEJAC, will be sent to EPA later in 2004.

In order to develop the recommendations report, the Working Group conducted site visits at five federal facilities throughout the United States. The purpose of the site visits was to examine the relationship between federal facilities and EJ communities during the remediation process. The five site visits included: Kelly Air Force Base, San Antonio, TX; Fort Wingate, Gallup, NM; Memphis Defense Depot, Memphis, TN; DOE's Savannah River Site, Aiken, SC; and DOE's Hanford Site, Richland, WA. The following site attributes were considered, among others, in determining the site visits: location, lead Federal agency, type of site (sites on the National Priority List, Base Realignment and Closure Sites, or Formerly Used Defense Sites), contaminants of concern, type of EJ communities and issue, and level of stakeholder involvement. After each site visit, the Working Group created a site visit report to serve as background information to its final recommendations report.

### Who was involved in this effort?

The NEJAC Federal Facilities Working Group's membership is comprised of a balanced representation of diverse interests, including: community-based groups, business, academic institutions, state government, federally recognized tribes, and other non-governmental groups. As part of the data collection effort, various community-based residents and local EJ-based organizations, as well as EPA's Regional offices, DoD and DOE facility personnel, tribes, state regulators, and non-governmental organizations provided information and insight into their experiences with the sites. EPA's Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office sponsored the Working Group's effort.

### What Are the Project Benefits?

The final product of the Working Group's efforts is a recommendations report titled "Environmental Justice and Federal Facilities: Recommendations for Improving Stakeholder Relations Between Federal Facilities and EJ Communities." This report provides an overview of EJ issues at Federal Facilities and specific recommendations to EPA to improve relations with EJ communities and assist these communities to more effectively participate in the cleanup process at federal facilities. Five general findings are presented in the report, which include EJ communities general need for:

- Access to adequate health services;
- Additional resources for capacity building;
- Improved and effective communication between facility/regulators;



- Enhancement of community assessments and communication methods to improve cultural sensitivity by the federal government; and
- New and consistent opportunities to help influence decisions.

The recommendations provide suggestions for how EPA can assist EJ communities to meet these needs.

## Lessons Learned

The recommendations report will provide important information to EPA's Headquarters and Regional offices about EJ issues at Federal facilities.

## Project Contact

*Trina Martynowicz*  
 U.S. EPA/OSWER  
 Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office  
 (703) 603-0051

## Region 3

### Auto Body Shop Initiative

#### Project Activity

The Auto Body Shop Initiative was implemented in the Park Heights Neighborhood of Baltimore, MD, and in Ward 5 of Washington, DC. The initiative focused on bringing auto body shops in the two target areas into compliance with current regulations. To do this, the following steps were taken: 1) identify the universe of facilities in the two target areas; 2) conduct inspections at a statistically valid number of randomly selected facilities to obtain a compliance rate for this sector in the particular area; 3) provide compliance assistance and pollution prevention outreach to the entire universe of auto body shops; 4) conduct a self certification program; and 5) measure the results of the compliance assistance efforts. Both Maryland and Washington, DC, received grants from EPA Headquarters to implement these steps. The states and the community groups involved developed compliance assistance materials that were distributed to auto body shops in the target areas.

With assistance from EPA Region 3's Office of Enforcement, Compliance, and Environmental Justice (OECEJ), both Washington, DC, and Maryland completed a checklist for the inspections, and wrote the Environmental Business Performance Indicators (EBPI). The EBPI were used in the measurement phase of the project. The second round of inspections were completed, and the State of Maryland is planning to provide additional assistance to the auto body shop owners in the Park Heights neighborhood. The Park Heights Project was awarded a \$100,000 grant through the Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem Solving Grants Program. It was also selected

as one of the Second Round IWG Demonstration Project Pilots.

The results of these projects were measured using different methods to:

- Determine the compliance rate at the beginning of the project and again after the outreach had occurred;
- Determine the number of participants who self-certified;
- Determine any change in behavior among the auto body shops with regard to complying with environmental regulations;
- Determine if complaints in the area had decreased; and,
- In Baltimore, evaluate the publicly owned treatment works' discharge monitoring reports to determine if there was a decrease in oil and grease discharges.

Region 3 is still working with both Washington, DC, and Maryland to finalize the measurement methods to be used for additional projects. OECEJ will continue to assist the states in 2004 and 2005 by confirming shop locations with a geographic positioning system (GPS) and with follow-up inspections at 46 auto body shops in Washington, DC, and 30 auto body shops in MD.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

In Baltimore, the Project was headed by OECEJ, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), and the Park Reist Corridor Association. In Washington DC, the lead organizations were OECEJ and the DC Health Department. EPA Headquarters and EPA



Region 3 provided funding for the project. OECEJ provided the staff who conducted the inspections, and assisted MDE, which developed the Compliance Assistance Workbooks and related materials. The citizens and body shop owners actively participated in the project by assisting OECEJ inspectors with locating facilities and in bringing together residents and shop owners with EPA and MDE. The Park Heights Body Shops formed an association of the shops that participated in the project. All of the stakeholders worked together to identify additional project partners who may be instrumental in building relationships that will bring about additional environmental improvements, and establish mutually beneficial relationships.

## What Are the Project Benefits?

The Project:

- Assisted shop owners in coming into compliance with regulations;
- Improved the quality of life in the communities;
- Increased awareness of environmental regulations among shop owners and employees; and
- Reduced environmental impacts due to waste oil, chemicals, paints, and associated automotive products.

- The universe of auto body and auto repair facilities in the study areas are more accurately defined.
- The inspections identified and more clearly defined needs and concerns.
- The stakeholders learned the value of the partnership.
- The compliance assistance activities and training provided insight and information that will improve future efforts.

## Project Contacts

*Garth Connor*  
 U.S. EPA Region 3  
 Office of Enforcement, Compliance and Environmental Justice  
 (215) 814-3209

*Reginald Harris*  
 U.S. EPA Region 3  
 Office of Enforcement, Compliance and Environmental Justice  
 (215) 814-2988

## Region 4

### Teachers Environmental Institutes

#### Project Activity

Building an awareness of the nature and vastness of environmental problems and finding creative solutions to these problems among middle and high school teachers are the primary goals of the Teachers Environmental Institute (TEI). So far, EPA Region 4 has trained more than 550 teachers who have touched the lives of over 25,000 middle and high school students.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

In FY 2003, EPA Region 4 and Alabama A&M University hosted the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual TEI. The TEI was held on the University campus during June 2003. Forty-one teachers from the State of Alabama, along with one from the State of Georgia, attended the TEI. In

total, they represented 15 school districts. The University utilized its engineering and environmental staff to develop and deliver the workshop. The University was assisted by staff from EPA Region 4 and the Marshall Space Flight Center.

#### What are the Project Benefits?

The TEIs offer teachers an opportunity to learn about the environmental issues affecting their communities and to consider practical suggestions for involving students and community residents in environmental protection. With waste management as a central theme, institute activities are comprised of stimulating workshop sessions, hands-on activities that focus on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Toxic Release Inventory (TRI), Superfund site tours, and interactive discussions on topics such as risk assessment, community activism, pollution prevention, and

environmental justice. With the assistance of institute facilitators, participating teachers developed lesson plans that incorporated the environmental research data specific to their respective communities. Participants have been exposed to topics as varied and far-reaching as “The Political Process and Environmental Policy,” “Teaching Environmental Science,” “Developing Environmental Curriculum Guides,” and “Pollution Prevention.”

## Lessons Learned

As the participating teachers touch the lives of more than 2,000 students annually, it is anticipated that the impact of these important environmental messages will reach far beyond the confines of conference participation. Thus, the “living legacy” of the Institutes will be manifested in the thousands of students who will become better equipped to analyze and discover new ways in which families and communities can work together for a better life.

## Region 7

### St. Louis Community AIR Outreach, St. Louis, Missouri

#### Project Activity

The population on the north side of St. Louis has some of the highest adverse environmental health (i.e., asthma) issues in the State of Missouri and the Nation. This same population also has the greatest social challenges with income, single head-of-households, educational barriers, and other social and physical measures. Region 7 implemented various outreach projects to the citizens of St. Louis. These included the St. Louis Community Air Project, the North Side Clean Air Project, and the Air Toxics Education Project. These outreach projects provided accessible community education on air toxics, helped people understand how their behaviors influence healthy air, and empowered people to make deliberate decisions to reduce harmful hazardous air pollutants and reduce diesel emissions from school buses through technology, fuel types, and policies.

#### Who was involved in the Project Initiative?

The project participants included: St. Louis residents, businesses, schools, daycare centers, the Public Library, and AmeriCorps.

#### Project Contacts:

*Margaret Crowe*  
U.S. EPA Region 4, Waste Management Division  
(404) 562-8687

*Eddie L. Wright*  
U.S. EPA Region 4, Waste Management Division  
(404) 562-8669

#### What Are the Project Benefits?

The projects have helped EPA realize a variety of approaches to environmental management that respect the assets and challenges that exist within different communities. While EPA has often agreed that a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach does not work well, rarely has EPA been able to offer specifics that demonstrate alternative approaches. These projects have developed a series of strategies and target groups that engage and use the strengths and assets of diverse communities. Below is a list of five extremely effective strategies:

1. Work through economic development opportunities (micro-enterprises) in economically stressed communities to help families find better cleaning alternatives that work effectively and do not trigger asthmatic reactions.
2. Ally with high schools to develop videos that carry a message that is highly accessible to young people. Using youth culture helps to increase the appeal of environmental stewardship concepts.



3. Partner with the public library system to create programs that educate and engage middle and high school students in air toxics education and youth-designed pollution prevention efforts.
4. Collaborate with formal and informal educators (e.g., schools, youth organizations, and neighborhood associations) to help kindergartners through adults learn how their behaviors can improve air.
5. Establish a cooperative network with the school districts and commercial fleets to reduce diesel emissions from buses.

## Lessons Learned

- Governments must work on environmental issues in a manner that respects the public's assets and position.
- The public is capable of managing complex environmental issues; they handle things that are far more complex every day.
- Timing and process are critical features in relating to communities.
- Be innovative and creative; the same old solutions (even those from last week) may not work tomorrow.
- Partnering together as a community helps us all achieve a better life.

## Project Contact

Marcus Rivas  
Region 7, Project Officer  
(913) 551-7669  
Rivas.Marcus@epa.gov

## Glossary

*Botanics* - Latino drug stores that sell herbal remedies, oils, and icons.

*Brownfields* - Contaminated areas, usually within a city or urban area, that are being cleaned up for future industrial use. Areas cleaned up under a brownfields program often are subject to different requirements than sites cleaned up under the Superfund program.

*Charrette* - An intensive, collaborative design workshop, often lasting several days, that involves all project stakeholders in the early phase of a project to develop a comprehensive plan or design.

*Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)* - Commonly known as Superfund, this Act established prohibitions and requirements concerning closed and abandoned hazardous waste sites, provided for liability of persons responsible for releases of hazardous waste at these sites, and established a trust to provide for cleanup when no responsible party could be identified.

*Contaminants* - Pollutants in air, water, soil, or food. A contaminant could be chemicals released by a facility, household products used incorrectly, car exhaust, stream discharges, or other materials that could cause harm to humans or the environment.

*Cooperative Agreement* - An assistance agreement whereby EPA transfers money, property, services or anything of value to a state, university, non-profit, or not-for-profit organization for the accomplishment of authorized activities or tasks.

*Environmental Assessment (EA)* - A preliminary analysis required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The EA is used to determine whether an activity supported by the federal government would significantly affect the environment. Public comments on the draft EA can be instrumental in convincing an agency that a federal action is required.

*Environmental Justice* - the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws and policies, and their meaningful involvement in the decision-making processes of the government.

*Federal Facility* - Any building, structure, installation, or equipment owned, operated, or funded by the federal government.

*Federal Register* - The publication in which EPA and other federal agencies publish their notices to the public about proposed actions, and advertise public comment periods. The Federal Register is searchable online at: [www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/](http://www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/)

*Groundwater* - The supply of fresh water found beneath the earth's surface, usually in aquifers, that supply wells and springs. Because groundwater is a major source of drinking water, there is growing concern over contamination from leaching agricultural or industrial pollutants or leaking underground storage tanks.

*Guidance* - Recommendations on how laws should be put into action, as opposed to formal regulations or law.

*Hazardous Substances* - EPA defines this in two ways: 1) any material that poses a threat to human health and/or the environment. Typical hazardous substances are toxic, corrosive, ignitable, explosive, or chemically reactive; or 2) any substance designated by EPA to be reported if a designated quantity of the substance is spilled in the waters of the United States or is otherwise released into the environment.

*Hazardous Waste* - Waste materials that contain certain hazardous chemicals. RCRA sets out standards for the handling, storage, transportation, treatment, and disposal of hazardous wastes.

*Particulates* - 1. Fine liquid or solid particles such as dust, smoke, mist, fumes, or smog, found in air or emissions. 2. Very small solids suspended in water; they can vary in size, shape, density and electrical charge and can be gathered together by coagulation and flocculation.

*PCBs* - Polychlorinated biphenyls, which are a mixture of individual chemicals that are no longer produced in the United States, but are still found in the environment. PCBs were used as coolants and lubricants in transformers, capacitors, and other electrical equipment because they don't burn easily and are good insulators. The manufacture of PCBs was stopped in the U.S. in 1977 because of evidence they build up in the environment and can cause harmful health effects. Products made before 1977



that may contain PCBs include old fluorescent lighting fixtures and electrical devices containing PCB capacitors, and old microscope and hydraulic oils.

*Pollution* - The contamination of air, water, soil, or food supplies by toxic and other pollutants.

*Pollutant* - Any substance introduced into the environment that negatively affects the usefulness of a resource or the health of humans, animals, or ecosystems. A pollutant could include chemicals released by a facility, household products used incorrectly, car exhaust, or other materials that could cause harm to humans or the environment.

*Polluter* - One who releases pollutants or conducts other activities without the required permits, or in violation of those permits.

*Regulations* - The rules developed by agencies that contain the details needed to implement the general requirements found in laws. Regulations are developed in draft first. The public has an opportunity to comment on regulations before they are finalized.

*Removal Action* - Short-term immediate actions taken to address releases of hazardous substances that require expedited response.

*Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)* - This Act was enacted by Congress in 1976. RCRA's primary goals are to protect human health and the environment from the potential hazards of waste disposal, to conserve energy and natural resources, to reduce the amount of waste generated, and to ensure that wastes are managed in an environmentally sound manner.

*Risk Assessment* - A study or evaluation that identifies, and in many cases quantifies, the potential harm posed to health and the environment by contamination. Risk assessments may make assumptions about the affected community that may not be accurate.

*Sediments* - Soil, sand, and minerals washed from land into water, usually after rain. They pile up in reservoirs, rivers and harbors, destroying fish and wildlife habitat, and clouding the water so that sunlight cannot reach aquatic plants. Careless farming, mining, and building activities will expose sediment materials, allowing them to wash off the land after rainfall.

*Sensitive Populations* - Groups of people who are more at risk for illness or disease than the general

population. This could be because they are already in poor health, or because they had more exposure to certain pollutants than other people in similar situations.

*Site Information Repository* - A location where public information about a Superfund cleanup is kept.

*Sludge* - A semi-solid residue from any of a number of air or water treatment processes; can be a hazardous waste.

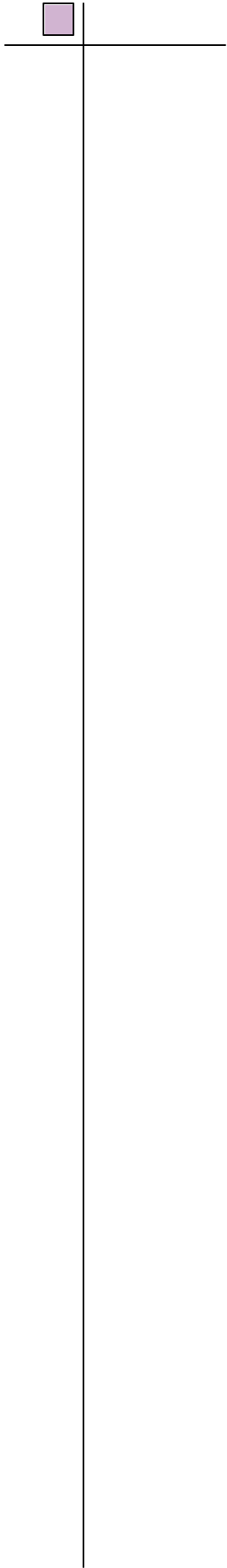
*Smart Growth* - Development that serves the economy, the community, and the environment.

*Solid Waste* - Any waste that is not hazardous. This generally includes municipal garbage and nonhazardous industrial wastes.

*Subsistence* - What is required to maintain life.

*Superfund* - The program operated under the legislative authority of CERCLA that funds and carries out EPA solid waste emergency and long-term removal and remedial activities. These activities include establishing the National Priorities List, investigating sites for inclusion on the list, determining their priority, and conducting and/or supervising cleanup and other remedial actions.

*Toxic Substances Control Act* - The primary Federal statute regulating the use of certain chemicals and substances, including asbestos, PCBs, radon and lead.



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