



# **Community Engagement Initiative:**

Meaningful Participation in OSWER Programs

2010 National Training Conference on the TRI and  
Environmental Conditions in Communities



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

*Implementation Plan 1.0*

Office of Solid Waste  
and Emergency Response

May 2010



# Community Engagement: A Cornerstone of Our Work

- President's Open Government Directive
  - Transparency
  - Collaboration
  - Participation
  - Community Engagement – Theme of EPA's Plan
- EPA Administrator Jackson – One of Seven Priorities
  - Expanding the conversation on environmentalism with communities historically underrepresented in EPA decision-making
- Priority of OSWER Assistant Administrator Stanislaus



# Why Community Engagement?

- When communities are **involved early and often** – and are **well informed**, we:
  - Benefit from their ideas
  - Design cleanup plans that fully consider local knowledge and are consistent with community plans
  - Build trust and relationships
- Enable all of the diverse parts of the community to meaningfully participate in our processes



# Effective Community Engagement

- Makes OSWER and Regional programs more productive
- Integrate it into existing work and processes
- *Not about* reaching consensus with every viewpoint in the community or providing a high level of engagement for every problem



# Implementation of the CEI

- Implementation Plan
  - Released May 2010
  - 16 Actions - each led by a HQ program office
- The plan is iterative
  - “Living Document”
- Ongoing input from stakeholders
- Regular update of website
- Annual report



# CEI Actions - Goal 1:

## Develop Transparent and Accessible Decision-Making Processes

<b>Action 1</b>	Decision-Making Process Review
<b>Action 2</b>	Underground Storage Tank Programs and States
<b>Action 3</b>	RCRA Programs and States
<b>Action 4</b>	OSWER Regulation and Guidance Development
<b>Action 5</b>	Community Engagement Policies Related to Enforcement
<b>Action 6</b>	CERCLA Enforcement at Federal Facilities



# CEI Actions – Goal 2: Improve Technical Assistance and Delivery of Information

<b>Action 7</b>	EPA Technical Assistance Process Review
<b>Action 8</b>	Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Program
<b>Action 9</b>	Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program
<b>Action 10</b>	Public Health Information on OSWER Projects – Federal Collaboration
<b>Action 11</b>	Risk Communication Processes and Education
<b>Action 12</b>	Communication of Sampling Results
<b>Action 13</b>	Delivery of Information





## CEI Actions – Goal 3:

### **Produce Outcomes that are Responsive to Stakeholder Concerns**

<b>Action 14</b>	Community Engagement Training Program
<b>Action 15</b>	Measures of Effectiveness and Annual Report
<b>Action 16</b>	Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program



# Delivery of Information

- Focus on remote and EJ communities
- Work Group to evaluate issues
- Report of Recommendations
- Issues may include
  - Electronic access/digital divide
  - Use of social media
  - Simplified Information
  - Location of information
  - Timely release of information



# CEI Status

- Four Workgroups
  - Technical Assistance
  - Risk Communication
  - Delivery of Information
  - CEI Training
- Recommendation Reports in Spring 2011
- Action 1 Process Descriptions on the Web
- Action 1 Workplans – early 2011
- Outreach to Communities

## Solid Waste and Emergency Response

Solid Waste Emergency Response Home

About Solid Waste Emergency Response

Land Cleanup and Redevelopment

Emergencies, Accidents and Spills

Safe Waste Management

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# Community Engagement Initiative

- [Community Engagement Initiative Overview](#)
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- [Progress Made to Date](#)
- [Related Materials](#)

## Community Engagement Initiative Overview

The EPA [Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response \(OSWER\)](#) Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) is designed to enhance OSWER and regional offices' engagement with local communities and stakeholders (e.g., state and local governments, tribes, academia, private industry, other federal agencies, non-profit organizations) to help them meaningfully participate in government decisions on land cleanup, emergency preparedness and response, and the management of hazardous substances and waste.

This initiative provides an opportunity for OSWER to refocus and renew its vision for community engagement, build on the good practices, and apply them consistently in EPA processes. EPA developed a proposed Action Plan and circulated it for public comment in December 2009. EPA used feedback received from communities, stakeholders, local governments, tribes and states to finalize the plan, [OSWER CEI Action Plan \(PDF\)](#) (6 pp, 36K, [about PDF](#)).

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## Community Engagement Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan lays out specific actions and activities that EPA will undertake to achieve the goals and objectives of this Action Plan. It is a working document that presents guiding principles, goals and objectives for the Initiative and outlines roles and schedules. Specific activities are being refined and more fully developed with ongoing feedback and input from community stakeholders. The document is available, [OSWER CEI Implementation Plan \(PDF\)](#) (20 pp, 842K, [about PDF](#)).

The actions EPA established for the CEI are:

- [Action 1](#) - Evaluate and Revise Critical Decision-Making Processes and Guidance
- [Action 2](#) - Review and Support Community Engagement Processes of Underground Storage Tank (UST) Programs Implemented by State Agencies and UST Programs in Indian Country Implemented by EPA
- [Action 3](#) - Sustain a Dialogue with EPA Regions and State RCRA Delegated Programs to Identify and Promote Best Community Engagement Practices

### Feedback

Share your comments on the Implementation Plan

### Related links

1. [OSWER Discussion Forum](#)
2. [OSWER Video Town Hall](#)
3. [OSWER AA speeches and testimony](#)
4. [Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response](#)



# Contact

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