



25 Years of Implementing EPCRA

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Before EPCRA



Bhopal, India in December 1984:
A cloud of methyl isocyanate gas
escaped from a Union Carbide
chemical plant. More than 2,500
people died.



Institute, WV in August 1985:
A chemical release occurred
shortly after the Bhopal
tragedy.



It's a girl !!

- SARA III
 - Full name: Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act
 - AKA: Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986
 - Nick-name (that has stuck into adulthood): EPCRA
- U.S. EPA was given the lead role in building programs to prepare for and prevent chemical accidents through EPCRA



Some Early Research

- FEMA (Bob Wilkerson) and EPA (Jim Makris) studied preparedness and found:
 - Those who will actually respond should plan together (i.e., do not rely on contractors to write a plan)
 - Get to know each other
 - Get to know each other's organizational functions and capabilities
 - Get to know the local hazards and risks
 - Include elected officials (the mayor must protect his/her people)
 - Include industry -- they have a vested interest in safety
 - Single best help to being prepared: **EXERCISES**
 - Table top exercise is fine



EPCRA is about CHEMICALS

- Conduct hazards analysis for your community
 - What chemicals are in your community?
 - Fixed facilities
 - Transportation routes
 - What equipment do you need for those chemicals?
 - What training do you need?



EPCRA is about INFORMATION

- Industry provides information about chemical hazards to:
 - SERC
 - LEPC
 - Fire departments
- LEPC can use the hazard information to plan for chemical safety in the community



EPCRA is about LOCAL Communities

- States manage the program
- Jobs are local
- Business profits are local
- Hazards are local
- Response is local
- Planning must be local
 - Includes many volunteers
 - Include all key local groups



EPCRA led to CAMEO

- Database of chemicals and their properties
 - Help identify chemicals in an accidental release
- Manage chemical information
- Identify and map chemical sources
- ALOHA can model chemical releases
- Available for download free of charge



EPCRA involved PREVENTION

- Some communities developed alternate transportation routes
- Industries began using less hazardous chemicals
- EPA developed the RMP program
 - Facilities must be coordinated with LEPC plans



EPCRA is related to OTHER EVENTS

- FEMA made progress in preparing for natural disasters, which could include chemical releases
 - Hurricanes
 - Floods
 - Earthquakes
- Deliberate releases
 - Oklahoma City
 - Twin Towers 1992 and 9/11



EPCRA went INTERNATIONAL

- APELL is very similar to EPCRA
 - EPA managers and staff, as well as SERC and LEPC members have taken the word to other countries
- OECD has developed parallel programs
 - Preparedness
 - Cross-border planning and information sharing
 - Safety Performance Indicators



Key EPCRA Successes

- No significant chemical releases in recent hurricanes
- Fire departments are better prepared for chemical accidents
- Volunteers contribute to local chemical safety
- Industry and local communities can cooperate



EPCRA into middle age

- Always coordinate with those responsible for homeland security, at both State and local levels
- Make EPCRA plan into an all-hazards plan
- Promote prevention of chemical accidents
- Believe in right-to-know
 - EPCRA needs regular attention if it is to continue its success



Questions?

THANK YOU!