



## Deer Park Community Advisory Council

### Summary of September 26, 2016 Meeting

#### DPCAC Receives Annual Reports on Plant Emissions and Air Quality Trends

The annual emissions report allows members of the Deer Park Community Advisory Council (DPCAC) to track releases from DPCAC plants of the criteria pollutants most plants must report annually to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) most must submit each July to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). DPCAC also invites Houston Regional Monitoring (HRM) to report each fall on sampling and analysis of the outdoor air. Pollutants reach the air from a wide range of sources, including industry, vehicles, power plants, and small businesses, as well as vegetation and fires.

In Deer Park plants, the Air Emissions Inventory increased 2% from 2014 to 2015 but has declined 30% since 2010. Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) Releases to Air were uncharacteristically higher in 2015 than in 2014 (up 38%) but are down 7% since 2010. Since 1987, there has been a 64% decrease in these releases of air toxics though the number of plants in DPCAC has increased through those years from 9 to 15, and the amount of products they make and handle has typically increased. The increases in 2015 are attributed primarily to a single large release and to flaring at one large facility. Decreases occurred in some plants, the result of installing a more efficient furnace at one plant.

Steve Hansen of Shell, a member of the HRM Technical Advisory Committee, summarized air quality trends. Based on data from 1987 to the present, Hansen showed that the number of ozone exceedance days has declined significantly even as EPA has made the standards stricter and the area has seen growth in population, vehicles, and industry. As of September 1, the number of exceedance days year to date has decreased. There were no ozone exceedances year to date at the TCEQ monitor in Deer Park at the time of the meeting, though one occurred shortly afterward.

Ozone, a respiratory irritant, is formed when nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) react in the sunlight on a day with calm winds and clear skies. The reduction in the number of times the ozone standard is exceeded may be attributed to a 55% decline in the concentration of NO<sub>x</sub> in the air and a 56% reduction of certain highly reactive VOCs that are more productive than others in forming ozone. Since 1988, HRM has also tracked a set of four hazardous air pollutants, including benzene and 1, 3-butadiene. Charts show an

85% reduction over the last 28 years. The DPCAC air quality report may be found at [www.deerparkcac.org](http://www.deerparkcac.org).

DPCAC will meet on Mon. Oct. 24 for the first of a two-meeting series on emergency response to a plant incident and related communications—and who does what. The Oct. 24 meeting focuses on response and the Nov. 28 meeting on communications. Visitors are welcome! For details about the 6 p.m. meeting, contact Janet Noble at 832-337-1557.

Visit [www.deerparkcac.org](http://www.deerparkcac.org) to read about recent meeting topics, find links to useful resources on emergency communications and the environment, see lists of DPCAC community and plant members, and read our mission and purposes.