



Deer Park Community Advisory Council

Summary of September 28, 2015 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, small businesses, as well as vegetation and fires.

In Deer Park plants, the Air Emissions Inventory continued to decline, dropping 17% from 2013 to 2014 and 37% since 2009. Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) Releases to Air are 61% lower in 2014 than they were in 2013 and are down 32% since 2009. Since 1987, there has been an 87% decrease in these releases of air toxics though the number of plants in DPCAC has increased through those years from 9 to 15.

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. However, there is an increase this year, most likely due to the hot summer weather.

Ozone, a respiratory irritant, is formed when nitrogen oxides (NO_x) 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 can be attributed to a 54% decline in the concentration of NO_x in the air and a 65% 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 27 years. The DPCAC air quality report may be found at www.deerparkcac.org.

DPCAC will meet on Mon. Oct. 26 for a report on TRI releases to water and to deepwells and transfers off the plant site for further waste management or disposal. Visitors are welcome! For details about the 6 p.m. meeting, contact Chris Miller at 281/817-9372. Visit 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.