



## Deer Park Community Advisory Council

### DPCAC Discusses Health Effects in Industrial Communities

Deer Park Community Advisory Council (DPCAC) recently heard about the stresses on health that may occur in a town with chemical plants and refineries. Kelsey-Seybold's Dr. Victor Simms said that exposure to pollutants in the environment may impact health. Though air quality has improved over the last 10 years, pollutants like ozone and particulate matter are still of concern. Both may exacerbate asthma. By decreasing lung function, particulate matter may also affect the heart. Efforts to reduce both pollutants continue.

While environmental exposures like these may impact health, they are not the only factors of interest in industrialized areas. Simms said shift work is necessary in industrial facilities but make it difficult to achieve quality sleep. Members were surprised to hear that mixing day and night shifts over time is less of a challenge to good sleep than working straight nights. Simms said obesity, poor diet, smoking, accidents, and physical inactivity also contribute to health problems.

In response to DPCAC's request to learn how the chronic conditions in this area compare to those in non-industrial areas, Simms shared information from 4 Kelsey-Seybold Clinics: two where plant employees are more likely to live, and two on the other side of Houston.

In Pasadena and Katy, the most common chronic condition that brought patients to the clinic was asthma. In Clear Lake, it was hypertension, and in the Willowbrook area, it was cancer. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) was the second most common chronic condition at the clinics in Pasadena and Clear Lake. Cancer was second in Katy and cholesterol in the Willowbrook area. Heart disease, the most common cause of death in Texas and in Harris County, was the 6<sup>th</sup> most common reason people with a chronic condition visited all four clinics. Cancer was the 7<sup>th</sup> most common reason in Pasadena and Clear Lake. Simms emphasized that the data are interesting and generate discussion, but there is no information on the causes of the differences between one clinic and the others.

DPCAC will be taking tours in March and April, but visitors are invited to the next regular meeting on Monday, June 3 for a Show and Tell about what plants make. For details about the 6 p.m. meeting, contact the DPCAC facilitator at [info@deerparkcac.org](mailto:info@deerparkcac.org).

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.

## OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

Each CAC agenda offers time for Updates of various types. On a set schedule, at each meeting, two or three DPCAC plants provide written updates on safety and environmental performance and business news. At any meeting, plants with significant news make verbal reports. Members report on community activities or ask questions related to the CAC. The CAC also makes decisions on organizational matters as needed. The plant updates below cover from August 2018 – February 2019.

### Clean Harbors Deer Park

No lost-time accidents during the reporting period, and no Notices of Violation of environmental permits. Received renewal in September 2018 of Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit to treat wastewater.

“Clean Harbors is a RCRA and TSCA permitted incineration facility. We store and treat hazardous, non-hazardous, TSCA, and medical waste. We also provide incineration services for witness burns to the DEA, DHS, and various police forces.”

### Shell Deer Park Manufacturing Site

Revised community complaint process in response to advice gained from a Social Performance Review in September, with a goal of bringing real-time community feedback into operations and improving the speed of response. To log a complaint or provide feedback to the site, call 713-246-7301.

“Shell Deer Park Manufacturing Site is a fully-integrated refinery and chemical plant with ~1,500 employees and ~1,200 contractors working to produce fuels and base chemicals that go into thousands of consumer products. Shell is proud to call Deer Park home since 1929 and our top priority is operating in a safe and environmentally sound manner.”