

# Deer Park Community Advisory Council

[www.deerparkcac.org](http://www.deerparkcac.org)

## Meeting Notes Monday, February 22, 2021

The 290<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Deer Park Community Advisory Council was held on Monday, February 22, 2021 via Zoom video conferencing. Facilitator Diane Sheridan reviewed the agenda, which was accepted as proposed. The January 2021 meeting notes were approved without changes.

### ATTENDANCE

DPCAC Community Members		DPCAC Plant Members		Guests/Resources	
X	Ruth Boyd		<b>Clean Harbors</b> , Bruce Riffel	X	John Collins
	Steve Corry	X	<b>Dow Chemical Deer Park</b> , David Herrington, rep by Whitney Bolger	X	Stuart Mueller, HCPC
	Ken Donnell	X	<b>Dow Chemical</b> , Whitney Bolger	X	Jana Pellusch
	Beverly Ferguson	X	<b>Evonik Oil Additives</b> , Jim Bentinck-Smith, rep. by Trilby Cressman	X	Karen Lewis-Holmes, TCEQ
	Bobby Garcia	X	<b>GEO Specialty Chemicals</b> , Steve Outlaw	X	Susan Newman, Hexion
	Sherry Garrison	X	<b>Hexion</b> , Marlene Mercado	X	Wallace Ward, Texas Prairies
	Tommy Ginn		<b>Intercontinental Terminals</b> , David Wascome	X	Blake White, Harris Co. OHS&EM
	Robert Hemminger	X	<b>Lubrizol</b> , Sarah Arroyo, rep by Doug Moore	X	Dennis Winkler, EHCMA
X	Cara Herbeck	X	<b>Lubrizol</b> , Tanya Travis, rep by Doug Moore	X	Jeff Anderson, Oxy Vinyls PVC
X	Steven Horton	X	<b>Oxy Vinyls VCM</b> , Josh Munn	X	Michael Perkins, Vopak Terminal DP
	Norma Hysler	X	<b>Oxy Vinyls PVC/KOH</b> , Craig Horak	X	Michael Kreter, UHCL
	Bill Irwin	X	<b>Shell Deer Park</b> , Jessica Blackmore	X	Christopher Thomas, OxyVinyls
	Katherine Mitchum		<b>Shell Deer Park Manufacturing Site</b> , Guy Hackwell rep. by Jessica Blackmore		
	Mike Mitchum	X	<b>Texas Molecular</b> , Jimmy Bracher, rep. by Frank Marine		
X	James Ragaisis	X	<b>Valvoline</b> , Robert Shelton		
	Ariel Pena	X	<b>Vopak Terminal Deer Park</b> , Kathy Stewart		
X	Vickey Roberts				
	Robert Segelquist				
	Andy Smith				
	Charles Thomas		<b>Support Staff</b>		
X	David Wade	X	Diane Sheridan, Facilitator		
	Ernest Weedon	X	Cynthia Wotipka Boland, Secretary		

## **Refresher on EPA's Risk Management Program**

Slides posted on Members Page of [www.deerparkcac.org](http://www.deerparkcac.org)

Jeff Anderson of OxyVinyls Deer Park PVC/Caustic Plant presented a historical overview of Risk Management Program (RMP), a program that was launched 25 years ago by the EPA, and what a plant must do to meet its requirements. He introduced others to the effort to minimize the chemical risk associated with an accidental release of certain toxic and flammable chemicals. Compliance activities for plants include three main parts which are prevention programs, hazard assessment and emergency response programs in place.

On August 1, 2013, Executive Order 13650 was signed, entitled Improving Chemical Facility Safety and Security. This executive order directs agencies to improve operational coordination with state and local partners; improve agency coordination and information sharing. Jeff said that members may recall the fertilizer plant incident in West, Texas and an incident Geismar, Louisiana that resulted in some fatalities. As a result of these incidents, there was an enhanced focus the managing emergency response activities.

Following Jeff's presentation, a question was asked about why the EPA took this on rather than OSHA under the Process Safety Management (PSM) program. While much of RMP aligns with the OSHA PSM program, EPA has more of a focus on the potential impact on the community.

Diane added that in 1989-1990, there were the Phillips and Arco Chemical accidents and out of those incidents came OSHA Process Safety Management (PSM) program. At the same time that happened, negotiations were underway for periodic revisions of the Clean Air Act. During these negotiations, the OSHA program focused primarily on protecting workers and people wanted to know what was done to protect the community in the event of an accident that was bad enough to affect the offsite communities. The OSHA program came first and then the RMP developed next in the early 90's.

Another question was asked regarding the three geographic areas-Residential, Public, and Environmental receptors further defined than the broad terms. Jeff explained that EPA has set up an electronic means of submitting your plan and so when you submit your RMP plan, plants must be more specific and identify some of the environmental receptors, such as national parks, state parks, environmental wetland areas. Public receptors are identified as schools and hospitals, for example.

Many positive comments were received for Jeff's presentation, which will be available on the CAC member page of the DPCAC website.

## **Updates**

### **Level 2 Watches or Level 3 Warnings**

Michael Perkins reported on two Level 3 releases to the Houston Ship Channel described in their written plant update.

### **Ozone Exceedance Days**

TCEQ's Karen Lewis-Holmes's report showed reported there were no new ozone exceedance days in the Houston Region in the month of February. In addition, there has been no ozone days year-to-date.

### **Written Facility Updates**

Evonik Oil Additives - Several capital projects were implemented in 2020 to improve or increase safety of workers' tasks and to lower the risk of injury or exposure to personnel; 2021 capital projects continue the safety

focus, especially on ergonomics, and operational flexibility. The site has now worked 6 years without an OSHA recordable injury.

Valvoline Deer Park - No reportable spills or injuries during the reporting period. Practiced several spill and injury drills. Have nearly reached goal of being “zero landfill” by steps such as recycling and sending waste where it can be used for its heat value. Use forklifts often, so added side marker safety lights to back up lights to improve safety. The site has had zero injuries since 2020.

Vopak Terminal Deer Park - One injury during reporting period. The site is conducting region-wide safety culture survey to identify ways to improve safety program. Two spills of a gallon or less into the Ship Channel were contained by boom and cleaned up. The site is constructing 7 additional tanks.

Michael Perkins briefed the group on a recent security breach at the terminal where thieves cut a fence and entered with a truck and stole a generator on a trailer. They are reviewing camera footage and security measures that are in place and asked that, if anyone else had similar incidents, they would like to collaborate with you.

## **Other Updates**

**Freeze Update** – Members agreed that that April 26 meeting will be a time where plants can discuss best practices and lessons learned from the recent freeze, but Diane wanted to reach out and see what the attending plants could share about their experiences. Most of the plants activated their emergency response plans on Sunday before the freeze. Several plants commented on the freeze and the issues that they faced. Utilities, natural gas, nitrogen, water and electricity were the biggest challenges for the freeze. One facility was asked why nitrogen is so important and they replied that it has many functions for them including that it runs all of the valves in the plant, is used to purge lines and to protect chemical storage with nitrogen blankets. It is very important for protection of products that they store.

David Wade said that the Harris County Emergency Operations Center was activated on Sunday afternoon for a Level 1 weather event. He wanted to give “kudos” to all of the industry partners who did an outstanding job of managing in a most difficult situation that everyone was faced with. Unfortunately, it is not over yet as it will take weeks and months to recover but all industrial partners are dealing with this issue. He appreciated the help that EHCMA and Dennis Winkler have given. There have been many discussions about industrial gases, especially nitrogen but there has been good partnership getting through this. He asked that plants reach out and let him know about any challenges that they are still facing.

David reminded everyone that as the restart continues, plants are flaring and this is important for safety of the facility as well as the community. Harris County Pollution Control (HCPC) has increased their capability and manpower, part of which helps them be in the field during startups and do air monitoring. Both HCPC and TCEQ are on site in many facilities monitoring startup activities.

Blake White also thanked everyone for their cooperation in dealing with the freeze. Similar to a hurricane emergency, the EOC gave industry briefings every morning during the freeze which allowed them to identify needs, give weathers alerts and help keep the communication lines open.

Dennis Winkler with EHCMA returned the shout out back to David and Blake, saying that they are continuing to work with EHCMA to see what the needs are. He added that members did an incredible job during a challenging time. Lots of attention is being spent on this as EHCMA is still communicating to find additional

needs and people are continuing in the spirit of working together. He added that EHCMA is gathering “Best Practices” during the startup phase via a survey and it was agreed that it would be sent to all CAP Facilitators to share with their members.

Stuart Mueller of Harris County Pollution Control (HCPC) – Monitoring teams are out in the field. He said that the public can see real time air monitoring on their website. Mobile monitoring data as well as data from the new Community Air Monitoring Program (CAMP) site are now available on the website.  
<https://pcs.harriscountytexas.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

Diane added that lots of flaring going on now as plants are restarting. If you want to find out which plant is flaring, use the CAER Online app or go to EHCMA website: <https://www.ehcma.org/public-safety/caeronline/> Plants should be posting courtesy messages there.

**Cancer Study** - A DPCAC committee was recently formed on the cancer study that was published in the *Houston Chronicle*. Several volunteers, both plant and community, met on Feb. 9th and they put together a long list of questions about the *Houston Chronicle* article which primarily focused on (Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, and Xylenes (BTEX) They agreed to plan a series of meetings over time to learn more about the chemicals mentioned in the article before asking the researchers to attend a meeting. It was agreed that wanted to know more about the subject before they are invited so that they can better understand what they are talking about. (NOTE: While the study singles out refineries, the committee will not limit attention to the refinery in DPCAC. They recognize that other facilities in DPCAC and in other nearby communities also deal with the BTEX chemicals.

Areas of Interest:

- Learn more about BTEX emissions and air monitoring trends because the study refers primarily to these chemicals.
- Learn more about BTEX emissions and air monitoring trends.
- Learn how plants protect workers that make, use, store, or move BTEX chemicals.
- Learn more about cancer and factors to consider when trying to find causes.
- Learn more about cancer incidence and mortality in Deer Park
- Learn more about communities within 10 and 30 miles of a refinery in this area.
- Learn more about other studies regarding cancer and proximity to refineries.
- Learn more from the UTMB researchers about their study and their plans for followup, including their target audience.

Diane said that the first meeting on this topic would be on March 22 to learn more about the four chemicals mentioned. She will be surveying plants in this group to see who uses, makes, stores or moves any of the four chemicals. The first featured chemical will be benzene. A plant who handles benzene would introduce members to a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) on benzene; what is contained in SDSs and what they would tell you about the hazards or protection that is needed.

Finally, the committee proposed a “Chemical of the Month” in place of “Question of the Month”, which would be a five-minute presentation with the information also posted on the website.

## **Plans for Future Meetings**

Until DPCAC decides otherwise, the group will meet by Zoom videoconference from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

**MONDAY, March 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Ways to Learn about Chemicals, with a Focus on Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, Xylenes (BTEX)

**MONDAY, April 26** – Plants and the Big Freeze

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**Dates for 2021**– all Mondays

Apr. 26

May 24 (before Memorial Day)

No June meeting

No July meeting

Aug. 23

Sept. 27

Oct. 25

Nov. 29 (delayed due to Thanksgiving)

No December meeting