

Deer Park Community Advisory Council

www.deerparkcac.org

Meeting Notes Monday, March 22, 2021

The 291st meeting of the Deer Park Community Advisory Council was held on Monday, March 22, 2021 via Zoom video conferencing. Facilitator Diane Sheridan reviewed the agenda, which was accepted as proposed. The February 2021 meeting notes were approved without changes.

ATTENDANCE

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

Ways to Learn about Chemicals, **with a Focus on Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, Xylenes (BTEX)**

A recent *Houston Chronicle* article about a UTMB study of cancer rates vs. proximity to refineries led DPCAC to form a committee to develop meeting plans to increase understanding of study-related issues before inviting researchers to speak. The first in this series of periodic meetings introduced members to resources for learning about four chemicals in the study: Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, and Xylenes—"BTEX" chemicals.

Shell Industrial Hygienist Daysha O'Pry presented an overview of Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and how to find them. Using Benzene as an example, she explained that SDSs are primarily used for hazard communication and are geared to workers. They must be readily available for every chemical that is onsite. An SDS shows properties of each chemical, physical hazards, health hazards and safety measures to take when handling, moving or transporting chemicals. OSHA defines a hazardous chemical as any chemical that is classified as a health hazard, physical hazard, simple asphyxiant, combustible dust, pyrophoric gas or hazard not otherwise classified. This could include chemicals that are corrosive, flammable or a gas under pressure such as propane.

There are different ways to find an SDS online. You can search the Internet for the product and company name to find an SDS associated with a particular chemical. Once you have the SDS, you can further refine your search and find the product code, full product name, SDS number, any product acronym and the CAS number. Every SDS has to have sixteen sections including the composition and ingredients, accidental release measures, first aid measures, firefighting measures, handling, storage and disposal.

Looking at a Benzene SDS as an example, DPCAC learned that benzene is a colorless, light yellow liquid that has a sweet odor and is highly flammable. It is widely used in the United States and ranks in the Top 20 chemicals for production volume. Some industries use benzene to make other chemicals that make plastics, nylon, other resins, synthetic fibers, lubricants, rubber, drugs, dyes and pesticides.

An important feature of the SDS is the exposure limits section. Exposures in the workplace are dependent on the concentration of the exposure including the duration. OSHA's permissible limit for Benzene is 1 part per million (ppm) for an 8 hour time weighted average, which is an employee's average airborne exposure. This is the amount of time that workers can be potentially exposed to Benzene in a certain amount of time. It would be different for community exposure. However, most companies use OSHA permissible exposure limits internally so that they know what actions to take. Shell's Goal Zero is to achieve no harm and no leaks across all of their operations. Shell is in the process of reducing its airborne exposure limit for workers.

Another section of the SDS is the composition, which often has a different breakdown of the ingredients in the product. The SDS that Daysha referred to was for a 100% concentration of Benzene. Using gasoline as an example, she explained that you can have a different chemical breakdown. Gasoline that

is available at a station can have different additives in it, which determines the different brands of gasoline.

The SDS also covers different types of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including respirators which can be used in the event of Benzene exposure at a level of concern. It is important to know the type of cartridge to use in a respirator. When handling Benzene, the SDS suggests using an organic cartridge as it is a volatile organic compounds (VOC). When selecting a chemical glove to use, it is important to seek information from the manufacturer as the material depends on the type of chemical being handled.

Following the presentation, there were some questions from members.

Is there a way to find a SDS that is written more for a public audience rather than a workplace so that it might be easier to understand? Daysha replied that she was not sure of that as OSHA required companies to have all sixteen sections on their SDS in order to be compliant. However, she did recommend the CDC website for public information.

Are any community members familiar with SDSs? A member said that she had worked in a plant and was very familiar with them as it was required to review before starting any new job.

Diane explained that, though SDSs are designed for the workplace, the public may use them when there is a big incident at a plant and people want to know about the hazards of the chemical being released. People would be seeking information on the dangers of that chemical and exposure limits. An SDS is very detailed and technical, but there is a lot of helpful information. Each time DPCAC has a Chemical of the Month presentation, an SDS for that chemical will be posted on the CAC website for members and the public to learn more about that chemical.

There are two sources of information about chemicals on the website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Both are written for the public and easier to understand than an SDS. The Emergency Preparedness branch publishes fact sheets on some chemicals, including Benzene. ToxFAQs are available from the Agency for Toxic Substances Disease Registry, another part of the CDC. Additional information for the public at www.atsdr.cdc.gov. The CDC Fact Sheet for Benzene and the Benzene ToxFAQs will be posted with the Benzene SDS at www.deerparkcac.org.

Diane will be sending out a poll this week to plants to see which sites make, use, store, move, or otherwise handle the BTEX chemicals. Benzene information is already available as it is in the annual emissions report, but she is seeking information on the other chemicals. Starting next month, Diane said that the CAC will switch from doing "Question of the Month" to "Chemical of the Month" She is looking for a small summary on each of the chemical and to also attach the respective SDS and CDC materials.

Members were divided into breakout groups to discuss this evening's presentation.

Updates

Level 2 Watches or Level 3 Warnings

Kathy Stewart with Vopak Terminal said that the facility experienced two Level 3 spills to the channel due to inclement weather. The first involved one gallon of slop oil due to a failed gasket. The second spill involved three gallons of contaminated storm water that was the result of a piping failure. Booms and a spill boat were deployed for response and cleanup of both spills. All authorities and management were notified on each incident.

Ozone Exceedance Days

TCEQ's Karen Lewis-Holmes reported that there has been one ozone exceedance day in the Houston Region year to date, exceeding the eight hour, 71 parts per billion (ppb) National Ambient Air Quality Standard. Karen added that the forecast season is March thru November, so she anticipates more exceedance days will be occurring.

Written Facility Updates

Clean Harbors - Bruce Riffel reported that the facility suffered water damage and pipe breakage like everyone else in the area. The site is currently awaiting approval on a RCRA Permit Modification and a TPDES Permit Modification. The TPDES Permit will give the site the ability to process customer's non-hazardous waste water through the waste water plant instead of incinerating everything as they currently do.

Shell - Guy Hackwell reported that there has been one recordable and one lost-time injury since the last written update and both of them were preventable. There was also a 2019 incident that was upgraded to a lost-time case as the result of a required surgery. On the environmental side, there have been four unauthorized emission events, but Guy added that 2020 was the Deer Park plant's best environmental performance ever. The freeze was a big event and there has been a lot of intermittent flaring, especially this past weekend, from restarting the units. Guy apologized for any effect on the community adding that the flaring is now completed. The site lost one of their big compressors in the freeze. Guy said that the site is looking forward to the annual "Strides for Schools Fun Run" event. Shell also contributed to the winter storm relief for the community, adding that large numbers of people are still recovering.

Natural Gas Odor – Blake White reported on the recent natural gas odor. He said that beginning on March 1st, complaints were received in the City of La Porte. The odor was prevalent through most of East Harris County and all the way to League City. Harris County Pollution Control (HCPC), first responders, industry representatives and the cities were all out trying to determine the source. The odor continued on and off for a week. Blake said that he went to the CenterPoint odorizing station on Red Bluff, but discovered that it wasn't the source of the odor. Unfortunately, Blake said this type of odor is called an "orphan odor" as they were unable to determine the source and they are not sure if it was related to the freezing weather. People naturally assume that an odor is related to industry, but Blake said that there are a lot of other possible sources. It could be transmission lines to the distribution lines for natural gas. Natural gas has no odor but gets odorized by Mercaptan. One drop of Mercaptan is very strong and could impact the entire area so that could possibly be the issue, but Blake added that a lot of industries use non-odorized gas. There are also a lot of chemicals that have a rotten egg odor. Blake said that they have started an effort with the fire marshals' office and HCPC to identify all of the CenterPoint pipeline odorizing stations in Harris County. They also plan to use Tier II reports to identify all chemicals that might have that odor and overlay the sites that use those

chemicals. This would be helpful for the first responders trying to determine the source of a future Mercaptan odor. Diane thanked Blake and David Wade for being very receptive to messages, adding that they continue to update the CACs on what is being done. Diane also recognized Stuart Mueller from the HCPC. Stuart added that HCPC had “boots on the ground” trying to find the source, but they were never able to do so.

An industry member said the same thing happened to a facility in Louisiana and it was tracked down to Mercaptan odorizing station that had generated some maintenance trash. The trash was put on a trash truck and when the trash was squeezed, the Mercaptan smell came out and went out into all of the surrounding area as the trash truck drove around the parish. It took a long time to solve the cause of the odor.

EHCMA – Diane introduced MaryJane Mudd who is the new executive director for EHCMA. MaryJane gave a brief background on her experience saying that she has worked at many large industries in all roles. However, she discovered that she had a passion for stakeholder engagement and crisis communication. She spent several years with the American Red Cross and managed media relations for Texas Gulf Coast during Hurricane Harvey. MaryJane said that she considered it an honor to serve the community during that time. She looks forward to working with everyone and encouraged members to call her if anyone has any questions or concerns.

Treasurers Report - On Feb. 10th, CAC Treasurer Cara Herbeck emailed plant managers a dues notice for 2021. Three plants have responded and paid. Cara will send a reminder email to those who haven't responded and she will follow up with a mailed invoice.

Diane Sheridan Day in Harris County Pct. 2, February 23, 2021 - Diane told members that she received a prestigious honor at the Pasadena CAC from Harris County Commissioner Precinct 2 Adrian Garcia, proclaiming February 23, 2021 as “Diane Sheridan Day”. It was also in appreciation of the work of PCAC, which had just celebrated its 30th anniversary. Everyone was very excited for Diane and said that the award was well-deserved. The wording of the proclamation is attached to the end of the meeting notes. The photo is in front of the commissioner's office when Diane picked up the award.

Plans for Future Meetings

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

Monday, April 26 - The Big Freeze: Plant Experiences, Lessons Learned, Best Practices, What Plants Will Do Differently

Monday, May 24 - Cancer vs Refinery Proximity topic: BTEX Emissions and Air Monitoring Trends. Will include DPCAC benzene emissions data; HRM monitoring of Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, and Xylenes; Harris Co. Community Air Monitoring Program; DPCAC plants on their monitoring

Dates for 2021 - all Mondays

Jan. 25
Feb. 22
Mar. 22
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

WHEREAS, Diane Sheridan is celebrating 30 years as Facilitator with the Pasadena Citizens' Advisory Council (PCAC); and



WHEREAS, the PCAC is a group built on the foundation of creating a true partnership between the Houston Ship Channel industry and the community of Pasadena where meetings offer a forum for candid conversation about industry-related issues of community interest or concern; and

WHEREAS, Diane first became involved with meeting facilitation as a skill in the 80's through her activities with the nonpartisan League of Women Voters organization; and

WHEREAS, as a meeting facilitator, her job is to remain neutral on issues but to lead meetings in a way that help people with differing perspectives on a subject understand each other's views and find common ground and agreeable solutions; and

WHEREAS, Diane has facilitated meetings with the PCAC since January 1991, and for decades, facilitated other groups in La Porte, Channelview, Deer Park, Galena Park- Jacinto City,

Bayport Industrial District and Wichita, KA; and

WHEREAS, her ability to work with people having diverse views over long periods of time has helped create trust among members of these groups that allow sensitive issues to be discussed candidly toward constructive ends; and

WHEREAS, Diane has become an institution in her role, and her legacy will remain for years to come.

NOW, THEREFORE, I call on all residents of Precinct Two to join in celebrating February 23rd as Diane Sheridan Day. By the power vested in me by Harris County and the State of Texas, I hereby affix my signature this 23rd day of February 2021.

Signed: Harris County Commissioner Precinct 2 Adrian Garcia