



Deer Park Community Advisory Council

Monday, February 22, 2021

DPCAC Reviews EPA Risk Management Program

In respond to a request from the Deer Park Community Advisory Council (DPCAC), a presentation on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Risk Management Program (RMP) refreshed memories of the risk program launched 25 years ago and introduced others to the effort to minimize the chemical risk associated with an accidental release of certain toxic and flammable chemicals. RMP addresses hazard assessment, accident prevention, and emergency response. To protect communities, RMP calls for the same accident prevention programs that the OSHA Process Safety Management rule requires for worker protection.

To identify potential effects of an accidental release, RMP calls for analysis of offsite consequences for both a worst case scenario and a more feasible alternative. This information is submitted to EPA in a Risk Management Plan that also calls for the plant's 5-year accident history and a description of its plans for both emergency response and communication with the public. Plants submitted their first RMPs in 1999 and must do so every 5 years and sometimes sooner. Changes made to RMP in 2013 were finalized in 2019 but remain under court challenge. The additions require emergency response notification exercises, drills, and public meetings for certain accidents involving RMP chemicals.

Several plants commented on the big freeze, which mainly affected their utilities. Messages about flaring during shut down and start up may be found on the CAER Online app or at www.ehcma.org in the CAER Online section.

DPCAC's Mar. 22, 2021 meeting, via Zoom, will show how to use a Safety Data Sheet and other publicly available information to learn about a chemical's hazards. Benzene will be the example. The April meeting will feature lessons industry learned from the big freeze. For more information, contact info@deerparkcac.org.

Read about DPCAC meetings and see summaries of our most recent presentations as well as our Questions of the Month at www.deerparkcac.org.