



Deer Park Community Advisory Council

Monday, August 23, 2021

DPCAC Updated on Odor Event, Hears Industrial Hygiene Presentation

Deer Park Community Advisory Council (DPCAC) planned to continue a series of meetings related to what are called “the BTEX chemicals” but changed their late August agenda to add reports on an August 15 event at the Lubrizol Deer Park plant that released a pungent odor that slowly traveled through multiple communities and was a nuisance to some and an irritant to others. Though investigations are still underway, the community-industry forum heard Deer Park Lubrizol General Manager Sam Striegel describe the event itself, the plant’s notifications of responsible agencies and its communications with and for the community. Buddy Rice, Interim Emergency Management Coordinator for the City of Deer Park, explained the city’s experience with the event, its decision not to call for a shelter in place, and how the city communicated with residents. Craig Hill and Kayla Roman of Harris County Pollution Control Services talked about air sampling and where the public could track the results. DPCAC facilitator Diane Sheridan summarized input from Deer Park and other communities that expressed frustrations learning what the odor was, its hazards, and steps to protect yourself and your family. In an effort to learn from this experience, community input will be shared with industry and government entities responsible for communicating with the public in an emergency. Striegel said, “Lubrizol will partner with EHCMA (East Harris County Manufacturers Association) to work with the local agencies to better understand how all parties can improve the flow of information during events to ensure that all know how to respond.”

The meeting ended with the planned presentation on how plants protect workers who could be exposed to Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, and Xylenes (BTEX). CTEH toxicologist Scott Malm described typical engineering and administrative controls for BTEX, personal protective equipment, and air monitoring and sampling tools. To protect workers from exposure to all four common chemicals, Malm said plants focus on Benzene, the one that is a confirmed human carcinogen.

On September 27, DPCAC will receive the Annual Report on Air Emissions from DPCAC Plants. Visitors are welcome to attend the Zoom meeting. Contact DPCAC at info@deerparkcac.org for details. *Read about DPCAC meetings and see summaries of our most recent presentations at www.deerparkcac.org.*

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

Each CAC agenda offers time for updates from community and plant members. 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. Highlights from Plant Updates are listed here. They cover January- August 2021.

Hexion Inc. -- Since the last report, there have been no spills above a reportable quantity, no OSHA recordable injuries among Hexion employees and contractors, and no process safety events. The American Chemistry Council recognized the site for its achievement in employee health and safety.

“Products produced at the Hexion Deer Park include Bisphenol Acetone (BPA) and various grades of liquid and solid epoxy resin. BPA’s primary use is as a feedstock for epoxy resin and polycarbonate production. Primary uses for epoxy resin include various protective coatings applications in the construction, automotive and electronics industries and as a binder in a wide range of composite applications.”

Intercontinental Terminals Company (ITC) -- Soil remediation of the “2nd 80s” incident site has been ongoing. The tank farm remediation is complete. Remediation of the surrounding areas is ongoing and/or pending and expected to continue through the fall of 2021.

“Intercontinental Terminals Company (ITC) is a for-hire bulk storage facility located on the Houston Ship Channel in Deer Park, Texas. The facility covers 265 acres and has a total storage capacity of over 11,858,136 barrels in 226 storage tanks. The facility is served by vessel, barge, rail, tank truck, and pipeline modes. ITC presently employs 323 at the Deer Park terminal.”

The Lubrizol Corporation – Since January, Lubrizol has had one Level 2 environmental event, one reportable quantity exceedance, two agency inspections, and two recordable injuries in addition to the August 15 odor event reviewed at the meeting. Safety remains a focus. The 2020 OSHA recordable rate was 0.69, and the year to date rate is 0.48.

“Lubrizol produces specialty chemicals (lubricant additives) used in motor oils, gear oils, automatic transmission fluids and greases to improve their performance. Our customers include Castrol, Chevron, Citgo, ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil, Imperial Oil, Mobil, Shell, Total, Valvoline and many, many others. When you go into your local Auto Zone or other auto supply store and look at the many rows of motor oils, automatic transmission fluids, gear oils and greases, our chemistry is in many of those products.”