



Community Action for a Renewed Environment

CARE Program

Quarterly Highlights — November 2006



USEPA Administrator Johnson Announces New CARE Grantees

U.S. EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson participated in the 2nd Annual CARE Training Workshop held in Seattle, Washington, November 14 –17, 2006. Administrator Johnson announced the 2006 Level I and Level II CARE grant recipients and congratulated 2005 grantees for their success. "Through CARE," he said, "we are putting communities in the driver's seat to deliver their residents real environmental results."

The workshop provided technical support, scientific expertise, and networking opportunities to the 29 CARE communities. Many of the CARE communities helped with planning the workshop and made presentations.



Administrator Johnson (center-front) & EPA Region 10 Administrator Elin Miller (far left-top) with members of Nunakauyak Traditional Council (AK), & EPA staff.

CARE Communities



2006 CARE Level I Grantees & Communities:

1. Nuestras Raices, Holyoke, MA
2. Harambee House, Savannah, GA
3. The City of Rock Hill, Rock Hill, SC
4. SW Detroit Environmental Vision, SW Detroit, MI
5. St. Bernard Parish Government, St. Bernard Parish, LA
6. Cherokee Nation Tribal Government, The Cherokee Nation, OK
7. Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health, Cerro Gordo County, IA
8. Citizens for Clean Air & Water in Pueblo/S. Colorado, Pueblo, CO
9. Nunakauyak Traditional Council, Nelson Island, AK
10. Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Pierce County, WA

2006 CARE Level II Grantees & Communities:

- | | | |
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| 1. Boston Public Health Commission, Boston, MA | 4. The Central Lake Superior Watershed Partnership, Marquette, MI | 6. Sonora Environment Research Institute, Tucson, AZ |
| 2. Clean Air Communities, Camden, NJ | 5. Rocky Mountain College, Montana Indian County, MT | 7. The Pacific Institute, West Oakland, CA |
| 3. Penn State University, Philadelphia, PA | | |

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program helps communities address risks from various sources of toxic pollutants in their local environment.

CARE

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CARE Communities in Action:

JOINING TOGETHER

The Mid-Atlantic Clean Ports Workshop (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) was a success and the Clean Air Council

fostered relationships with both national and local maritime industry leaders, such as the Delaware River Stevedores and South Jersey Port corporation and Port of Wilmington as well as the Philadelphia Regional Port authority. Camden Iron and metal, Donaldson and Caterpillar are stakeholders that helped sponsor the Clean Ports Workshop. The Council is developing a "Green Ports" website, including resources that should help other port projects. The project's three subcommittees are focusing on their goals of completing a water quality report, expanding diesel port cargo, handling equipment retrofits and working with United Communities of southeast Philadelphia as the organization links youth groups and land use.

The Rochester City School District in Rochester, New York, partnered with the District's Director of Arts Education to conduct an art design contest for District elementary school students to increase awareness of the importance of retrofitting vehicles with a diesel particulate filter in order to reduce toxic air emissions. The students were encouraged to create pictures of their personal experience with pollution in their neighborhood. Over 50 drawings were submitted. The next phase of this educational outreach effort is creating large scale depictions of selected student art to be placed on the seven retrofitted refrigerated school buses that service the Rochester City School District.

There are four steps in the CARE process: joining together, identifying problems & solutions, implementing solutions & reducing risks, and becoming self-sustaining.



School Children Bring Air-Quality Issues to Life in Art in Rochester, NY

IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Using the NACCHO PACE tool to gain community consensus on environmental risks, the Oneida County Health Department (NY) is proceeding on subcommittee work with its 111 organizations in the CARE partnership. In addition, the Department mailed letters to the county's mayors and town supervisors and published an article in the *Observer Dispatch* to generate interest in Brownfields.

Similarly, in order to build interest for a major CARE meeting, the DeKalb County (GA) Community Action for a Renewed Environment held smaller community involvement presentations at the DeKalb branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. DeKalb CARE also visited with businesses, put out a press release on Sagal Radio, and hung banners along the streets to generate interest. This groundwork paid off in a major turnout of over 70 community members, 2 state legislators, 2 county commissioners, the city mayor and council members attending the Clarkston community town hall meeting at Georgia Perimeter College. Participants provided their input on evaluating community environmental risks. Over 70% in attendance indicated that the forum was helpful for raising awareness about community environmental issues. Issues of greatest concern were recycling and water quality, and water conservation.

The Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments faces several challenges in dealing with a population of 225,000 dispersed over 15,000 miles. Several of these challenges were raised in three county forums held by the Council. The environmental concerns ranged from air quality related to the San Juan County power plants to water quality and health risks from resumption of uranium mining in McKinley and Cibola Counties. Common themes were the tension between activities related to the energy economy and the associated environmental impacts and environmental injustice. This CARE project is continuing to work towards developing and maintaining the widely dispersed counties' partners and to delve more deeply into the area's environmental concerns.

"CARE has the potential to take us to the next level of environmental protection...with community partnerships being the source of the kind of synergy we need to move forward."

Jim Gulliford, Assistant Administrator, EPA's Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances

Implementing Solutions & Reducing Risks

Partners of Pacoima Beautiful (CA) identified residential areas in the community where trucks stop and idle while waiting to be loaded. These areas will be targeted for an anti-idling campaign. Residents will be provided with information on how to either repair or retire their older cars that are not passing smog checks in order to reduce air pollution. In a previously identified area with concentrated auto disassembling facilities, the wastewater will be tested and evaluated to determine if exposure is a risk to children playing in the water.



Pacoima Beautiful's Logo, linking residents & their environment

In order to address the concerns of a community in Fair Haven burdened by a large number of junk yards, scrap metal and auto recycling facilities, Green New Haven (CT) developed an Environmental Best Practices Checklist for Auto Recyclers, with the CT Dept of Environmental Protection guide and assistance. The new environmental engineer, funded by CARE, provided on-site assistance to these facilities. A facility whose past operations created fires that impacted neighborhood businesses and residents is now putting in fire breaks and is handling hazardous materials properly.

The lead remediation program headed by The NeighborWorks Rochester (Rochester, New York) created a total of 31 Action Plans to address lead hazards. Of the 31 Action Plans, 13 were for owner-occupied units and 18 were for rental units. Toxics reduction action can include referring participants to lead safe work practice workshops, to available rehab programs and health services, including lead testing for children. Participants are also given information on the common household sources of lead poisoning and advised to undertake the appropriate cleaning methods to help reduce the presence of lead dust. They are also working with the Rochester Green Business Network to conduct outreach and education to local small businesses on how they can save money by using pollution prevention methods to reduce air pollution.

The International District Housing Alliance (Seattle, WA) is expanding its reach, by coordinating individual building meetings with residents who were unable to attend community meetings, reaching over 200 additional individuals. The highest priority concerns of the residents were indoor and outdoor air quality, which led to indoor air workshops and in-home assessments for 95 residents. A workshop for home care and outreach nurses was also held. During the International District's Summer Festival, an EcoVillage attracted over 400 visitors who participated in environmental educational activities.

The Clean Air Partnership (St. Louis, MO) hosted its first Air Quality Stakeholders meeting in May and began to network and provide information on EPA's Performance Track Program to several facilities such as the Metropolitan Sewer District on potential voluntary pollution prevention actions for 6 pollutants of concern. A preliminary inventory of area sources is being undertaken with the assistance of the City Department of Air Pollution. Another focus is to continue its successful collaboration with the St. Louis Community Air Project on reducing idling. After a meeting with the St. Louis Public School Director of Public Transport, several projects were initiated such as establishing a "no-idling zone" and a parental outreach at "Back to School" fairs held at several schools.

Becoming Self-Sustaining

Muskegon County (MI) Environmental Coordinating Council is joining forces with ongoing coalitions and organizations that are fixtures in the County and combining information to get better results with the CARE funds. This enhanced network has successfully launched the following campaigns: (a) assisted in locating residents most in need of services with the Lead Safe Coalition, (b) supported funding from the MI Department of Environmental Quality for a West Michigan Shoreline K-12 Chemical Management Project for the Annis Water Resources Institute's school program, (c) worked to reduce the sale and use of fertilizers containing phosphorus to protect the Mona Lake Watershed, and (d) initiated conversations with the Muskegon County Chamber of Commerce on the State Clean Corporate Citizen Program to help local businesses become more environmentally friendly.

Groundwork Denver (Healthy Air for NE Denver) and Consensus Building Institute helped facilitate the *Healthy Air for Northeast Denver (CO): Helping Achieve a New Direction in Environmental Management (HAND in Hand)* -- an introduction of a new operating protocol that encourages representation from community, business, nonprofits and agencies. Review of the formal organizing documents is underway through *pro bono* assistance from Brownstein, Hyatt and Farber law firm. Over 306 homes have been provided in-home toxic reduction information, such as Smoke Outside pledges, by neighborhood *promotoras*.

Building Partnerships in the Public Health Arena

The **American Public Health Association (APHA)** held its 134th Annual Meeting in Boston, November 4-8, 2006, where over 13,000 public health professionals from around the world gathered to discuss pressing issues in public health and human rights. CARE was very visible at this meeting. Program members hosted an exhibit booth and participated on an Environmental Health and Community Based Participatory Research panel. The panel included an overview of the CARE program and presentations by two CARE communities.

In addition, CARE and **CDC's National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH)** met October 31, 2006 in Atlanta to form a collaboration to improve support for communities. This collaboration will enable CARE and NCEH to leverage resources and expand their support for community-based environmental health initiatives. Representatives from two CARE communities, Dr. Mildred McClain from Harambee House in Savannah, GA, and Rob Blake from the Dekalb County (GA) Health Department, participated in the meeting to help ensure that the collaboration meets community needs. Ideas, such as the establishment of a national environmental health academy for community leaders, are being contemplated for this new partnership. All participants at the meeting in Atlanta agreed that the collaboration has the potential to significantly improve support for communities.

Highlights from the CARE Conference

At the 2nd Annual Training Workshop for CARE Program over 142 participants from 29 CARE communities, academia, industry, state/local/tribal government and EPA worked together to build understanding over concerns communities are facing today. Compared to the 2005 CARE First Annual Training, this year's workshop grew – by participants (from 70 – 142), by training sessions (from 7 to 12) and by substance (from general sessions to specific solutions). The training's collaborative planning process engaged a diverse EPA technical team and various community partners throughout each step.

Participants especially enjoyed a tailored walking tour and community dinner in Seattle's International District, hosted by CARE's Level I International District Housing Alliance.

Upcoming Events:

- Early 2007 – 2007 CARE Request for Proposals Announcement
- Jan/Feb 2007 – Three Web-casts for prospective CARE grantees
- December 15, 2006 – Abstracts due for speakers at June 19-22 EPA Community Involvement Conference (Jacksonville, FL)

Words Delivered at CARE 2nd Annual Conference

I see how my community struggles to overcome bad situations...
I see our youth making our community a healthier place to live...
I see a work-in-progress becoming a beautiful thing...
I see future generations starting to make a positive change in the world...

I can make my community a better place to live...
I can organize people in my community...
I can change my community and world with the knowledge that I know...

I will help others learn about their community...
I will stand tall...
I will spread the power of words into my community...

I hope our community becomes beautiful...
I hope that not just this community, but the whole world will become a safe and healthy place to live in...

I am the future of my community...
I am the dreams of many others...
I am willing to give my all and make a change...
I am the future of my community...

I am a leader...
I am a tool needed to fix my community...
I am well aware that unity among our community can make a difference...
I am and an up and coming power in my community...

I am proud of my community...
I am what I am, no one will dictate my destiny...

I dream of a better tomorrow...
I dream of a community where we become the leaders we wish to see...

Pacoima Beautiful Environmental Justice Institute
 San Fernando High School Students – Fall 2006



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