

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE



## First Year Highlights: A Progress Report

September 2011 – Updated, v.1.1

The 2011 Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) Progress Report will be updated as necessary and all changes and corrections will be tracked and listed in *Appendix D: Progress Report Corrections*. This is version 1.1 of the report and was released September 2011.

# Public Reaction to OSWER's Community Engagement Initiative

*"The key to meaningful community involvement is to develop an informed community. This is not accomplished in a single public meeting. People will need to be provided adequate support over time to provide them with a full understanding of the often complex issues involved so that when critical decision points are reached they are prepared. This means an "early and often" approach begun prior to that critical moment should be standard. It is unfair to invite communities to the table only when decisions are well underway."*

—**Robert Stout**, Senior Policy Coordinator, Missouri Department of Natural Resources

*"EPA has a great deal of expertise, but does not always have all the best knowledge. It's important to engage communities and acquire local knowledge, because doing so leads to improved decisions. The evidence shows that engaging communities in meaningful deliberation also leads to a greater acceptance of decision outcomes by the public and NGOs."*

—**Thomas Webler**, Senior Researcher, Social and Environmental Research Institute, Greenfield, MA

*"It's important to be aware who delivers the message so there are no mixed messages from multiple sources. Technical assistance staff need to be trained to be able to identify which stakeholders are missing from the table and make sure to engage them. Staff need to figure out who has influence in the community in order to make things happen."*

—**Mary Nelson, Ph.D**, Former President and Chief Executive Officer, Bethel New Life, Inc., Chicago, IL

*"The whole issue of community engagement is an organic process. If you want to engage the community and gain trust, it's about listening through difficult conversations and accusations up front. Conversations need to be held several times so you can move beyond the frustrations and get to a place of trust and two-way conversations."*

—**Carlos Romero**, Mayor, East Palo Alto, CA

*"OSWER's Community Engagement Initiative is about building understanding and relationships, and making EPA programs more responsive to local community needs. The approach taken in the CEI and other EPA programs like Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) focuses on bringing business, community members and government together to share knowledge and address environmental problems in a way all parties recognize as a tangible improvement. When EPA employees work to bring stakeholders together for mutual problem-solving, everyone benefits."*

—**Sue Briggum**, Vice President Federal Affairs, Waste Management Inc., Washington, DC

*"The people who are most affected by EPA decisions should have influence over the outcome. Effective community engagement is about a process of interactions...that emphasizes the community's role in identifying concerns and participating in formulating solutions. In the broadest sense, community engagement in environmental decision-making is the inclusion of the community in the process of defining the problem and developing alternatives."*

—**Benno Friedman**, Board member Housatonic River Initiative, Sheffield, MA

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# Glossary of Terms

AA	Assistant Administrator
ASTSWMO	Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials
ATSDR	Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
CARE	Community Action for a Renewed Environment
CDC	Centers for Disease Control
CEI	Community Engagement Initiative
CEN	Community Engagement Network
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CPA	Center for Program Analysis
DOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
DSW	Definition of Solid Waste
EDA	U.S. Economic Development Administration
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EWDJT	Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training
FFRRO	Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office
HQ	Headquarters
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
IPCO	Innovations Partnerships Communication Office
NARPM	National Association of Remedial Project Managers
NEJAC	National Environmental Justice Advisory Committee
NPL	National Priorities List
OBLR	Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization
OECA	Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance
OEM	Office of Emergency Response
OPA	Office of Public Affairs
OPM	Office of Program Management
ORCR	Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery
OSRE	Office of Site Remediation Enforcement
OSRTI	Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation
OSWER	Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response
OUST	Office of Underground Storage Tanks
PCB	Polychlorinated Biphenyl
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
RFP	Request for Proposal
TAP	Technical Assistance Plans
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
UST	Underground Storage Tanks

# Executive Summary

Communities are directly affected by EPA's actions related to the cleanup of contaminated land and pollution, and the management of hazardous substances and waste long after the work is finished. In addition to site-specific actions, EPA may also affect communities through its national regulations and policies that may impact individual properties, development and land use plans, business operations, local economies or other vital interests of a community.

EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) developed the Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) to help communities meaningfully participate in activities related to contaminated site cleanup and redevelopment, emergency preparedness and response, and the management of hazardous substances. Communities are directly affected by OSWER program activities and should be proactively engaged in ways that build trust, enhance EPA decisions and help communities plan and leverage resources.

In May 2010, OSWER released the CEI Implementation Plan that includes 16 Actions to help integrate and coordinate community engagement principles and successful practices into OSWER's work and decision-making processes. The Implementation Plan is intended to be a "living" plan that is continually informed by the ongoing Action efforts and results, and by stakeholder input and feedback. OSWER created a CEI webpage and posted all of the plans, schedules and products for each Action. The website was also designed to obtain ongoing feedback and input from stakeholders including states, tribes, community stakeholders and others working on waste management and cleanup issues on the CEI plans. Many of the original due dates for Action materials have been extended, and updates on schedule and process changes have been regularly posted on the website for each Action.

This progress report highlights the activities of the CEI since the release of the Implementation Plan and describes the key priorities and strategies and how they have evolved over the past year. OSWER has made significant progress toward completing the outlined deliverables and milestones (see Appendix B for more specific updates on each action). Highlights of progress include:

- ◆ **Evaluate Existing Decision-Making Processes (Action 1):** Each OSWER program office identified and posted existing opportunities for community engagement in their decision-making processes. These processes were evaluated to determine whether they should be enhanced. Work plans<sup>1</sup> were developed for the following specific policies and processes: Hazardous Waste Corrective Action and Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) management; Emergency Response and Cleanup; Brownfields; Superfund; Underground Storage Tank Management; and Facilities Owned by Other Federal Agencies.
- ◆ **OSWER Program Process Diagrams (Action 1):** Several diagrams have been developed and posted on the CEI website to show how communities can be engaged in specific processes.
- ◆ **Collaboration with States (Actions 2 & 3):** OSWER's Office of Underground Storage Tanks (OUST) and Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery (ORCR) have collaborated with state led programs to identify good ideas and practices for community engagement for cleanups of leaking underground storage tanks and corrective actions at permitted facilities.

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<sup>1</sup> Action 1 Work Plans – [www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative/act1.htm](http://www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative/act1.htm)

- ◆ **Clarify and Improve Technical Assistance (Action 7):** A national EPA workgroup developed recommendations for revising and better coordinating technical assistance processes, policies and guidance. OSWER is now clarifying the extent and range of OSWER and regional technical assistance, and improving outreach and education to communities, states, tribes, local governments and within EPA about the various technical assistance programs.
- ◆ **Area-Wide Planning (Action 9):** OSWER's Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization (OBLR) established the Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program<sup>2</sup> and awarded grants to 23 communities to help their diverse populations come together and address local environmental, economic and public health challenges related to brownfields.
- ◆ **Community Health Web Page (Action 10):** A web page was created on the EPA website to provide communities with information about the public health aspects of OSWER's programs.
- ◆ **Evaluate How Information is Delivered (Action 13):** A national EPA workgroup developed a clear framework for providing information in ways that everyone in a community can understand and use to meaningfully participate in EPA processes. OSWER is now evaluating how to include this framework into program guidance and training, and is collaborating with other programs and external organizations to improve delivery of information. In addition, recommendations were made for improving public accessibility to Superfund site information.
- ◆ **Focus and Coordinate Community Engagement Training (Action 14):** A national EPA workgroup identified the core skills and competencies that are important for personnel working with communities, and identified existing training opportunities and options available to OSWER personnel. OSWER is now developing a community engagement training strategy to enhance and coordinate training for OSWER and regional personnel.
- ◆ **Workforce Development (Action 16):** OSWER created the Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program<sup>3</sup>, which aims to increase collaboration within OSWER on workforce development and job training programs.

From this first year of implementation working closely with stakeholders, reviewing EPA processes and drafting work plans and recommendations, three overarching themes began to emerge. These three themes cut across and tie together all of the 16 CEI Actions and include:

- ◆ **Formalize community engagement planning** for priority waste management issues and cleanup sites
- ◆ **Provide focused and coordinated community engagement training** to staff and managers who work with communities and on policies that may affect communities
- ◆ **Create an effective and collaborative community engagement network** that helps federal, state, tribal and local governments to proactively and meaningfully involve communities in waste and cleanup program decision-making

To address these three themes, particular focus will be placed over the next year on: integrating community engagement planning into OSWER program processes for priority sites and issues; developing an OSWER-wide community engagement training strategy; and creating a Community Engagement Network.

OSWER will continue to make community engagement a priority and assimilate the best ideas and practices learned through the CEI into ongoing and long-term processes and policies.

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<sup>2</sup> Area-Wide Planning – [www.epa.gov/brownfields/areawide\\_grants.htm](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/areawide_grants.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Workforce Development – [www.epa.gov/brownfields/job.htm](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/job.htm)

# Introduction

This progress report highlights the activities of the Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) since the release of the Implementation Plan in May 2010. It describes the key priorities and strategies and how they have evolved over the past year. EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) continues to encourage and assess new approaches and practices that can be integrated into the framework of the CEI. Continued stakeholder input and involvement is an essential component of the success of the initiative. All information associated with the CEI is available on the CEI website at:

[www.epa.gov/OSWER/engagementinitiative](http://www.epa.gov/OSWER/engagementinitiative).

## Goals of the Community Engagement Initiative

In December 2009, OSWER released a CEI Action Plan that presented guiding principles, goals and actions to enhance OSWER's relationship with communities, and carry out EPA's mission to protect human health and the environment. The CEI was initiated to provide an opportunity for OSWER to refocus and renew its vision for community engagement, build on public involvement practices, and apply them consistently throughout OSWER's activities. In May 2010, OSWER further defined the CEI by releasing an Implementation Plan that identified 16 specific actions that OSWER and the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance (OECA) program offices will implement to achieve the goals and objectives of the plan (See Appendix A for a list of all actions and program leads).

The initiative aims to improve transparency and upfront collaboration by engaging communities in an authentic and meaningful way during cleanup of contaminated sites, emergency preparedness and response, and management of hazardous substances. The CEI focuses on identifying ways to engage all members in an affected community, including those that traditionally have not participated in OSWER decision-making processes. It also directly responds to the President's Open Government Directive, which requires transparency, collaboration and participation in federal government processes.

## Community Engagement Initiative Goals\*

- Develop transparent and accessible decision-making processes **to enhance meaningful community stakeholder participation. Engage stakeholders in the decision-making process before it is started. To the extent practicable, provide early and frequent opportunities for stakeholders to participate**
- Present information and provide technical assistance in ways that will **enable community stakeholders to better understand environmental issues** and participate in an informed way during the decision-making process
- **Produce outcomes that are responsive to stakeholder concerns** and are aligned with community needs and long-term goals to the extent practicable. Enhance OSWER's culture of valuing community perspectives. Evaluate and measure the effectiveness of community engagement activities.

Meaningful community engagement will help EPA waste management and cleanup programs to:

- ◆ build trust and relationships to fully understand community issues and local knowledge;
- ◆ enhance cleanup plans and avoid costly delays because of misunderstandings or incorrect information; and
- ◆ assist communities identify and leverage available resources to address environmental issues.

## Outreach

Input and feedback from a diverse group of stakeholders is critical to the successful implementation of the CEI. Over the past year, OSWER has received responses from a variety of stakeholders, including EPA employees who have firsthand experience working with communities; stakeholders affected by EPA waste management and cleanup program activities; state, tribal and local governments; and industries responsible for managing and cleaning up hazardous substances. OSWER is using several forums to receive input from stakeholders, including the CEI website, the OSWER online discussion forum, national and regional meetings, and direct distribution of materials via stakeholder email lists. Direct outreach has also occurred



## An Interview with the EPA Region 4 RCRA Community Engagement Coordinator on the Planning and Prioritization at RCRA Sites

**Q:** *Why did Region 4 focus on community engagement at RCRA Sites?*

**A:** We wanted to more clearly communicate the environmental challenges and issues in communities where there are active RCRA facilities. We wanted to hear from the affected communities how they are impacted and how EPA can address the issues. Involving the community will help establish a dialogue that can lead to leveraging resources and building capacity for addressing environmental issues and working collaboratively with the community and industry.

**Q:** *What activities did you complete?*

**A:** First, we prioritized RCRA facilities which had a threat of or actual offsite contamination and had environmental justice concerns, resulting in 11 priority facilities and their host communities for our initial focus. To build internal capacity, we conducted two "all employees" RCRA division-wide trainings on community engagement. Later we conducted a two-day more comprehensive community engagement training for specific EPA RCRA technical managers, representatives from other divisions, and five of our eight state agencies. Our objective was to improve our own methods on how we communicate environmental issues, and to be better able to listen to the concerns of the communities. During our first year, we established a RCRA division community engagement team to delegate the community engagement workload for these targeted communities and start achieving meaningful community engagement. We also engaged industry leaders.

**Q:** *What was the result of your work and what will you do in the second year of the CEI?*

**A:** Our work has heightened RCRA division interest in community engagement. We have been able to work closely with community leaders often in highly sensitive situations, to demonstrate EPA's commitment to this effort. We have, and will continue to champion the "one EPA" approach by ensuring that other divisions are involved with community residents as they voice concern about air and water issues at active facilities. The 11 priority communities have been visited and we maintain ongoing communication with residents, industry officials, and state agencies (environmental and health) to address the environmental issues raised. Communities are informed and can actively participate in the decision-making process.

for specific CEI Actions through meetings with states and tribes. Comments are reviewed and incorporated into the CEI plans and strategies as appropriate.

The CEI website was developed to inform stakeholders of progress and to solicit feedback on specific activities and products for the CEI. The website features status updates and materials developed for each of the 16 CEI Actions, including workgroup recommendation reports, community engagement process diagrams, and status fact sheets. Additionally, requests for stakeholder feedback on key deliverables, such as the draft national workgroup recommendation reports and program work plans are posted on the website.

Several external stakeholder meetings served as forums to discuss the CEI, including the Tribal Lands and Environment Forum and the National Environmental Justice Advisory Committee (NEJAC) Meeting. Mathy Stanislaus, OSWER Assistant Administrator (AA), also hosted a community forum in EPA Region 2 to promote the CEI and discuss community engagement challenges and opportunities. At the 2011 National Brownfields Conference, AA Stanislaus and a diverse panel of community, government and industry leaders discussed community engagement issues and engaged in an interactive question and answer session with the audience. In August 2010, AA Stanislaus and Lisa Feldt, OSWER Deputy Assistant Administrator, hosted the OSWER State Open Door Webinar to present, discuss and receive comments on the CEI with state representatives. EPA representatives also participated in the October 2010 annual meeting for the Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials (ASTSWMO), which focused on community engagement issues.

National workgroups also reached out to several experts to solicit their ideas for potential policy changes that could maximize community benefits from technical assistance. For instance, the Technical Assistance Workgroup and the Delivery of Information Workgroup used the OSWER Discussion Forum on the EPA website to solicit input from stakeholders regarding technical assistance and delivering information. Additionally, the Technical Assistance Workgroup interviewed four outreach providers and experts to gain insights about effective technical assistance programs and challenges with providing assistance to communities. The Delivery of Information Workgroup used several of the external meetings to receive input on the current delivery of information to communities.

EPA employees provided their input on the CEI through participation on national workgroups, as well as through discussions at meetings of specialized groups, such as EPA's National Association of Remedial Project Managers (NARPM). Additionally, nearly 270 EPA employees provided direct feedback on CEI actions through their participation in an internal survey used to collect information from a range of employees and experience levels. EPA regions have joined and strengthened OSWER headquarters efforts by participating on the CEI national workgroups, reviewing reports and recommendations, and developing innovative ideas for community engagement. Examples of this innovative regional work are highlighted in this report.

OSWER will continue to make all CEI action plans and products available for public review and comment on the CEI website ([www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative](http://www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative)). OSWER is committed to ensuring that all CEI-related products are transparent and collaborative by soliciting public feedback through the website on specific products, as well as the overall actions of the initiative. Establishing a commitment to the CEI will lead to greater community engagement experiences and better decisions because the greatest resource for information is the community in which EPA works.

## Coordination with Other Related Agency Efforts

While CEI is an OSWER-specific initiative, it is closely connected to and helps inform several other Agency efforts and overarching EPA goals. The CEI is a flagship initiative in the EPA Open Government Initiative<sup>4</sup> to further promote a fair, open and inclusive EPA and progress will continue to be linked to the Open Government Initiative. The CEI also is provided as an example of an initiative developed to better integrate environmental justice in the Agency's programs in the 100 Day Challenge Report. Additionally, EPA's Plan Environmental Justice 2014<sup>5</sup> may help inform activities within the CEI as both programs look at how the Agency can better work with communities to take action to improve their health and environment.

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<sup>4</sup> EPA Open Government – [www.epa.gov/open/](http://www.epa.gov/open/)






<sup>5</sup> Plan EJ 2014 – [www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/resources/policy/plan-ej-2014.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/resources/policy/plan-ej-2014.pdf)

# Status of Actions

The goal of the CEI is to integrate community engagement principles and successful practices into existing work, weaving them into the fabric of EPA decision-making processes. The increased focus and planning conducted under the CEI has prompted all OSWER programs to closely evaluate and enhance efforts to do planning, training and communication for community engagement issues. Each OSWER program office is striving to increase community engagement opportunities in their processes. The dedication of the OSWER program offices resulted in significant accomplishments during the first year of implementation. The following chart (Figure 1) depicts each CEI action’s general status and outlines the next project milestones. Work was initiated on all 16 actions, with several actions still on schedule.

**Figure 1: Status of CEI Actions**

 On Track, On Schedule     
  Needs Attention     
  Not Initiated

		CEI Action	Next Milestone
1		<b>Evaluate and Revise Critical Decision-Making Processes and Guidance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Post remaining work plans (July 2011)</li> <li>■ Obtain public feedback on draft work plans (August 2011)</li> <li>■ Address public comments and finalize work plans (September 2011)</li> <li>■ Publically report on status of implementation of work plans (October 2011)</li> </ul>
		Hazardous Waste Management	
		Resource Conservation	
		Emergency Response and Cleanup	
		Cleanup of Uncontrolled Sites (Superfund Sites)	
		Sites with Perceived Contamination (Brownfields Sites)	
		Underground Storage Tank Management	
Facilities Owned by Other Federal Agencies			
2		<b>Best Practices for Underground Storage Tank Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Maintain Web content for the new OUST Community Engagement website</li> <li>■ Develop guidelines for tailoring community engagement to site circumstances (December 2011)</li> <li>■ Analyze the feasibility and affordability of making compliance and cleanup data for tank sites in Indian country publically available (December 2011)</li> </ul>
3		<b>Best Practices for RCRA Sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Review draft compendium document</li> <li>■ Develop Web pages to share data and highlight effective practices for delegated state RCRA programs (December 2011)</li> </ul>
4		<b>Regulation and Guidance Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Communicate updates on the Definition of Solid Waste (DSW) Final Rule (June 2012)</li> <li>■ Solicit input on the vapor intrusion guidance (Spring 2012)</li> </ul>
		Regulation Development Pilot	
		Guidance Development Pilot	
5		<b>Community Engagement Policies and Activities Associated with Enforcement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Issue a compendium of best practices (September 2011)</li> <li>■ Provide regions with recommendations on the possible information and documentation that regions could provide on websites to inform the public about enforcement cases associated with the site(s) (September 2011)</li> </ul>

		CEI Action	Next Milestone
6	●	<b>CERCLA Enforcement Involving Federal Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate information obtained from the pilot sites and identify recommendations for engaging communities in ongoing and future federal facility response actions and settlement agreements (September 2011)</li> </ul>
7	●	<b>EPA Technical Assistance Processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive public comments on the Draft Recommendation Report (August 2011)</li> <li>Develop best practices for conducting a technical needs assessment (December 2011)</li> <li>Develop best practices for productive relationships among EPA, technical assistance recipients and technical advisor (December 2011)</li> </ul>
8	●	<b>Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share best practices with programs and practitioners at Community Involvement Conference (July 2011)</li> </ul>
9	●	<b>Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist selected applicants with brownfield site reuse planning</li> <li>Work with other agencies, states and tribes to target environmental improvements as identified in each community's plan</li> <li>Promote the brownfields area-wide planning approach in communities</li> </ul>
10	●	<b>Public Health Information on OSWER Projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build upon current community health website to provide useful health information related to OSWER sites, cleanup activities, and policies</li> <li>Facilitate efforts to measure public health impacts</li> </ul>
11	◆	<b>Risk Communication Processes and Comprehensive Education Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate risk communication processes and methods (October 2011)</li> <li>Develop a report and recommendations that identify elements of good "risk" communication Design a comprehensive risk communication education program (October 2012)</li> </ul>
12	●	<b>Sampling and Testing Results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify pilot sites to test color-coding methodology (July 2011)</li> <li>Develop report of recommendations for expanded use of the methodology EPA-wide (Spring 2013)</li> </ul>
13	●	<b>Delivery of Information</b> At-Risk and Remote Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize recommendations on best practices (September 2011)</li> <li>Implement priority recommendations to improve the delivery of information (September 2011)</li> <li>Develop a delivery of information training module (December 2011)</li> </ul>
		Superfund Information Repositories	
14	●	<b>Community Engagement Training Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive public comment on the Draft Recommendation Report (August 2011)</li> <li>Develop a training strategy to strengthen community engagement skills of key personnel (December 2011)</li> </ul>
15	◆	<b>Measures on Effectiveness and Annual Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review approaches and tools for measuring effective community engagement</li> <li>Identify what success would look like for each action and to determine how to report it (e.g., an evaluation or a measure) (December 2011)</li> <li>Issue 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Progress Report (July 2012)</li> </ul>
16	●	<b>Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convene an all-grantee meeting for new and past grant recipients and, in conjunction with the meeting, provide an overview of health and safety guidelines (August 2011)</li> <li>Develop partnerships with contractors to encourage hiring graduates of the training program</li> </ul>

## CEI Evolution

During the first year of implementation, OSWER initiated work on all 16 actions. Specific activities were initiated by a lead office with participation from other EPA offices and regions. Although the goals of the CEI are complementary to individual program office goals, as work progressed new partners were included and ideas evolved. This resulted in modified schedules for some of the CEI deliverables. The CEI evolved to accommodate lessons learned and new information as activities were completed. The lead offices worked together to eliminate duplicative efforts or modify an action to further enhance community engagement opportunities. The offices maintained communication and schedule updates through an Action Update Fact Sheet that was posted quarterly on the CEI website.

OSWER offices and EPA regions in consultation with states and tribes conducted significant work in this first year of implementation. While it is often difficult to communicate planning and partnering activities, the work conducted in this first year will be a platform from which to launch more targeted efforts in the second year of the CEI. The activities completed thus far have built momentum and helped foster support and partnerships outside of the Agency. This momentum will lead to greater results moving into the second year.



### An Interview with the EPA Headquarters Lead on State Delegated Tanks Programs Community Engagement (Action 2)

**Q:** What did OUST want to accomplish/change about the tank program community engagement?

**A:** There have always been requirements for community engagement in Underground Storage Tanks regulations and grants; however, since it is a state-run program, EPA was not monitoring or providing oversight of these activities. OUST wanted to determine a baseline for the community engagement activities conducted by the states.

**Q:** What activities did you do for the CEI this year?

**A:** OUST internally reviewed and analyzed 48 different state and territory plans to identify the community activities each state and territory conducted at tank sites.

**Q:** What was the result of your work and what will you do in the second year of the CEI?

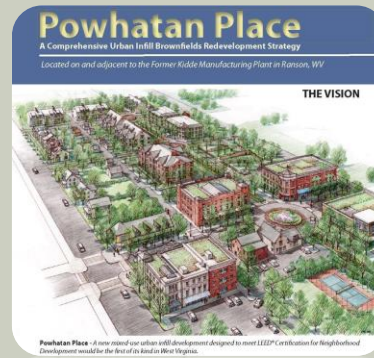
**A:** The states are doing a great job and have several examples of good practices to share. OUST discovered many noteworthy plans and processes, including plans that have tried approaches to community engagement in which the level of engagement is tailored to site circumstances and needs. We also concluded that the states have a widespread interest in having community engagement tools shared as a resource. As a result, OUST developed a community engagement toolbox that has been shared online to enhance access to resources.

## Progress Highlights

The following summary provides brief highlights of the progress made on each of the 16 CEI Actions. For more specific information about progress and upcoming activities, please see the action specific accomplishments in Appendix B or visit the website for continual updates.

**Action 1: Decision-Making Processes and Guidance** – As an initial step, OSWER offices evaluated how community stakeholders are involved in national policies and decision-making processes and how their role can be enhanced. In March 2011, six OSWER program offices developed work plans and process diagrams to help outline opportunities for public comment and identify ways to improve community engagement within OSWER processes. The work completed by the programs opens up cleanup processes to the public in a way that has not previously been documented.

- ◆ **Take A Look!** Learn more about the available community engagement opportunities for OSWER program decision-making processes online at: [www.epa.gov/oswer/engagemeinitiative/act1.htm](http://www.epa.gov/oswer/engagemeinitiative/act1.htm).



## An Interview with the EPA Headquarters Lead on Area-Wide Planning (Action 9)

**Q:** What did OBLR want to accomplish with the area-wide planning program?

**A:** We wanted to encourage communities to take a holistic approach to brownfields cleanup and reuse, and to engage residents and community-based organizations in developing area-wide plans for the cleanup and reuse of multiple brownfield sites in their neighborhoods. This approach would result in area-wide brownfields redevelopment plans, but also identify what resources are needed and ways to implement the plans. The planning process educates communities and encourages them to actively participate in addressing brownfields sites.

**Q:** What activities did you do for the CEI this year?

**A:** In November 2010, OBLR awarded grants up to \$175,000 to 23 communities – 16 local governments, five non-profits, one tribe, and one regional planning organization. We are just getting started, but hope that the grantees will provide a diverse set of projects which will help us identify differences and similarities in the planning process. Webinars were held with the 23 grantees and four federal agencies (HUD, DOT, EDA, and USDA) to highlight additional resources which may be available to assist the communities in the implementation of their plans.

**Q:** What's your favorite part of this process?

**A:** Area-wide planning will connect communities and encourage everyone to actively participate in the planning process. The diverse grantees are each going to demonstrate different techniques to engage communities in area-wide planning.

**Action 2: Underground Storage Tank (UST) Program** – As a state delegated program, the UST program coordinated with state leads to review and analyze state policies on community engagement. The partnership with the states led to the identification of several community engagement success stories, which EPA used to communicate example processes and promote more community engagement at tank sites.

- ◆ **Take A Look!** Visit the UST Program Community Engagement website at: [www.epa.gov/oust/communityengagement](http://www.epa.gov/oust/communityengagement) to read about the Selma to Montgomery, Alabama trail and other success stories and learn more about the program’s community engagement efforts.

**Action 3: Best Community Engagement Practices for RCRA** – EPA formed a workgroup of regional and state RCRA and community involvement contacts in order to identify best community engagement practices at RCRA sites. The workgroup evaluation led to the development of a draft compendium of best community engagement practices at RCRA sites.

**Action 4: OSWER Regulation and Guidance Development** – Focusing on the two pilots for regulation and guidance development, the Definition of Solid Waste Final Rule and the Vapor Intrusion Guidance, EPA has conducted listening sessions, held video town hall meetings and used other communications tools to solicit input from stakeholders for the development of the draft and final guidance.

**Action 5: Community Engagement Policies and Activities related to Enforcement** – EPA initiated a dialogue to increase information sharing and discussions with communities in order to engage them in the decision-making processes, but also ensure protection of sensitive information. EPA’s Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance completed a review of more than 600 enforcement policies to identify areas for revision in order to accommodate community engagement activities. A compendium of best practices will be developed to help the regions inform the public about enforcement cases associated with the sites.

**Action 6: CERCLA Enforcement Involving Federal Facilities** – EPA collaborated with the regions to identify two pilot sites to increase community engagement in ongoing and future federal facility response actions and settlement agreements.

**Action 7: EPA Technical Assistance Processes** – A national workgroup conducted a review of available OSWER technical assistance programs. Additionally, the workgroup developed draft recommendations for improving the delivery of technical assistance.

- ◆ **Take A Look! Review the draft recommendations for improving technical assistance online at:** [www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative/act7.htm](http://www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative/act7.htm).

**Action 8: Support for EPA’s Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Program** – OSWER programs are collaborating with CARE Program projects to leverage technical assistance and share plans and approaches. The CARE program was established to help communities form collaborative partnerships, develop an understanding of the many local sources of pollutants and environmental risks, set priorities, and identify and carry out projects to reduce risks through collaborative action at the local level. CARE concepts are reflected in EPA’s Area-Wide Planning Program Request for Proposals (RFP) issued in June 2010. In addition, OSWER is identifying CARE communities that may benefit or be affected by other OSWER program activities.

**Action 9: Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program** – EPA is providing assistance to 23 communities to facilitate community involvement in developing an area-wide plan for brownfields assessment, cleanup and subsequent reuse.

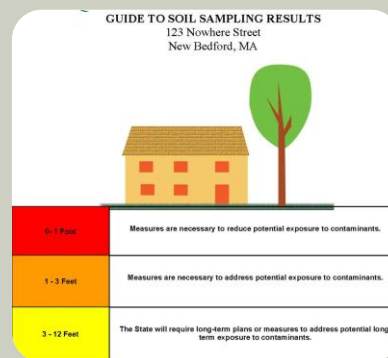
- ◆ **Take A Look!** Learn more about the communities selected and their plans for facilitating community involvement at: [www.epa.gov/brownfields/areawidegrants.htm](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/areawidegrants.htm).

**Action 10: Public Health Information on OSWER Projects** – Through collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), EPA launched a community health website to support OSWER's ability to deliver environmental and public health data as related to EPA's programs. The website provides information that communities can use to better understand environmental health issues. Future activities include facilitating efforts to evaluate and measure the full range of public health impacts in local communities from OSWER programs.

- ◆ **Take A Look!** Visit the new community health website at: [www.epa.gov/communityhealth](http://www.epa.gov/communityhealth) to learn more about public health and environmental data related to OSWER programs.

**Action 11: Risk Communication Processes and Comprehensive Education Program** – Coordination with EPA offices and regions led to the establishment of a national workgroup. Workgroup members will continue to collaboratively evaluate risk communication processes and education and focus on developing tools and guidance, and identifying training opportunities and issues that can be addressed in the OSWER community engagement training strategy (see Action 14).

**Action 12: Sampling and Testing Results** – A new tool for communicating sampling and testing results was successfully piloted during the BP oil spill and the cleanup of a waste site in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Currently, the EPA regions are identifying pilot



## An Interview with the EPA Headquarters Senior Advisor on Sampling Results (Color Coding) Communication (Action 12)

**Q:** What did you want to accomplish with the new sampling results communication tool?

**A:** We wanted to make sampling data and results more understandable for the public. This approach also allows EPA to go beyond simply comparing the data to a benchmark; it takes it one step further and makes the data actionable by telling the audience what they can or need to do.

**Q:** What activities did you do for the CEI this year?

**A:** We used the color-coding tool in two real-life incidents. The tool was used to communicate information to communities at the Parker Street Waste Site in New Bedford, Massachusetts and during response for the Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill.

**Q:** How did the tool work during those two real-life incidents?

**A:** We received positive feedback from the community members at the Parker Street Waste Site. They told us the tool made the data understandable, and one woman told us she thought she would be able to explain the data to her husband when he got home! Explaining sampling and testing data in a way that people feel they can communicate the information to other people shows that the method helps community members understand the data to a level that will allow them to more effectively participate in decision-making processes. In addition, community groups in the Gulf were also pleased with our attempts to make the data more understandable during the BP oil spill.

sites to test the new color-coded communication tool. The results of the pilots will then be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the tool at a variety of sites and to identify modifications and improvements that should be incorporated. The long-term goal for the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is EPA-wide distribution and use of the communication tool.

**Action 13: Delivery of Information** – The workgroup looked at ways to reach at-risk and remote communities, and strengthen their participation and voice in EPA decision-making. As a result, OSWER is developing a new 3R's framework (delivering the Right Information to the Right Place at the Right Time), and is working to incorporate the framework into guidance for regulators that are working with communities. OSWER is also reviewing Superfund site information repositories to identify potential barriers and solutions to information delivery, including electronic access.

- ◆ **Take A Look!** Review the two draft recommendation reports where EPA identified ways to help improve information sharing with communities at: [www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative/act13.htm](http://www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative/act13.htm).

**Action 14: Community Engagement Training Program** – The national workgroup formed in summer 2010 and immediately began identifying community engagement principles, tools and strategies to be addressed by training. Through regular meetings and dedication to the task, the workgroup produced many products aimed at improving community engagement training.



## An Interview with the EPA Headquarters Advisor on Workforce Development & Job Training (Action 16)

**Q:** What's the goal of the Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grants Program?

**A:** We want to increase the hiring of local residents living near contaminated sites by making them aware of job training opportunities in their community. Residents living near hazardous waste sites can be trained and considered for employment to work for environmental cleanup companies at sites in their communities.

**Q:** What activities did you do for the CEI this year?

**A:** The request for proposals for the job training program was expanded to include all OSWER programs. Funding was provided by all of OSWER to support the expanded program. We saw a 36 percent increase in the number of proposals submitted this year. That's the most proposals we've received since the beginning of the job training program. Funding will be used to provide training in hazardous and solid waste cleanup, as well as renewable energy, underground storage tanks, federal facilities and emergency response. In July 2011, 21 communities were selected to receive more than \$6.2 million.

**Q:** What's next for the program?

**A:** We are just getting started! We look forward to receiving success stories from the EWDJT grantees and tracking results. The FY12 RFP will be issued in mid-November, and we look forward to another positive response from communities.

- ◆ **Take A Look!** Explore the guiding principles and core competencies for community engagement training, draft recommendations, and a list of current available training courses on community engagement identified by the workgroup at:  
[www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative/act14.htm](http://www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative/act14.htm).

**Action 15: Measures of Effectiveness and Annual Report** – The CEI is committed to measuring the outcomes and effectiveness of the activities under the initiative, as well as communicating progress and changes to the public. The development of the Action Update Fact Sheets and this progress report helps to communicate progress and updates to the public.

- ◆ **Take A Look!** Visit the CEI website for more information on progress and milestones for each specific action at: [www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative](http://www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative).

**Action 16: Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program (EWDJT)** – EWDJT provides grant funds to recruit, train, and place residents of affected communities in jobs related to contamination assessment and cleanup work taking place in their communities. This program helps foster community collaboration, builds local partnerships, and enhances the capacity of communities to participate in and address environmental concerns by creating a skilled workforce. Under CEI, EPA created a website to support the EWDJT Initiative. EPA also issued a RFP to provide funding to support environmental training and recently announced that 21 communities were selected to receive more than \$6.2 million in grant funds.

- ◆ **Take A Look!** Check out the new EWDJT Initiative website at [www.epa.gov/brownfields/job.htm](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/job.htm).

# Looking Ahead

## Continue Implementation of CEI Activities

The initial CEI Action Plan and CEI Implementation Plan were developed to encourage OSWER to refocus their efforts on community engagement and to identify, expand upon and apply best practices consistently across OSWER programs and processes. Based on the positive results and progress made over the last year, it has become even more apparent that proactive and effective community engagement in government decision-making can provide tremendous benefits to EPA programs and communities. Community engagement will remain a priority, and OSWER programs will continue to engage communities to consider and incorporate local knowledge, plans, institutions, labor and other social and economic resources into waste management and cleanup actions. Understanding and engaging the full and diverse resources of a community will allow EPA waste and cleanup programs to make decisions that the community can build on and trust. Public understanding, participation and buy-in make EPA actions even more productive, cost effective and long-lasting.

OSWER will continue to assimilate the best ideas and practices learned through the CEI into ongoing and long-term processes and policies. Many of the 16 CEI Actions are well underway and have produced new ideas and activities that will be incorporated into long-term program planning. Several other CEI activities will produce results in the coming year that will be evaluated and worked into future plans as appropriate.

### *Cross-Program Focus on Planning, Training and Collaborating on Best Practices*

The collaboration and planning conducted during the first year of implementation led to the identification of many challenges, opportunities and resources. As work on the individual actions progressed, three themes consistently appear in public comments, CEI work plans and recommendations from national EPA workgroups.

- I. Formalize community engagement planning for priority waste management issues and cleanup sites.** CEI work plans and workgroup recommendations indicate that community engagement planning should be considered in all OSWER programs and integrated into internal EPA processes, guidance and tools. Community engagement plans should be regularly updated and include an analysis of needs for technical assistance and delivery of information.
- II. Provide focused and coordinated community engagement training to staff and managers that work with communities and on policy that may affect communities.** Building on the findings from the training national workgroup draft recommendation report, an OSWER-wide community engagement training strategy will be developed. Focus areas moving forward will include developing a culture to support community engagement training and ensuring staff receive ongoing community engagement training.
- III. Create an effective and collaborative community engagement network that helps federal, state, tribal and local governments to proactively and meaningfully involve communities in waste and cleanup program decision-making.** OSWER program offices identified the importance in sharing best practices, successes and challenges in order to improve community engagement. The development of a Community Engagement Network (CEN) would be an effective and efficient way to provide EPA programs, regions, states and tribes with the tools and support needed to foster meaningful community engagement. The

network would allow stakeholders to share example practices, trainings, strategies, resources, tools and issues/concerns related to community engagement.

To address these three themes, particular focus will be placed over the next year on:

- ◆ Integrating community engagement planning into OSWER program processes for priority sites and issues
- ◆ Developing an OSWER-wide community engagement training strategy
- ◆ Creating a Community Engagement Network

These broad activities will be incorporated into specific actions as appropriate to inform the final action products.

# Appendix A: Overview of Community Engagement Action Items

Action #	Action Name	Lead Office	Lead POC
<b>Action 1</b>	Evaluate and Revise Critical Decision-Making Processes and Guidance	CPA	<b>Ellen Manges</b> manges.ellen@epa.gov
<b>Action 2</b>	Review and Support Community Engagement Processes of Underground Storage Tank (UST) Programs Implemented by State Agencies and UST Programs in Indian Country Implemented by EPA	OUST	<b>Barbara Grimm-Crawford</b> grimm-crawford.barbara@epa.gov
<b>Action 3</b>	Sustain a Dialogue with EPA Regions and State RCRA Delegated Programs to Identify and Promote Best Community Engagement Practices	ORCR	<b>Jeff Gaines</b> gaines.jeff@epa.gov
<b>Action 4</b>	Pilot Methods of Engaging Communities in OSWER Regulation and Guidance Development	ORCR, OPM	<b>Stiven Foster</b> foster.stiven@epa.gov
<b>Action 5</b>	Review Community Engagement Policies and Activities Associated with Enforcement Activities	OECA	<b>Helena Healy</b> healy.helena@epa.gov
<b>Action 6</b>	Promote Community Engagement Associated with CERCLA Enforcement Involving Federal Facilities	OECA's Federal Facilities Enforcement Office, FFRRO	<b>Kathleen Doster</b> doster.kathleen@epa.gov
<b>Action 7</b>	Evaluate and Improve EPA Technical Assistance Processes	CPA, OSRTI, and OECA	<b>Suzanne Wells</b> wells.suzanne@epa.gov
<b>Action 8</b>	Broaden Awareness and Support for the Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Program Principles in OSWER Programs	IPCO	<b>Pat Carey</b> carey.pat@epa.gov
<b>Action 9</b>	Launch the Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program	OBLR	<b>Aimee Storm</b> storm.aimee@epa.gov
<b>Action 10</b>	Collaborate with Federal Agencies to Provide Public Health Information on OSWER Projects	CPA	<b>Ellen Manges</b> manges.ellen@epa.gov
<b>Action 11</b>	Evaluate Risk Communication Processes and Develop a Comprehensive Education Program	OSRTI and OEM, working with other OSWER offices and OPA	<b>Peter Oh</b> Oh.peter@epa.gov <b>Yolanda Sanchez</b> Sanchez.Yolanda@epa.gov
<b>Action 12</b>	Improve Communication of Sampling and Testing Results	OEM, working with OPA	<b>Bill Finan</b> finan.bill@epa.gov
<b>Action 13</b>	Evaluate and Improve Delivery of Information	IPCO and OSRTI	<b>Marsha Minter</b> minter.marsha@epa.gov <b>Melissa Dreyfus</b> dreyfus.melissa@epa.gov

<b>Action #</b>	<b>Action Name</b>	<b>Lead Office</b>	<b>Lead POC</b>
<b>Action 14</b>	Develop an OSWER-Wide/Regional Community Engagement Training Program for EPA OSWER and Regional Employees	OSRTI and CPA, working with the regions and other OSWER offices	<b>Yolanda Sanchez</b> Sanchez.Yolanda@epa.gov
<b>Action 15</b>	Develop Measures on the Effectiveness of Community Engagement Activities and Report Annually on CEI	CPA, with other OSWER and EPA HQ offices	<b>Ellen Manges</b> manges.ellen@epa.gov
<b>Action 16</b>	Create an Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program	OBLR	<b>Myra Blakely</b> blakely.myra@epa.gov

# Appendix B: CEI Action Accomplishments

## Action 1 – Evaluate and Revise Critical Decision-Making Processes and Guidance

*Action 1 strives to support more enhanced, transparent, and upfront collaboration with community stakeholders through the identification, explanation, and enhancement of community engagement opportunities in OSWER decision-making processes.*

### Overview

Action 1 aims to clarify and describe the opportunities for community engagement across OSWER's programs. To achieve this goal, OSWER program offices reviewed their current program processes and wrote descriptions specifying where and how communities are involved in decision-making

([www.epa.gov/OSWER/engagementinitiative/act1.htm](http://www.epa.gov/OSWER/engagementinitiative/act1.htm)). Using these process descriptions, OSWER program offices identified processes that should be modified in order to enhance community engagement, and prepared work plans for revising them.. At this point, five OSWER program offices have posted their work plans on the CEI website for public comment. The remaining work plan from the Office of Emergency Management will be posted by the end of July 2011. During the review period, OSWER will engage local and tribal communities, state and local governments, and OSWER program offices and EPA regional offices.

To make public opportunities for input in decision-making more transparent, OSWER developed diagrams that visually depict the community engagement opportunities in OSWER processes. First-generation diagrams have been posted on the CEI website for the Superfund, Brownfields, and Hazardous Waste Permitting processes. OSWER is currently requesting public feedback, which will help enhance their usability and expand their use to the other OSWER programs.

*Future Activities and Milestones*

- ◆ Post the remaining OSWER program office work plans on the CEI website(July 2011)
- ◆ Collect public comments on OSWER Process Work Plans (August 2011)
- ◆ Address public comments and finalize work plans (September 2011)
- ◆ Publically report on status of implementation of work plans (October 2011)
- ◆ Develop process diagram for Hazardous Waste Corrective Action (September 2011)

### Highlights

- Developed descriptions for the current OSWER processes and associated community engagement opportunities
- Developed web pages highlighting Action 1 information including the OSWER Process Descriptions
- Identified and initiated evaluation of specific processes for revision
- Prepared work plans for the specific OSWER processes
- Posted work plans on website for public review and feedback
- Created diagrams of OSWER processes for Superfund, Brownfields, and Hazardous Waste Permitting

## Action 2 – Review and Support Community Engagement Processes of Underground Storage Tank (UST) Programs Implemented by State\* Agencies and UST Programs in Indian Country Implemented by EPA

*Action 2 strives to enhance community engagement policies and processes in coordination with states and tribes. Encouraging dialogue and creating a forum for sharing and highlighting effective community engagement practices will help improve community engagement in the underground storage tank program.*

### Overview

Due to the vast size of the regulated universe, states are the primary implementers of the UST program while EPA implements the program in Indian country. As part of implementing the program, states perform community engagement activities, as appropriate.

OUST, working with states, tribes and EPA regions reviewed and analyzed a sample of state community engagement policies or processes and EPA's community engagement processes in Indian country. This overview provided baseline information on the extent those policies or processes produce outcomes that are responsive to community concerns or interests, and are commensurate to the circumstances of a release. OUST will sustain an ongoing dialogue with the states, tribes, and EPA regions to: share information; promote and support effective community engagement processes; and identify noteworthy practices and opportunities for improvement. OUST will post outcomes of this collaboration on the new Community Engagement and the Underground Storage Tank Program website ([www.epa.gov/oust/communityengagement/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/oust/communityengagement/index.htm)).

### Highlights

- Developed descriptions for the current OSWER processes and associated community engagement opportunities
- Developed new OUST Community Engagement website (March 2011)
- Identified and initiated evaluation of specific processes for revision
- Prepared work plans for the specific OSWER processes
- Posted work plans on website for public review and feedback
- Posted an overview of state community engagement plans
- Developed a toolbox to share community engagement resource materials and posted online (July 2011)

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Use overview of community engagement policies and practices to facilitate discussions with states, tribes and EPA regions and then maintain dialogue to support effective community engagement efforts (July 2011)
- ◆ Develop guidelines for tailoring community engagement to site circumstances (December 2011)
- ◆ Analyze the feasibility and affordability of making compliance and cleanup data for tank sites in Indian country publically available (December 2011)

\*The term “state” refers to state and territory.

## Action 3 – Sustain a Dialogue with EPA Regions and State RCRA Delegated Programs to Identify and Promote Best Community Engagement Practices

*Action 3 will focus on the identification and development of best practices for effective community engagement regarding facilities located in or near communities. Effective community engagement will help these communities understand the impacts and opportunities associated with RCRA sites.*

### Overview

Action 3 has provided the opportunity for EPA to establish, expand and sustain a dialogue with EPA regional and state partners to further community engagement efforts near RCRA program sites. EPA has gathered examples of community engagement activities at several RCRA permitting and corrective action sites. As the dialogue progresses, EPA will assess, identify and encourage the use of best practices for effective community engagement in communities

located near hazardous waste facilities. EPA will share data and highlight effective community engagement practices used in the hazardous waste permitting process online. Action 3 will engage support from state, tribal and local governments, as well as the public with focus on communities with RCRA hazardous waste permit facilities.

### Highlights

- Formed workgroup of regional and state RCRA and community involvement contacts to share information
- Began compiling examples of successful community engagement activities
- Developed Draft Compendium of Best Community Engagement Practices at RCRA Sites

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Continue discussions with workgroup to continue to identify best practices
- ◆ Continue outreach to state partners to further the dialogue
- ◆ Continue collecting, evaluating and presenting examples of community engagement practices
- ◆ Develop web pages to share data and highlight effective practices for delegated state RCRA programs (December 2011)
- ◆ Involve/engage the Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials in compiling state-specific examples of successful community engagement activities (December 2011)

## Action 4 – Pilot Methods of Engaging Communities in OSWER Regulation and Guidance Development

*Action 4 aims to make community engagement more proactive during regulation and guidance development. This Action especially seeks to reach the environmental justice and at-risk communities to provide better mechanisms for working with EPA. The Action will help ensure that the science used to develop regulations and guidance will be provided to stakeholders early and clearly in the process.*

### Overview

Action 4 recognizes that communities throughout the country are affected by EPA regulations and guidance. The goal is to identify ways to proactively engage communities beyond the traditional outreach practices used during regulation and guidance development that may affect the management of hazardous substances and waste and underground storage tanks. OSWER is using the ongoing re-evaluation of the Definition of Solid Waste Final Rule as a pilot to explore methods of effectively engaging communities in national rulemaking. For example, EPA conducted public roundtable meetings to solicit input on the draft DSW environmental justice methodology, and is planning additional public meetings and webinars on the new DSW proposed rule. EPA is also evaluating community engagement activities used in other ongoing rulemaking actions and initiating a multi-stakeholder national dialogue to solicit input regarding community engagement in OSWER National Regulation and Guidance Development.

Action 4 also includes conducting community engagement activities associated with the development of the final Subsurface Vapor Intrusion Guidance. The guidance development process has included public listening sessions, a video town hall meeting, solicitation of written comments, and the communication of progress through websites and other communication mechanisms. In response to a request for input, OSWER has received widespread support for its effort along with a number of specific technical recommendations. OSWER is considering all of the input it has received and in the coming year will engage in another round of public outreach to get feedback on the draft vapor intrusion guidance.

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Meet with contacts for various OSWER rules to evaluate how community engagement has been/will be used in developing those rules
- ◆ Evaluate the community engagement activities used in other ongoing rulemaking actions
- ◆ Initiate dialogue with stakeholders on vapor intrusion guidance efforts
- ◆ Continue public engagement on the DSW proposed rule through public meetings and webinars (Fall 2011)
- ◆ Consider public input received in the development of vapor intrusion guidance (Fall 2011)
- ◆ Solicit additional public comment on the draft vapor intrusion guidance (Spring 2012)

### Highlights

- Conducted public roundtable meetings on the DSW Final Rule Environmental Justice methodology
- Updated stakeholders on the DSW Final Rule Environmental Justice analysis and framework
- Solicited input from stakeholders on the vapor intrusion guidance
- Held listening sessions, video town hall meetings and other public outreach activities on the vapor intrusion guidance and related activities
- Updated stakeholders on the progress of developing final vapor intrusion guidance through the Internet and other communication tools

## Action 5 – Review Community Engagement Policies and Activities Associated with Enforcement Activities

*Action 5 seeks to identify a balance between increased information sharing and having dialogues with communities about significant enforcement decision-making processes and safeguarding against the disclosure of privileged or enforcement-sensitive information. Action 5 will provide communities affected by enforcement actions with access to more information on CERCLA/RCRA enforcement activities and utilize the information to meaningfully participate in EPA decisions within ethics rules, federal rules and applicable laws, where possible.*

### Overview

Action 5 recognizes that during the course of its enforcement activities, EPA can often share information with the affected communities and engage them in dialogues with not only the Agency, but also the regulated entities and the parties responsible for conducting response activities. To help strengthen and increase opportunities for information sharing and community dialogues, the Office of Site Remediation Enforcement (OSRE)

reviewed over 600 enforcement policy and guidance documents to find places in the enforcement process where community engagement could be enhanced. New language for enhancing the community engagement process in these identified areas will be developed and inserted in the selected policy and guidance documents. OSRE has also reviewed its website to determine how to make it easier and more informative for the public. As a part of this review and update, OSRE is in the process of retooling its website and is working with the regional offices and their websites so as to highlight the community engagement process within the enforcement context. This will be done in conjunction with an Agency-wide retooling of its website. OSRE has also explored ways to make the cleanup process more transparent for an affected community, which will allow for timelier community input that will help strengthen the final cleanup options. As part of this particular effort, OSRE will focus on the various "deliverables" required during the cleanup process and will develop community engagement practices to help the community understand them and participate in their development. Finally, OSRE will develop a compendium of best practices for enhancing community engagement.

### Highlights

- Reviewed more than 600 enforcement policies to determine which might be revised to accommodate community engagement activities
- Reviewed OSRE website to identify ways to make it more informative and user-friendly for the public

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Review enforcement policies and practices to identify where community engagement can be improved
- ◆ Improve public access to relevant enforcement information
- ◆ Produce a report with recommendations on how to improve enforcement guidance
- ◆ Issue a draft compendium of best practices (September 2011)
- ◆ Provide the regions with recommendations on information and documentation that could be posted on their websites to inform the public about enforcement cases associated with contaminated site(s) (September 2011)

## Action 6 – Promote Community Engagement Associated with CERCLA Enforcement Involving Federal Facilities

*Action 6 will further EPA’s goal for federal facility compliance with environmental requirements to equal or exceed other regulated entities. Using information obtained from pilot projects, EPA will provide recommendations for engaging communities in ongoing and future federal facility response actions.*

### Overview

Action 6 will enhance community awareness of EPA’s enforcement actions at federally-owned contaminated sites (federal facilities). EPA has identified two pilot projects at federal CERCLA cleanup sites primarily to evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of posting online schedules for response activities and

improving the public’s access to EPA’s administrative records. The two selected sites selected for the pilot studies were TVA-Kingston, TN (Region 4) and Ft. Ord, CA (Region 9).

Recommendations from the pilot projects will lead to recommendations to improve community engagement during ongoing and future federal facility response actions. EPA will also work with federal facilities to explore using a wider range of social media to engage a broader sector of the community in response actions.

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Evaluate information obtained from the pilot sites and propose recommendations for engaging communities in ongoing and future federal facility response actions and settlement agreements (September 2011)

### Highlights

- Worked with EPA regions to identify pilot sites to increase community engagement in ongoing and future federal facility response actions

## Action 7 – Evaluate and Improve EPA Technical Assistance Processes

*Action 7 aims to better coordinate technical assistance processes, policies and guidance and to clarify the range and extent of OSWER and regional technical assistance, and how it may be used to support communities.*

### Overview

The goal of Action 7 is to maximize the use of EPA's currently available technical assistance and determine how it can be improved for communities and tribes. This includes evaluating OSWER's current technical assistance processes, identifying gaps and needs and developing a strategy to address those gaps and needs. EPA also intends to promote OSWER's internal technical assistance capabilities to increase community access to and use of technical assistance. This could include the possible development of a "Partners Program" of OSWER program offices, as well as other stakeholders, such as national environmental organizations to increase technical assistance offerings to all communities, including disadvantaged and environmental justice communities.

Through Action 7, OSWER is also striving to improve coordination and promotion of all technical assistance activities within OSWER and EPA regions. As part of this Action, OSWER is considering developing a "toolkit" for local communities that may be receiving federally-transferred property or Formerly Used Defense Sites. OSWER is also considering expanded use of Technical Assistance Plans (TAP) for RCRA-Corrective Action sites, National Priorities List (NPL) sites, and non-NPL sites using the Superfund Alternative Site TAP as a model.

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Increase awareness of outside organizations and universities that provide technical assistance (September 2011)
- ◆ Create web-based compilation of OSWER technical assistance opportunities (September 2011)
- ◆ Develop best practices for improving relationships among EPA, technical assistance recipients and technical advisors (December 2011)
- ◆ Develop best practices for conducting a technical assistance needs assessment (December 2011)

### Highlights

- Established a national workgroup (December 2011)
- Developed draft definition of "technical assistance" to set parameters
- Developed a matrix of technical assistance programs within OSWER, EPA's Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center and the Department of Defense to help identify opportunities, gaps and eligibility
- Summarized findings of review of documents that will help identify opportunities to improve availability of technical assistance
- Solicited input from stakeholders by posting question on OSWER Discussion Forum, interviewing technical assistance experts and providers, and surveying EPA staff
- Developed a draft recommendation report and posted online for public review (June 2011)

## Action 8 – Broaden Awareness and Support for the Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Program Principles in OSWER Programs

*Action 8 encourages OSWER's coordination with and support of EPA's CARE program, which was established to help communities form collaborative partnerships, develop an understanding of the many local sources of pollutants and environmental risks, set priorities, and identify and carry out projects to reduce risks through collaborative action at the local level. OSWER programs will collaborate with CARE projects to leverage technical assistance and model CARE approaches where appropriate.*

### Overview

Action 8 focuses on providing technical assistance to enable communities to form their own collaborative partnerships and develop an understanding of contaminant sources and environmental risks in their communities, and then to develop project actions and priorities to reduce those risks. As part of this effort, OSWER is identifying CARE communities that may benefit or be affected by other program activities (e.g., Superfund site work in the vicinity of a CARE grant community) and facilitate communication of plans and results between CARE communities and OSWER programs. OSWER is also working to incorporate the CARE concept of using broad-based local partnerships into the Brownfields Area Wide Planning Pilot Program, ensuring applicants include support from residential neighborhoods, neighborhood associations, religious groups, or other community grass roots organizations. In addition, OSWER is exploring opportunities to make CARE communities aware of Brownfields Assessment funding and job training opportunities and ensuring long-range collaboration between CARE communities and local brownfields planning efforts.

### Highlights

- Included CARE concepts in the Brownfields AWP Pilot Program RFP issued in June 2010
- Identified CARE communities and associated OSWER program offices
- Displayed CARE projects on a U.S. map to indicate project diversity and associated waste and cleanup programs

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Integrate CARE into the Brownfields Grant Proposal process by including CARE concepts in the Brownfields Assessment and Job Training Request for Proposals
- ◆ Share CARE Promising Practices with communities participating in OSWER programs
- ◆ Report CARE results to OSWER programs that demonstrate human and environmental health benefits

## Action 9 – Launch the Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program

*Action 9, the launching of OSWER's Brownfields Area-Wide Pilot Program, was developed to bring key land revitalization components – strong local leadership, inclusive public engagement, a clear and realistic vision, and diverse public and private partnerships – together to help foster successful Brownfields cleanup and redevelopment, and promote area-wide revitalization.*

### Overview

Action 9 focuses on providing successful applicants with grant funding and/or direct Agency contract support to facilitate community engagement in area-wide planning to help address and revitalize a single large or multiple brownfield site(s). Under the Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program, OSWER provided assistance to 23 pilot communities to help them create a shared vision for brownfields-impacted areas, and ensure that site assessment and cleanup decisions are informed by reuse planning and supportive of area-wide revitalization strategies. The pilot communities began their brownfields area-wide planning efforts in Fall 2010, and the projects will continue through 2012. Recipients of Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Pilot assistance include 16 local governments, one tribe, five non-profit organizations, and one regional planning commission. The diversity of these pilot communities will help to demonstrate various community engagement strategies that communities can use towards developing a brownfields area-wide plan. For more information and a complete list of the 23 pilot communities, please visit: [www.epa.gov/brownfields/areawide\\_grants.htm](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/areawide_grants.htm).

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Continue webinar series to highlight federal resources for implementation
- ◆ Reach out to local, federal, and state contacts to facilitate their initial coordination and to help inform the communities' brownfields area-wide plans
- ◆ Work with other agencies, states, and tribes to assist with targeting environmental improvements as identified in each community's plan
- ◆ Promote the brownfields area-wide planning approach in communities, as a tool to help facilitate brownfields assessment, cleanup and subsequent reuse
- ◆ Convene a second all-pilots meeting for the 23 brownfields area-wide planning communities once projects are nearing completion in late 2012

### Highlights

- Developed and announced RFP (March 2010)
- Completed evaluation of AWP proposals and finalized competition results (Sept 2010)
- Awarded 23 brownfields AWP pilots (November 2010); Made public announcement of EPA assistance to 23 communities to initiate development of brownfields area-wide plans and identify next steps/resources needed to implement the plans
- Conducted four initial coordination calls, providing each grantee the opportunity to share information about their project and ask initial questions of EPA and other federal agencies participating
- Held three webinars which provided an overview of federal resources the grantees should consider for implementing their brownfield area-wide plans
- Convened an all-pilots meeting with representatives from six other federal agencies (HUD, DOT, EDA, ATSDR, USDA and OMB) and ten EPA programs; included equitable development emphasis as part of the meeting

## Action 10 – Collaborate with Federal Agencies to Provide Public Health Information on OSWER Projects

*Action 10 promotes the development and sharing of tools to provide communities with access to clear and useful environmental and public health information. Action 10 also strives to help communities understand how that information relates to and is used in OSWER cleanup policies and decisions.*

### Overview

OSWER programs often work on sites where other federal agencies are responsible for generating and providing public health information. Action 10 focuses on identifying tools to provide clear, useful environmental and public health information that helps communities understand how the information impacts OSWER cleanup activities and policies.

OSWER has made progress on Action 10 through collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and ATSDR, and has developed a community health website ([www.epa.gov/communityhealth](http://www.epa.gov/communityhealth)) that supports the delivery of environmental and public health data. The website helps communities understand underlying issues at OSWER sites by teaching them how they can obtain environmental and public health information and how they can then use that information to get involved in environmental issues and OSWER programs decision-making processes. To date, limited progress has been made on the commitment to describe and communicate health hazards at hazardous waste sites, especially in areas with high background levels of contamination versus areas with high levels of non-naturally occurring contamination.

Action 10 is slightly behind schedule, but plans are in place to ensure all deliverables are completed. Moving forward, OSWER is working to expand the community health website to include more information about OSWER cleanup programs and policies. OSWER will also work to expand current efforts to evaluate and measure the full range of public health impacts in local communities from OSWER programs.

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Build upon current community health website to provide useful health information related to OSWER sites, cleanup activities, and policies.
- ◆ Determine best practices for describing and communicating health hazards at hazardous waste sites to the public
- ◆ Expand efforts to evaluate and measure public health impacts of OSWER programs

### Highlights

- Developed a website in collaboration with CDC and ATSDR to share tools and environmental and public health information with communities about how they can be more involved in environmental decision-making

## Action 11 – Evaluate Risk Communication Processes and Develop a Comprehensive Education Program

*Action 11 strives to improve EPA's and state waste and cleanup programs' communication to affected communities and the general public about the hazards of environmental problems. Action 11 is intended to help OSWER programs and EPA regions establish consistent processes and methods for communicating the hazards of environmental problems and understanding other factors affecting the public's risk perception.*

### Overview

Action 11 focuses on developing enhanced processes and methods for communicating and explaining risks to affected communities and the general public. EPA and the states have a responsibility to communicate its scientific understanding of the hazards to the public early in the process and on an ongoing basis, and in a way that is understandable. Specifically, Action 11 aims to evaluate current risk communication processes and methods, and provide recommendations for revised or new guidance by identifying elements of good "risk" communication.

OSWER has recently formed a cross-OSWER/regional workgroup, which has begun to scope out the necessary steps for achieving the milestones. A draft recommendation report will be developed.

To accomplish the goals of Action 11, OSWER intends to seek input from stakeholders to understand their concerns about how EPA conducts risk assessments and communicates related information. OSWER also intends to analyze gaps in current risk communication training options, identify resources and key partners to implement a risk communication education program, and develop an OSWER-wide/regional strategy to ensure that appropriate EPA personnel are trained. Action 11 is slightly behind schedule, but plans are in place to ensure all deliverables are completed.

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Evaluate risk communication processes and methods (October 2011)
- ◆ Seek input from stakeholders on their concerns about how EPA communicates risk
- ◆ Develop a report and recommendations based on the workgroup that identifies elements of good "risk" communication and provides recommendations for revisions
- ◆ Evaluate OSWER risk communication trainings that are currently available
- ◆ Design a comprehensive risk communication education program (October 2012)

### Highlights

- Identified key policies and documents to be evaluated
- Formalized cross-OSWER/regional workgroup

## Action 12 – Improve Communication of Sampling and Testing Results

Action 12 was developed in order to better inform communities on sampling and testing results. While EPA has taken steps to more clearly communicate the level of contamination for emergency sampling response actions, EPA continually strives to improve its communication approaches.

### Overview

Action 12 was established to help develop methods to more clearly communicate the level of contamination for emergency response actions to the communities affected by these actions. One of the elements under this action includes developing a new public communication methodology to notify citizens when contamination is found in their communities. Another element is to simplify scientific language, providing visual illustrations and clear explanations of contamination levels and associated risks, and recommendations of any actions the public should take to protect themselves. The new approach has been used in national exercises and during the recent BP oil spill response. To further test the concept each region has been asked to identify by July 2011 a Superfund remedial site and a removal site for pilot testing of the new communications tool. Regional offices will test the approach in real life situations, incorporate improvements, and work to implement the tool Agency-wide. EPA is developing a tool and process to evaluate the effectiveness of the new approach with the general public; this evaluation process should be established by the end of FY2011.

### Highlights

- Developed new communication method (September 2010)
- Tested the new methods during the National Liberty RadEx exercise
- Tested the tool in real-life scenarios, including the BP oil spill, and made improvements as needed
- Explained the new communication methodology during a risk communication training session at EPA's Region 10 office
- The Office of External Affairs conducted a webinar for regional offices to assist with pilot site selection and conducted a webinar in June 2011 for all regions describing the new tool and providing guidance on identifying pilot sites

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Finish identifying regional sites to pilot new communication methodology (July 2011)
- ◆ Continue using and testing the methodology—including tests in real-life scenarios—and making changes based upon feedback
- ◆ Identify improved ways to obtain public feedback
- ◆ Complete an evaluation tool and methodology to test the effectiveness of the new approach and improve it as appropriate (Fall 2011)
- ◆ Interim report on pilot projects progress (December 2012)
- ◆ Report of recommendations for expanded use of the methodology EPA-wide (Spring 2013)
- ◆ Use the new communication tool EPA-wide (Ongoing)

## Action 13 – Evaluate and Improve Delivery of Information

*Action 13 strives to help EPA connect with communities that have been historically underrepresented in EPA decision-making, including communities of color and tribes. This action will help OSWER identify barriers and solutions that would address the delivery of information and strengthening the voice of disadvantaged communities to help shape the government programs that affect them.*

### Overview

Action 13 supports the Agency's priority mission of "Expanding the Environmental Conversation with Communities." It is intended to help EPA connect with communities, especially those underrepresented in EPA decision-making, to provide the right information, at the right place, at the right time into existing guidance, training and Agency outreach efforts. Specifically, Action 13a focuses on identifying barriers and solutions that would address the delivery of information, while concentrating on strengthening the voice of at-risk and remote communities. To date, Action 13a has participated in an OSWER-wide survey to assess how information is being delivered; has created a draft framework for the final report (which can be accessed at:

[www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative/13a\\_action\\_recommendation\\_report.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative/13a_action_recommendation_report.pdf)); and has organized a session at the Community Involvement Training Conference in July, 2011. We are in the process of writing our guidelines document that will highlight our findings and compile results into recommendations for OSWER

employees and program offices. We

are also working in coordination with the Community Engagement Network (described in Action 14) to compile best practices, key tools and innovative ideas.

Under Action 13b, EPA conducted an assessment of Superfund site information repositories to identify potential barriers and solutions to information delivery, including electronic access. EPA also developed a set of recommendations on best practices for Superfund site information repositories that can be applied across NPL and non-NPL sites to improve the delivery of information to communities.

## Highlights

### Improving Delivery of Information

- Held dialogue with tribes on Delivery of Information issues at *Tribal Lands and Environment Forum* (August 2010)
- Established National Workgroup (September 2010)
- Conducted a staff survey to assess how information is currently delivered (February 2011)
- Presented delivery of information initiatives at the National Brownfields Conference (April 2011)
- Developed a draft recommendation report and posted online for public comment (July 2011)
- Created a draft framework of the Delivery of Information report and received feedback from the program offices

### Superfund Information Repositories

- Surveyed Regional Community Involvement Managers to assess practices and policies for Superfund information repositories (December 2010)
- Conducted site visits to 28 Superfund information repositories in 5 regions
- Formed a national EPA workgroup specific to Action 13b consisting of regional and Headquarters staff
- Developed a draft Recommendation Report and posted online for public comment (March 2011) ([http://www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative/public\\_review.htm%23act13\\_sr](http://www.epa.gov/oswer/engagementinitiative/public_review.htm%23act13_sr))

### *Future Activities and Milestones*

- ◆ Conduct a session at the 2011 Community Involvement Training Conference in Washington, DC entitled: *Getting the Right Information, to the Right Place, at the Right Time: Community Perspectives to Agency Outreach* (July 2011)
- ◆ Obtain public feedback on draft recommendation reports
- ◆ Implement priority recommendations to improve the delivery of information (September 2011)
- ◆ Work with Community Engagement Network (Action 14) to submit best practices resulting from Delivery of Information case studies
- ◆ Finalize recommendations on best practices (September 2011)
- ◆ Develop training module (December 2011)

## Action 14 – Develop an OSWER-Wide/Regional Community Engagement Training Program for EPA OSWER and Regional Employees

*Action 14 strives to develop an OSWER-wide/regional community engagement training strategy for key personnel involved in project and site activities, building on existing training offered by the regions and HQ. The training program will cover, among other things, when, how and why to engage communities and build trust.*

### Overview

OSWER developed Action 14 because community engagement training should strengthen the skills of key personnel to effectively apply community engagement practices and strategies to projects and sites. This action intends to enhance “one site, one team” project management approaches, in order to enable team members to understand project and community facts, communicate a consistent message to the public, and ensure that decisions reflect community consultation. The Action 14 Workgroup was tasked to: review existing “public/community involvement” training within and outside OSWER; develop training to enable OSWER to work more effectively with tribal communities; update or compile a list of community engagement practices; solicit stakeholder input on practices; and develop strategies to ensure that appropriate EPA personnel are trained.

The workgroup has identified skills that community engagement practitioners need and has reviewed the community engagement training courses that are available to OSWER and regional employees. The workgroup will now use these findings to determine if there are gaps in the currently available training and to design an OSWER-wide/regional training strategy that effectively delivers community engagement training to appropriate personnel. To date, the workgroup has not developed training on working more effectively with tribes, but plans to move this deliverable forward by folding it into the development of the OSWER-wide/regional training strategy. Finally, a framework was developed for a virtual network that will enable community engagement practitioners to share practices. The workgroup will continue to identify community engagement practices that should be included and launch the network for OSWER-wide/regional use.

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Examine various OSWER job functions as they relate to community engagement
- ◆ Clarify the types of project management tools that enable collaboration for a “community of practice”
- ◆ Obtain public feedback and comments on draft recommendations, including feedback on the identified core competencies and guiding principles for training (August 2011)
- ◆ Develop the OSWER community engagement training strategy to strengthen the community engagement skills of key personnel (December 2011)

### Highlights

- Identified community engagement principles, tools and strategies to be addressed by training (September 2010)
- Identified community engagement guiding principles and core competencies in relation to community engagement training (December 2010)
- Defined the purpose of the cross-OSWER/regional workgroup and developed a “road map” (August 2010)
- Compiled a list of community engagement training courses available within OSWER (September 2010)
- Defined “one site, one team” (March 2011)
- Developed a framework for a Community Engagement Network to facilitate the sharing of best practices (June 2011)

## Action 15 – Develop Measures on the Effectiveness of Community Engagement Activities and Report Annually on CEI

*Through Action 15, OSWER will measure progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the approaches and tools identified in the CEI. OSWER will also explore methods for measuring effective community engagement in OSWER programs.*

### Overview

Action 15 was established to track OSWER's progress implementing the CEI Actions. This is the first annual report on the progress of the Actions presented in the CEI Implementation Plan (May, 2010). OSWER is also reviewing the progress of the regional and Headquarters community engagement case studies and pilots highlighted in the CEI Implementation Plan. The results of these case studies and pilots will be shared widely as best practices for potential use in other situations.

OSWER is also evaluating how to determine the effectiveness of existing approaches and tools used to increase transparency, collaboration and meaningful involvement of communities – and is developing a baseline of community engagement activities used by OSWER and regional programs.

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Continue to review approaches and tools for measuring effective community engagement
- ◆ Work with CEI Action leads to identify what success looks like for each Action and determine how to measure and report effectiveness for that Action (e.g., an evaluation or a measure) (December 2011)
- ◆ Issue 2nd Annual Progress Report (July 2012)

### Highlights

- Tracked progress on commitments of all CEI Actions
- Began compiling examples of methods used to evaluate effectiveness of community engagement
- Completed a report describing the progress made on the commitments in the CEI Implementation Plan

## Action 16 – Create an Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program

*Action 16 strives to streamline the environmental workforce development programs by creating a comprehensive program to promote community revitalization both environmentally and economically. The development of the program will culminate in the release of a RFP to select community grantees to receive financial and technical support in the area of job training and workforce development. By expanding the program, communities are allowed the flexibility to better design their training curriculums based on local labor market demand by environmental employers.*

### Overview

Action 16 was developed to help communities revitalize properties environmentally, mitigate potential health risks, and restore economic vitality to neighborhoods where properties exist. Specific efforts include developing a hiring and tax incentive brochure, creating a website to support the OSWER Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Initiative, and communicate opportunities to stakeholders/partners. Whenever possible, OSWER intends to bring together community groups, job training organizations, educators, labor groups, environmental contractors, investors, lenders, developers and other affected parties to address the issue of providing environmental employment and training for residents in communities impacted by contaminated properties.

Under Action 16, OSWER developed a RFP for fall 2010 to provide funding to support environmental training related to: Federal Facilities and Superfund site-specific cleanup, recycling center operations, construction and demolition debris recycling, first responders, solar and renewable energy installation and site preparation, leaking underground storage tank removal, greener and innovative remediation technologies, and brownfields remediation. As a result of extensive outreach efforts, including multiple webinars and two Clu-In sessions, this year OSWER received 112 proposals as a response to the 2011 RFP. This number is up from 40 proposals the previous year. EPA recently announced that 21 communities were selected to receive more than \$6.2 million in grant funds.

### Future Activities and Milestones

- ◆ Convene an all-grantee meeting for new and past grant recipients and in conjunction with the meeting, provide an overview of health and safety guidelines (August 2011)
- ◆ Continue to develop and promote partnerships with contractors to encourage hiring graduates of the training program
- ◆ Partner with the Superfund Job Training Initiative during 2010 and 2011 projects
- ◆ Issues request for FY12 proposals (anticipated November 2011)

### Highlights

- Developed OSWER EWDJT Initiative website
- Completed three webinar sessions for the public, providing information on the EWDJT initiative ([www.clu-in.org/](http://www.clu-in.org/))
- Issued RFP to the public in late 2010
- Convened the Job Training Grantee Roundtable in Hartford, CT: “Barriers to Employment”
- Developed partnerships with contractors to encourage hiring graduates on the training program
- Completed two webinar sessions for the public, providing information on the EWDJT initiative
- Presented at the EPA-Tribal Colleges Conferences in Albuquerque, New Mexico in June, 2011 to provide technical assistance to prospective tribal college applicants
- Announced that 21 communities were awarded grant funds (July 2011)

# Appendix C. National Workgroup Recommendation Report Summaries

## Action 7 – Evaluate and Improve EPA Technical Assistance Processes

### *Purpose of Action 7*

- ◆ To develop recommendations for revising and better coordinating technical assistance processes, policies, and guidance.
- ◆ To clarify the range and extent of OSWER and regional technical assistance, and how it may be used.

### *Workgroup Approach*

- ◆ Formed a national EPA workgroup with state participation.
- ◆ Conducted a literature review to identify best practices and ideas for offering and strengthening technical assistance programs.
- ◆ Posted a question (*What steps can EPA take to ensure that technical assistance to communities serves the needs of the whole community and not just a small group?*) on the OSWER Discussion Forum to solicit input from stakeholders.
- ◆ Interviewed outreach providers and experts to gain their insights about effective technical assistance programs and challenges with providing assistance to communities.
- ◆ Surveyed EPA staff about technical assistance offered by the Agency to communities.

### *Highlights of Workgroup Recommendations to EPA Management*

#### *Recommendations Targeted for EPA Staff*

- ◆ Reaffirm EPA's commitment to provide technical assistance that serves the needs of all community members, and ensure a community's technical assistance needs are considered early in the community engagement process.
- ◆ Improve outreach and education within EPA and throughout other federal agencies about the various technical assistance programs.
- ◆ Develop best practices for establishing productive/constructive relationships between site teams and the technical assistance recipient and technical advisor.
- ◆ Increase awareness within EPA of outside organizations and universities that provide technical assistance, and identify partnering opportunities.

#### *Recommendations Targeted for Technical Assistance Recipients*

- ◆ Create a web-based compilation of OSWER technical assistance programs.
- ◆ Develop a letter of agreement between EPA and the community to set expectations for the organization receiving the technical assistance.
- ◆ Identify best practices that technical assistance recipients have used for informing and communicating with the broader community about the information they receive.
- ◆ Develop best practices for identifying and working with a technical advisor.
- ◆ Identify opportunities both within EPA and outside of EPA to assist organizations seeking technical assistance in building organizational capacity.

#### *Recommendations Targeted for Technical Advisors*

- ◆ PA will identify and develop mechanisms to provide information to technical advisors on public participation and technical topic.

## Action 13A – Delivery of Information

### *Purpose of Action 13A*

- ◆ Evaluate how OSWER delivers information and incorporate the framework of right information, in the right place, at the right time into existing guidance, training and Agency outreach efforts.
- ◆ Ensure OSWER community practitioners adopt the workgroup's recommendations to more thoroughly assess their communities and to help them determine the best methods to direct information to its intended audience.
- ◆ Enable all members of EPA project teams to understand and consider delivery of information issues – and communicate consistent messages to the public.
- ◆ Develop a collaborative network with EPA programs, regions, states and tribes to share best practices, training, strategies, issues and concerns related to the delivery of information.

### *Workgroup Approach*

- ◆ Formed a national EPA workgroup with state participation.
- ◆ Identified important sources to conduct a review of past document and recommendations, engaging stakeholders and selected meetings and presentations that involved delivery of information.
- ◆ Provided recommendations to EPA senior management on specific actions and next steps needed to implement delivery of information in guidance, best practices and training.
- ◆ Obtained internal stakeholder input and feedback on recommendations.

### *Highlights of Workgroup Recommendations*

- ◆ **Right Information** – Delivering information that is clear, understandable, and relevant.
- ◆ **Right Place** – Engaging people where they are informed about their community.
- ◆ **Right Time** – Providing information that is timely for engaging community members in the decision-making process.
- ◆ **Capture Best Practices** – It is essential for EPA personnel to have access to best practices, key tools, and innovative ideas for delivering information to remote and at-risk communities.
- ◆ **Update OSWER Guidance** – Guidance already exists for community engagement practitioners and it is far more efficient to develop some broad guidelines that can be appropriately adapted into existing guidance documents.
- ◆ **Community-Centric Training Module** – Develop a community led module for OSWER and Agency personnel on the importance of delivery of information based on a session from the 2011 Community Involvement Training Conference.
- ◆ **Promote a One EPA Approach** – The organizational structure of EPA presents a challenge for many communities that are addressing multiple environmental issues. The reality is most Americans see EPA as a single entity. More and more communities are seeking information that cut across media programs.

## Action 13B – Evaluate Superfund Information Repositories

### *Purpose of Action 13B*

- ◆ Assess the effectiveness of Superfund site information repositories and identify potential barriers and solutions to information delivery, including electronic access/digital divide.
- ◆ Consult with regional staff and visit Superfund site information repositories to gather information regarding the location, content, and nature of information repositories.
- ◆ Examine ways to improve Superfund site information repositories and develop best practices that can be applied across NPL and non-NPL sites to improve information delivery to communities.

### *Workgroup Approach*

- ◆ Surveyed Regional Community Involvement Managers to assess practices and policies for Superfund information repositories.
- ◆ Conducted site visits to 28 Superfund information repositories in five regions.
- ◆ Formed a national EPA workgroup specific to Action 13, Part B consisting of regional and Headquarters staff.
- ◆ Provide recommendations to OSWER senior management on specific actions and next steps needed to improve Superfund information repositories as sources of information.
- ◆ Obtain stakeholder input and feedback on recommendations.

### *Highlights of Workgroup Recommendations to OSWER Management*

- ◆ **Utilize Electronic Repositories:** The recommendations follow a concept of establishing an internet-based or digital repository to serve a broader population and to reduce the strain of maintenance on repository facility staff. An internet-based or electronic repository does not preclude establishing a traditional physical repository, based upon the preference or request of the community. The regional site team should always assess the capacity, resources, and preferences of the specific community to decide whether to maintain an electronic or internet-based repository in lieu of paper copies.
- ◆ **Explore Guidance Changes to Support a Move Toward Electronic Repositories:** Since the passage of CERCLA, the federal government has encouraged electronically-available data. We should explore potential changes to EPA guidance as a way to facilitate the move towards electronic Superfund repositories.
- ◆ **Provide Accessibility to Repository Documents through Superfund Website:** Superfund website(s) should be established with access to electronic copies of all documents found in the traditional paper information repository. In essence, creating a searchable online information repository. Regional practices, staff resources and/or website server capacity could all play a role in determining whether or not this recommendation could be implemented throughout the EPA regions.
- ◆ **Build Capacity with Repository Facility Staff:** Repository facility staff may not have the time or resources to maintain current knowledge about the documents in the repository or specific site information. Creating fact sheets would not only serve to educate the repository facility staff, but also provide basic instructions for community members on how to use the repository, and would be located at the repository.
- ◆ **Produce Documents Compatible with a Paperless Repository:** Information repositories established at new sites, and those in the pre-Record of Decision (ROD) stage of the Superfund process, should consider producing site documents compatible with a paperless repository.
- ◆ **Assess Repositories for Order and Completeness:** For paper-based repositories, we recommend a structured assessment process to ensure repository order and completeness. We suggest a bi-annual

assessment of the repository. However, this assessment may occur more frequently, recognizing that assessment schedules will be site-specific. At the least, regions should confirm the contact information and location for all current repositories.

- ◆ ***Explore Options to Remove Physical Repositories When Site Cleanup is Complete:*** There is currently no guidance referencing the ability to remove an information repository from a site after any given period of time. There are many considerations on this issue, including how to address sites with extensive operation and maintenance plans such as long-term institutional controls or on-going Five Year Reviews.

## Action 14 - Community Engagement Training

### *Purpose of Action 14*

- ◆ Develop a community engagement training strategy for EPA personnel involved in waste management and cleanup activities.
- ◆ Ensure that OSWER project teams have the right mix of skills to meaningfully and authentically involve communities and stakeholders in waste and cleanup program processes.
- ◆ Enable all members of OSWER project teams to understand and consider community knowledge, needs, and concerns – and communicate consistent messages to the public.
- ◆ Update and compile community engagement best practices.

### *Workgroup Approach*

- ◆ Formed a national cross-OSWER/regional workgroup.
- ◆ Identified important competencies and skills needed for community engagement.
- ◆ Cataloged existing training courses used by OSWER Program Offices and regions.
- ◆ Provide draft recommendations to EPA senior management on specific actions and next steps needed to implement a comprehensive training program and collaborative network.
- ◆ Obtain stakeholder input and feedback on draft recommendations.

### *Highlights of Draft Recommendations and Next Steps*

- ◆ **Job Functions:** Work with regional managers and corresponding human resource leads to identify key job positions that require community engagement skills and knowledge, and adjust related job descriptions, hiring processes, performance standards and professional development plans to reflect community engagement competencies as appropriate.
- ◆ **Encourage Holistic Approach:** Training should encourage project managers and teams to look at other, non-project related environmental exposures and stressors that may affect the community – and work with other environmental programs dealing with those issues to present a holistic view of environmental exposures to local communities.
- ◆ **One Site, One Team:** Training should include One Site, One Team practices for EPA project teams to enable consistent community engagement planning, delivery of information and understanding of community issues.
- ◆ **Train on Core Competencies:** Complete a more detailed analysis of available training to ensure that community engagement core competencies and key principles are part of the comprehensive training curriculum and if not, address training gaps as needed.
- ◆ **Level of Training:** Identify who and to what extent community engagement training is delivered for key personnel and project teams: what level of training is needed, what courses should be required, and how often should training occur.
- ◆ **OSWER-Wide Training Strategy:** Develop an OSWER-wide training strategy to effectively deliver community engagement training, including engagement with tribal communities, and leverage available funding, OSWER and regional training programs, and contract vehicles.
- ◆ **Share Information:** Develop a community engagement network with EPA programs, regions, states and tribes to share good practices, training, strategies, issues and concerns related to community engagement. The network should be accessible by waste and cleanup program staff for general and site specific questions.

## Appendix D. Progress Report Corrections

*The following table is provided to represent corrections made to the Progress Report. The Progress Report is not updated to track future actions, but rather is corrected in the case of presenting erroneous information.*

<b>Version</b>	<b>Correction</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>v.1.1</b>	The July 2011 Progress Report incorrectly indicated that a "compendium of best practices" will be developed as part of Action 6: CERCLA Enforcement Involving Federal Facilities. The "compendium of best practices" will be developed under Action 5: Community Engagement Policies and Activities related to Enforcement. The Progress Report was corrected.	Page 11	August 31, 2011