

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to membership on the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). This handbook was developed to aid you, the LEPC member, in fulfilling your duties and responsibilities as mandated by the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act, also known as EPCRA. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), other federal agencies, state agencies, and the local chemical industry are working together with communities to make EPCRA effective. However, the responsibility for EPCRA's success rests with the LEPCs, who form the link between citizens, industry, and government.

LEPCs are in the best position to make EPCRA work because being composed of local citizens, they are most familiar with hazards in their communities. Also, since response to incidents occurs first with local response forces (many of whom are LEPC members), LEPCs have a unique expertise to assist local governments in developing and reviewing hazardous materials response plans.

This handbook is not a regulation, but a summary of current policy and best practices concerning the LEPC's role, responsibilities, proper implementation of EPCRA, and its relationship to the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC). Of course, the complete EPCRA should be referenced when making decisions concerning LEPC activities. The complete act is at attachment X.

Please direct any inquiries to your county director/coordinator of Emergency Management, or the South Carolina Emergency Management Division at 2779 Fish Hatchery Road, West Columbia, S.C. 29172, telephone: 803-737-8500, fax: 803-737-8570.