

WHAT IS ATSDR?

ATSDR is the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, a federal public health agency. ATSDR is part of the Public Health Service in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. ATSDR is not a regulatory agency like the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Created by Superfund legislation in 1980, ATSDR's mission is to prevent exposure and adverse human health effects and diminished quality of life associated with exposure to hazardous substances from waste sites, unplanned releases, and other sources of pollution present in the environment. Through its programs—including surveillance, registries, health studies, environmental health education, and applied substance-specific research—and by working with other federal, state, and local government agencies, ATSDR acts to protect public health.

WHAT IS A CAP?

ATSDR is evaluating the possible public health impact of environmental contamination in your area. To help, ATSDR may form a Community Assistance Panel, or CAP. The CAP is a way for the community to participate directly in ATSDR's evaluation and make sure community concerns are addressed in any ATSDR report.

The CAP will assist ATSDR by sharing community concerns and health information. ATSDR will assist the CAP and the community in understanding technical environmental and health information and public health decisions. The CAP will not direct ATSDR's activities. Instead, CAP members will work with ATSDR to gather and review community health concerns, provide information on how people might have been or might now be exposed to hazardous substances, and inform ATSDR on ways to involve the community in its activities.

The CAP will usually meet once a month—but meetings may be more or less often, as needed. Meetings will generally last 1-3 hours. ATSDR cannot reimburse for expenses or pay panel members for participating. All CAP meetings are open to the public, and everyone who comes to meetings will have an opportunity to speak.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE CAP?

ATSDR will choose CAP members who:

- Are at least 18 years of age
- Reflect area residents' various viewpoints, as ATSDR understands them
- Have understanding or knowledge of the site, the contaminants of concern, and/or the community's health concerns
- Are permanent residents of the affected area

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BEING A CAP MEMBER?

If you are interested in serving on a CAP in your community, please contact the ATSDR Community Involvement Team.

Fact sheets are available on Public Health Assessments and other ATSDR activities. If you want to know more about ATSDR, or if you have health concerns or information to share about ways people might have been or might now be exposed to hazardous substances, please contact the ATSDR Community Involvement Team, visit the ATSDR web site, or call the ATSDR toll-free information line.

Community Involvement Team
ATSDR - Division of Health Assessment
and Consultation
1600 Clifton Road, NE (E56)
Atlanta, Georgia 30333

ATSDR web site: <http://atsdr1.atsdr.cdc.gov>:8080/

ATSDR information line: (888) 42-ATSDR, that's
(888) 422-8737