

**NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND CHEMICAL EXPOSURES
CHEMICAL EMERGENCIES**

**Meeting No. 7 Summary
Teleconference
June 22, 2010**

Objectives:

- Hear National Conversation updates
- Review subgroup progress and draft documents, focusing on discussion of actionable recommendations and specific next steps
- Discuss overall tasks, timelines, and approach for continuing to develop and finalize *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* report for discussion at August 10 in-person meeting
- Decide on next steps

Upcoming Meeting or Call	When and Where	Suggested Agenda Items
Eighth <i>Chemical Emergencies Work Group</i> meeting	Tuesday, August 10, 2010, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. EDT Centers for Disease Control and Prevention— Washington offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and refine draft <i>Chemical Emergencies Work Group</i> report • Developing <i>Chemical Emergencies Work Group</i> for finalizing and submitting the draft <i>Chemical Emergencies Work Group</i> report to the <i>Leadership Council</i>

I. Action Items

Training Subgroup	By whom	By When
Hold a subgroup conference call on or around July 6, 2010	All subgroup members	July 7, 2010
Review comments and feedback received and share revised subgroup report	All subgroup members	July 2, 2010
Systems Subgroup	By whom	By When
Share language on recommendations regarding an ombudsman and training competencies related to green chemistry	Paul Orum	July 7, 2010 <i>(completed)</i>
Work Group Leadership		
Post new milestones and timeline document to shared project management site and share with <i>Chemical Emergencies Work Group</i> via e-mail	Montrece Ransom	July 7, 2010
Begin compiling the work of both subgroups into draft <i>Chemical Emergencies Work Group</i> report	Ransom	July 2, 2010
Brainstorm and invite <i>Chemical Emergencies Work Group</i> members to serve on drafting subgroup	Ransom, Jennifer Peyser, and Andrea	July 12, 2010

	Kidd Taylor	
Convene a call of the drafting subgroup	Ransom, Peyser, and Taylor	July 20, 2010

II. Meeting Summary

1) Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Jennifer Peyser, Work Group (WG) facilitator, welcomed members. She advised that each member should have in front of them a copy of the agenda and the two subgroup draft documents. Jen reviewed and finalized the agenda, and conducted roll call.

Jen advised that the goal for the call is to look at the progress of the subgroups, with a particular focus on emerging recommendations. Following today's call, the WG will need to pull the pieces into a single draft WG report.

Montrece Ransom, NCEH/ATSDR staff to the WG, offered an update on the June 1st Leadership Council (LC) meeting. She advised the group that the timeframe for the project has been slightly shortened, and she agreed to share the revised timeline with the WG via email and the shared project site. Montrece also provided an overview of the LC advice to the WG on its emerging recommendations. She pointed out the following as important feedback for the WG:

- 1) Consider the inclusion of all phases of a chemical emergency, including what to do when an emergency ends.
- 2) Consider floods, fires, oil well blow-outs, etc. as chemical emergencies
- 3) Given limited resources, consider ways to integrate the varying preparedness training that currently exists for infectious diseases, and other threats
- 4) Consider transportation related chemical emergencies, given that the *Chemical Emergencies Work Group's* emerging recommendations are facility oriented
- 5) Consider recommendations toward a general reduction of chemical materials and the prevention of chemical emergencies

2) Update from the Capacity Building and Training Subgroup

Wanda Lizak Welles, New York State Department of Health, subgroup co-lead, gave an overview of the subgroup work thus far. The subgroup had its last meeting by teleconference on June 4, and the subgroup members agreed to draft portions of the draft document. Subgroup member Betsy Kagey, Georgia Division of Public Health, coordinated all of the pieces submitted into one document. Kagey provided a brief overview of the subgroup draft document.

Kagey noted that there are currently five recommendations from this subgroup. The focus has been on first responders, who seem to get the least consistent training.

Recommendation 1: Identify and communicate basic common knowledge and competencies to responding organizations and agencies. Better communicate prevention, planning, response, and recovery coordination among all responders.

Questions and Discussion

General Discussion

This recommendation focuses the development of a *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* “bootcamp.” Many different sources of training are available, but they are not communicated well or consistently.

Recommendation 2: Develop a user-friendly planning tool for toxicologic hazard and vulnerability analysis (HVA) for local level planning and response. Disseminate and train.

Recommendation 3: Create...“a cadre of trained and experienced emergency support function No. 8 (ESF No. 8) planners and responders that will improve emergency operational capabilities and better integrate the tiers of private sector and government responses to domestic public health emergencies.”

Recommendation 4: Define/develop a consensus on which standards to use for Threshold Limit Values (TVL), Lower Exposure Limits (LEL), Permissible Exposures Limits (PEL), and Reference Exposure Levels (REL).

Questions and Discussion

General Discussion

This recommendation focuses on the differing standards that exist and the confusion that results as to which standard to use during a chemical emergency. *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* members noted that the problem is complex and would be dependent on a deployable monitoring program and equipment and on linking the findings to action. The measurements should be useful to determine what type of preparedness or response efforts are needed. *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* members noted that OSHA has standards, but NIOSH standards are more conservative and are used as reference numbers. The decision to choose how a standard is selected may need to consider legal factors. This issue is not the *Chemical Emergencies Work Group's* to solve, but it is a point worth thinking about. *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* members also noted that this issue may have appeared in the ASTHO Report. One member pointed out that in his experience he sees two aspects of protection levels: one for the responder, who goes into these emergency environments often, and one for the general public, which does not frequently come into contact with these types of environments. The more strenuous the protection level, the more inconvenient to the general public. Also, in many cases, the monitoring equipment is there, but professionals don't know where or how to apply those levels.

Recommendation 5: Remember that all emergencies occur at local level and need to be tied to real resources, and that local response teams need to be trained and ready for what they can reasonably expect to respond to.

Questions and Discussion

General Discussion

Jennifer Peyser, RESOLVE facilitator, asked subgroup members if they feel this set of recommendations is complete. Members agreed that at least one additional higher-level review is critical. Peyser asked the group to make sure that they are covering the themes listed in the *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* charge and the components of the Final *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* Report Template. Welles noted that most themes are covered, but members need to apply themselves to complete the project.

Chemical Emergencies Work Group members pointed out that the subgroup recommendations focus heavily on training first responders, but getting that group on track will lead to a much more successful response to any chemical emergency. Welles noted that the subgroup plans to have a conference on July 6 or 7, and she encouraged subgroup members to participate.

Chemical Emergencies Ombudsperson and the use of Green Technologies toward prevention

Chemical Emergencies Work Group member Paul Orum, NGO Chemical Safety Consultant, noted that the subgroup has done good work, underscoring the importance of having common competencies for first responders. He offered two additional suggestions for either subgroup. First, he recommended an ombudsperson position on the federal level to help break down silos. Second, he supported a recommendation about training competencies related to reducing chemical emergencies by using green technologies. Because “worst-case scenarios” do happen, as evidenced by the 2010 Gulf Coast oil spill, and chemical emergencies can overwhelm a community, prevention needs to be a key element of our work. The *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* was amenable to implementing these suggestions where appropriate.

Synthesizing subgroup materials into one full document

Chemical Emergencies Work Group member Jacque Darbonne, Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services, asked when the two subgroup documents would be merged and by whom. Peyser responded that Ransom will compile them into a document within a week of receipt of the revised documents.

3) Update from Systems and Coordination Subgroup

Peyser led the discussion of this subgroup’s current work product. She provided background on the document that Fleming Fallon, Bowling Green State University, subgroup co-lead, developed for this call, based on language from existing subgroup documents. Fallon stated that he applied those recommendations to the case studies to see if the recommendations mesh with the gaps identified.

Orum suggested making the recommendations more specific and reiterated his two previous potential recommendations for this subgroup. Subgroup member Constance Thomas, South Fulton and Fayette Community Task Force, reminded the group that she had recommended a national clearinghouse that would work much like poison control centers. Connie agreed to resend this recommendation for inclusion in the next iteration of the subgroup draft, along with language from Jacqueline McBride, Love, Peace and Prosperity International, Inc., about working with community and faith-based organizations.

Recommendation No. 1: Work to increase partnerships with academia.

Questions and Discussion

General Discussion

Chemical Emergencies Work Group members acknowledged the importance of partnerships. Learning what happens in the real world, not just in theory, is important for

academia because academics often have little hands-on experience. On the other hand, state and local public health have few research capabilities. So this should be a two-way process.

Who would be the actors? Which agency might lead this effort?

Ransom, encouraged *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* members to think about who the potential actors might be and how this and other recommendations can be made more specific and actionable. She asked to brainstorm on who might be called on to guide the development of such partnerships. Members noted that on the state level, departments of health could lead this. On the local level, local health departments and academic institutions, including community colleges, could jointly take the lead. Members acknowledged that these recommendations need more work. Each recommendation needs an action component and should clearly articulate who would lead the action. For example, one driver might be funding mechanisms. Ransom noted that she a recommendation that says “Request for Applications” or “Proposal” should include language which encourages such partnerships. The *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* did not spend much time reviewing or discussing the remaining recommendations:

Recommendation No. 2: Strive to expand the context of partnerships involving industry.

Recommendation No. 3: Work to improve communications involving several dimensions.

Recommendation No. 4: Change the structure of silos.

Recommendation No. 5: Expand the existing limits that have been imposed.

Recommendation No. 6: Develop sufficient momentum or will to succeed.

Recommendation No. 7: Utilize available resources.

Recommendation No. 8: Compromise.

4) Developing the Work Group Report

Peyser noted that, by our August 10 in-person meeting, the draft final *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* Report should be at a refining stage. Ideally, it should be ready for distribution to the *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* about a week before the in-person meeting. That means in the next month, much progress must be made.

Questions and Discussion

Systems co-chair Darius Sivin, International Union, UAW, let the group know that because of new responsibilities, he must resign as co-chair. Derek Swick, American Petroleum Institute, noted that he would be out of the office until the week of July 19.

5) Next Steps and Assignments

Chemical Emergencies Work Group members agreed to continue reviewing the current document and to email any comments directly to Ransom. The systems subgroup

agreed to hold a conference call within the next week. By COB July 2, Ransom will provide a compiled draft document so that we can start working from one draft report.

6) Adjourn Conference Call

Peyser offered thanks for *Chemical Emergencies Work Group* member attendance and participation, and the call was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

IV. Participation

Members Present:

Jacque Darbonne, Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services
Fleming Fallon, Bowling Green State University
Nancy Hughes, American Nurses Association
Kimberly Jennings, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Betsy Kagey, Georgia Division of Public Health
Maureen Orr, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
Paul Orum, NGO Chemical Safety Consultant
Darius Sivin, International Union, UAW
Syndi Smallwood, Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians
Derek Swick, American Petroleum Institute
Constance Thomas, South Fulton and Fayette Community Task Force
Anthony Tomassoni, Yale University School of Medicine
Wanda Lizak Welles, New York State Department of Health

Regrets:

Bill Benerman, Denver Department of Environmental Health
Nathan Birnbaum, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
John Bresland, U.S. Chemical Safety Board
Susan Cibulsky, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Kathleen Curtis, Clean New York
Scott Deitchman, NCEH/ATSDR *senior liaison*
James Eaton, Maine Health and Environmental Testing Lab
Michael Greenberg, American Academy of Clinical Toxicology
Joseph Hughes, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
James James, American Medical Association
Erik Janus, CropLife America
Todd Jordan, Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Andrea Kidd Taylor, Morgan State University (chair)
Mark Kirk, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Jacqueline McBride, Love, Peace and Prosperity International, Inc.
Susan Palchick, Hennepin County
Clark Phinney, Maine Oxy

Facilitation & Staff Team Present:

Jennifer Peyser, RESOLVE *facilitator*
Montrece Ransom, NCEH/ATSDR *staff*