Why do we have LEPCs?

In October 1986, the Federal (EPA) Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA) was enacted in response to concerns regarding environmental and safety hazards posed by the manufacture, transportation, use and storage of toxic and hazardous chemicals in our communities.

This followed the Bhopal, India tragedy (est. 15,000 killed, hundreds of thousands injured) by a methyl isocyanate gas release at the Union Carbide plant in 1984.

Local planning involving all stakeholders is required to avoid tragedies like Bhopal.

Our communities have a right to know what hazards they face.
In order to implement EPCRA, EPA directed States to create:
- SERCs (CEPC)
- LEPCs

Required reporting from facilities containing above certain quantities of chemicals:
- Chemical inventories
- Spills

Required Planning:
- Facility emergency plans
- Community emergency response plan

Required training & exercises
- To test the facility & community plans

SERC= CEPC (Colorado Emergency Planning Committee)
- Originally a Governor appointed committee
- Currently a Sub-committee of HSAC
- DHSEM & CDPHE Co-chair
- Serves as "one stop" collection point for chemical inventory reporting
- Provides technical assistance to LEPCs
- Provides the annual LEPC Conference
LEPCs designation and membership
- Counties
- Some larger cities
- Some multi-county regions (SLV & SW Colorado)
- Membership: first responders, elected officials, media, PH, medical, non-profits, community members & regulated business community

LEPCs do the “on the ground” work of EPCRA
- Review chemical inventories
- Emergency planning (facility plans & Community plan)
- Educate the public on the hazards as well as what actions they should take in the event of a release
- Receive and review spill notifications & reports
- Provide training and exercise opportunities

Assisting with the collection of Household Hazardous Waste
- Educating the public on hazardous chemicals
- Educating businesses on the dangers of hazardous chemicals
- Providing/attending workshops with the regulated community on the LEPC’s purpose & function
- Provide advice on alternatives for certain high hazard chemicals (i.e. hypochlorite for chlorine gas)
- Review submissions to Planning Department on new construction with HAZMAT implications

Network with the first responder community
Network/partner with the regulated community
Participate in training & exercises related to HAZMAT response
Stay informed on the HAZMAT issues in your community
Why should I participate?

- Provide training to LEPC membership on
  - Solid Waste and proper handling/disposal
  - What not to dispose of as solid waste
  - Waste minimization education

Fran Santagata
Preparedness Program Manager
State of Colorado
DHSEM
Fran.Santagata@state.co.us
720-852-6616