

Minutes for LEPC meeting (2023-06-08 12:38 GMT-6)

- Transcript

Attendees

Cora Phillips, Cora Phillips's Presentation

Transcript

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Cora Phillips: Can everyone online hear me? Okay?

Tammy Gallegos: I can hear you Cora.

Cora Phillips: Wonderful. Thank you so much Tammy. Hi, Tom. We are really excited today to have Tom Daniels and Hannah from the Division of Environmental Quality here to share about the work that they do and how they can support us during disasters, such as the recent wellhead site malfunction that led to the release of natural gas.

Cora Phillips: If you haven't already, there is the sign in sheet in the back to help us make sure we have an updated contact list. If for some reason you weren't included on invite, please let me know that you can be included in the future.

Tom Daniels: Okay, we're all set and ready to go. Thank you so much for having me here. I'm talking as the manager of the Site Assessment and Emergency Response Section. We are also the Utah Department of Environmental Quality, we're under the division that's responsible for mitigation and cleanups. So yeah, we complete the clean up. I brought a member of my staff, Hannah Tremble-Marty, who is our coordinator, and also invited my good friend, Marty McComb, from the EPA. He's an onsite coordinator for the emergency response branch. We do a lot of work together. Cora and I were marginally involved in a natural gas release about a month ago and I kind of told a little bit about what our program does. She's invited us to come here and make a little bit of a presentation and show you what we do and what tools we have to help out local emergency planning committees. I'm going to be up front. I don't have a lot of tools that can be helpful, but the ones I do have aren't being utilized. and the tools. Here we go. So, as I said, right? I represent the site assessment and emergency response section. Hannah Tremble-Marty is our emergency response coordinator. We will go over a little more about what that means. Robin Osterhoudt who couldn't make it, but should be here virtually is our Tier II coordinator. So, here we are. What we're going to go over today is: what is site assessment? How does it fit into the superfund process and what site assessment is and also how it fits into the community right to know program program, and what my sector does to support community right to know. So, site assessment site assessment is the first part of the superfund process. This is where we go out and we actually find sites, facilities, old manufacturing plants - you name it - and determine how contaminated they are and whether they need to be cleaned up and if they do need to be cleaned up, under what program is it going to be best to address the problem. It's the very first part of the superfund process. What is superfund? Environmental program

to address cleaning up hazardous fluids and sites. Secondary goal is involving communities so that they are involved in the remedies and the clean up of the products. It has an emphasis on making responsible parties pay for cleanup both through a tax and also through making the polluters actually pay for the cleanup themselves. Now there's a portion where the federal government does come in and cleanup sites and we don't like to use federal funding to do that. We prefer to have the responsible party pay for it, and then the end goal is to return these polluted properties for use. So really, really quick - this is what the superfund site assessments are: we initially do a discovery or surplus inventory. That's where we go out and look at sites and we determine if this is bad enough that we would need to look at it further or can we walk away? If it's bad enough that we need to look at it further, that allows me to discover. This then allows me to use federal funding to determine how bad the contamination is - who's at risk, what's at risk - and we do what's called a preliminary assessment, which in most cases it's a literary historic study. Now, we look at literature, look at historic records we have from a site and determine what the contaminants were and if there are what we call targets, and then if we determine that there are targets, we will move it to what's called site assessments. If it warrants more investigation we will do that. We are always on the lookout to find what's the best program to have something clean up or does it need to be cleaned up at all. So anytime along this process here we refer them to our voluntary cleanup program which is another state program where landowners and developers come and clean up their properties voluntarily and receive some limited release of liability. I also worked very closely with Marty's group in the emergency response branch or emergency removal branch. They can respond and get the site cleaned up really quickly. They do a lot of really good work. Like Marty said, then targets. Its recommendations are on the National Priority Resource list.

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Those are the big things right now. Right now I think we have 12 active cleanups going on right now. There's one just south of here. You can find them on the SAMs list. It allows us to use Federal funding to address and assess how bad it is. It allows us to go out and discover. The SAMs list keeps track of all of those sites. It was originally called the preliminary assessment where we assess risk. It's a really, really down and dirty, you know, really look to see what's being impacted? It's what we call targets and the targets we're looking for are those that impact the community - environmental targets - is it a sensitive environment such as a drinking water source that could be impacted. Are there any daycares or elementary schools nearby? Is there a community that we are concerned about? It's very broad, if you are looking at it from a distance and trying to pinpoint people at risk. If they are, we do what's called site inspection and that involves some very targeted sampling. It's a very few samples of targeted areas. What we'll actually do is go out and take a look at those targeted areas we've identified in the preliminary assessment and determine if there is a potential of exposure and then at that point we will look at our options. Is it bad enough that it's going to qualify for the National Priorities list? Is this something that we can bring in our experience and do a removal on? Is this something where we can enroll them in the voluntary cleanup program? Quite frankly, most of our sites fall into this category. Or is it going to be designated in what we call "no further remedial action plan (NFRAP)" We use a lot of acronyms in this program. What no further remedial action means is that the site is contaminated, but there is not an established exposure group that's made at risk by the contamination on site. That is something that can change. An example is that we recently has a site that was declared NFRAP at the beginning of my career that due to changes in property use of the population surrounding it we were able to convince Marty's group to come in and do a removal there. So that's good. That's a success for me. I'm pretty proud. So we regularly go back and reevaluate sites that have been NFRAC to determine if that designation is still appropriate and if not, there are avenues that we can follow to address what's going on.

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Tom Daniels: My section also covers the emergency planning and community right to know act, which is why you guys are all here. It's one of our acronyms - EPCRA. The two programs that we manage under EPCRA are a hotline and our Tier II chemical inventory. I'm going to give you a very, very quick overview of both programs. If you do have more questions, particularly about environmental response or emergency response. Hannah is there. She knows it a lot better than I do. She can answer your question much better than me. So for emergency response, we have an environmental incident notification process. We have a hotline. It's 801-536-4123 - right there. You call it anytime, 24/7. We have a roster of duty officers that are available to call and that it's not going to call-center. It's going to people like me and Hannah. We keep our phones in reach all the time and for the record we are probably not going to be completely coherent at 1 o'clock in the morning. Duty officers are not first responders. Our job is to get the pertinent information about an environmental incident and turn it around to the people who need to know that information so they can respond to the incident. Generally, after a spill, there's a 24-hour period before it, you know, 24 hour grace period before it needs to be called to this hotline. Usually, if it's something really big, the first responders are already inside and have already addressed it. We are kind of, you know, just the last part of the process. Sometimes we're one of the first people that it's called, and in that case, you know, we try to get the information out to whatever agencies we think need to know. We've got a pretty good relationship with the State Fire Marshalls. We push this information onto the local health departments. We push it out to emergency management teams, fire departments, emergency rooms, etc. We also have our Tier II chemical inventory. I don't know how familiar you are with Tier II chemical reporting. Any facility that has these chemicals on site should be reporting what they have on site to the Tier II facility database - gas stations, grocery stores, you know a lot of those will have some chemical that they will have in exceedance of what called reportable quantities and you can get that information on those reportable quantities through the EPA website. Our responsibility is to receive, process and manage these Tier II facility reports so that if a LEPC or first responder or emergency management team needs to get a hold of that information, we've got Tier II reports going back probably 20 years. We also sit in what's all this emergency response phase and the LEPCs are kind of involved in that. We, DEQ, co-chair it with the Utah Department of Public Safety.

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It's our division of environmental quality that's responsible for remediation that generally sits in on those community meetings in conjunction with the Division of Emergency Management. We have quarterly meetings and work to figure out the best way to respond and help those communities be prepared for response. I told you that I have a couple tools. One of those tools is, of course, the entire cycle of the site assessment process and determine if they pose a risk or not. Some of those tools are like sledgehammers - there are some legal liabilities with discovering a site and bringing in the Federal government, but once I have discovered a site it allows me to bring in the removal branches or other resources that allow that site to be assessed to see if it's a risk or not. From the after side of things, we have an interactive map and I mentioned before the incident spill database and our spill notifications system and our Tier II database. So from the DEQ website, you have an interactive map. This is a huge resource. It has basically every site that is being regulated by the department of environmental quality. Now, I've only posted stuff up here that's under my division, the environmental response and remediation division but there's many other divisions - Division of Water Quality, Air Quality. They have tabs on this website and you can find any facility that we regulate. Now, what I think is probably going to be the most

important to you all from this tab here on the site is that you can pull up any site that we have done a site assessment on, all the environmental incidents that have ever been reported, and all the Tier II facilities. So this is a quick and dirty search of all the items for Grand County. We did a quick and dirty search and this is what we came up with: you can see that there are four circle sites and you can actually click on those to see what they are. The green dots are environmental incident sites. There are 86 of those and 77 Tier II facilities. In Grand County, the majority of those Tier II facilities happen to involve extraction, either oil or natural gas or wellhead sites. Some of those happen to do with uranium extraction and some of those are gas stations and stuff like that. I did not do a full breakdown of all of the facilities that are in Grand County. This is a very powerful tool because you can click on any one of these dots and pull up information for the site assessments - the title, the UTM, this is the number that is tracked in the Federal spill database and where it's located. For each of these layers, you can do the same thing and it will give you information for these incidents on the interactive map and in our spill database.

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Tom Daniels: If you click on the dot here you can see that this was a natural gas incident in Moab. Cora and I were talking about this a few weeks ago.

[gap in recording] questions from audience, contact information

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Tom Daniels: From the site inspection, we can determine if it's a risk or not. It's not a fast process, but it is a process. And like I said, once I've discovered a site, then I can start using federal money to determine if it's an issue. And once again, thank you very much for inviting us. We're looking forward to being involved in the meeting after this. I'm particularly interested in that.

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Cora Phillips: Alright, Thank you so much. Thank you so much everyone online. We had a little bit of a technical difficulty, but we should be back up online now.

Daiko Abe: Alright, really quick - my name is Daiko Abe and I'm in the second meeting, which is the two hour meeting. That's why we have provided refreshments to give you energy all the way through. This is also a public meeting, and one of the requirements of the hazard mitigation plan is not just to engage the various stakeholders, the communities, but also provide a public and open opportunity to provide input. So we just want to take the opportunity, very quickly, to include this portion - the LEPC meeting - as part of the public element. One of the things that we have out in the Internet space right now is this survey which we are inviting the general public to participate in. It's typically what we would do is a very mitigation specific survey but most of the public could probably care less about mitigation, they don't even know what that is. So what we started is we've developed a broad 30 plus question community preparedness survey that basically goes way above and beyond normally what's asked for this mitigation plan, but it gives us insights into preparedness, into resilience, expectations - as far as if an evacuation were needed, what would the compliance participation be, reasons why they wouldn't evacuate. We're not suggesting anyone would need to evacuate, we just want to provide a scenario. We ask questions about hazards, risk ranking, and so forth. So a really good opportunity for us to capture information and they will incorporate

additional mitigation projects, more geared for public education, outreach, and so forth. So if you could take the survey, but also push it out and share that on social media with your, if you have a list serves and share that out via Facebook Twitter, that's a bunch of other social media sites that are available to you, but please, please promote that, and the information we collect is very, very interesting, and we'll support Cora and her prepare. So prepare.community/Grand, it's a short URL that will direct to one much longer. If you didn't sign in, especially if they're not paying for the second portion, if you could, please make sure you sign in - all this information goes toward getting us a FEMA hazard mitigation approved plan. So a couple of different reasons why the mitigation plan is so important for Grand County. It's specifically any sustaining action taken to reduce or eliminate long term risk to life and property as result of an event. So, it's anything we use before disaster, after disaster, anything, we use a lesson the impact. So, in our second, we will talk about mitigation projects, give you an opportunity to review the counties previous mitigation projects and then come up with any new mitigation initiatives. These structural nature. They can be nonstructural. The mitigation plan is really here for natural hazards. So FEMA requires that every five years, every County, and every incorporated jurisdiction in the country participate in the hazard mitigation plan. This enables the county and all the participating jurisdictions to be eligible for pre-disaster and post-disaster mitigation funding. So we better wonder what happens when the President declares a disaster. What does that mean? An influx of Federal and state resources come in, but it also provides an influx of mitigation grants that come in to help in the rebuilding process. Having a mitigation plan that's been approved by FEMA is a criteria to receive the millions of dollars of funding that potentially could help you in your rebuilding process. It also enables you to go after pre-disaster mitigation dollars whether it's a stormwater issue or mitigating flooding. We'll talk about some of those specifics later on, but this plan is really, really important because it enables you to be eligible for these dollars. So that's why this plan is so important. Your plan, you need the final approval before and you need to complete the federal requirements and mandates to be eligible for these federal dollars. You have to have a plan to be eligible for federal dollars in the event. That's why the hazard mitigation plan piece is so important.

If you look at the mitigation guidance sheet that was released with all the different regulations they just came out with new requirements as of April 19th 2023, which made these requirements even more stringent. So there's a lot of things that we're going to be asking you to do throughout this process and that none of it is just things to do for fun. It's all part of helping to ensure you have a FEMA approved mitigation plan. There's a number of different things that we have to demonstrate and provide in the plan. We do a very comprehensive risk assessment and identify mitigation strategies and projects. There's a plan adoption, plan approval process that we go through as well. And this is one of those unique plans that goes to a state review and then the Feds do the exact same review, based on what the state review so it goes through a two step review process. And again, once you pass the FEMA requirements, then you have a FEMA approved hazard mitigation plan. So I won't go into a lot of specifics in this setting. Some of you will be participating in the second meeting but the law stipulates that we address all natural hazards. That's what the law stipulates. That's what this plan has to address, all natural hazards. You will find in the plan that we can state that hurricanes do not occur here. We actually have to state why we are not addressing all those natural hazards. You can also have certain non-mandated hazards that are not defined as natural hazards. We took some direction from our kick-off meeting in which certain non-natural hazards were identified. So all the non-natural and man-made hazards that we discuss in our next session and input received in our kickoff meeting - that's all considered additional hazards in the mitigation plan. We set the hazard mitigation plan goals, that's a FEMA requirement.

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Overarching vision, for the priorities of Grand county, specifically life safety and property protection. It includes additional elements that speak to the new guidance and speak to the priorities of your county. I won't go through those in detail, but we have eight goals that are building off what you had last time, in 2018. So, as far as the project schedule goes, the survey is out there now and any assistance promoting the survey can be super helpful. We're doing our big workshop today. We anticipate our next meeting will be in July and we will have a chance to review the draft with the folks in this room and then we anticipate having the plan approved and sent to FEMA. FEMA will send you a letter stating that your plan is approved pending adoption. At that point, we will ask the County and the City of Moab to adopt the plan and at that point you will have a FEMA approved hazard mitigation plan. The process is quite extensive and your participation is super important to ensure that we are not missing anything - especially projects that you want implemented here in Grand County for your respective communities. That will help mitigate disasters. High level overview: for those of you who are staying for the second session, we will go a lot deeper and you will have time to provide feedback on mitigation.

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Cora Phillips: Just making sure - we had a couple people roll in - if you didn't sign in, in the back, please do. Those online, if you could put your name in the chat and also your email that would be appreciated.

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Cora Phillips: A couple of updates: As far as programming, we did have some recent training, we did a flood tabletop exercise and then Tammy, you have the airport tabletop exercise yesterday, would you like to speak?

Tammy Howland: Over all, I think it went well. We didn't quite get the turnout that we wanted. Our original date got postponed. Overall it went well. I think everytime we get together and talk about this stuff it's helpful.

Cora Phillips: With the flood tabletop exercise that we did, one of the things that we found is just building in additional layers to our contacts so it's 3-deep versus two individuals and also having a 24-hour contact for if the flood happens on the weekend or after five o'clock. So we're working through that process now and it is to the state for approval. We had a lot of help from the Army Corps of Engineers in developing that flood emergency action plan. We also had an ICS 300 course that lots of our folks were able to go though, so that's exciting. For our senior and elected officials we had a 402 course that Rani was able to attend - so thank you Rani for coming. Shan was there too and Lex. We're doing a lot of community outreach now. Some of you that are in Grand County, you probably received that postcard in the mail for alert sense. We're also trying to push that through social media, so that we're encouraging folks to sign up and subscribe to our alerting system. If you haven't done that, it's GrandCountyAlerts.org or you can download the MyAlerts app on your cell phone and customize your alert settings, for different locations and what to be alerted for. We also had Christopher Wilkowske from USGS. He presented at Grand County Library on stream gages - how they work and how to find that data and how you can set up water alerts on your phone so you can receive alerts on your phone when the gauge reads like a certain CFS or certain stage, or so many feet. So that was great. We also had the National Weather Service come and present in this room - the weather spotter course for the public. So yes, we've been pretty busy. And then we have a

PIO group established, so it's a collection - so Andy back there, Lex, myself. There's a lot of different agencies that are represented on that. So if there is an imminent threat to public safety, you can alert each other and blast that message on the respective accounts. We are also working on grant funding. That's going really well. We should hear back from some of those sometime in September, which is really exciting. Any questions with that or any of the public outreach that has occurred so far? Excellent. As far as spill reports, we've had a recent wellhead site function that led to the release of natural gas, Tom referred to it a little bit earlier, up at White Wash Sand Dunes. Our alert system was utilized. We decided to elect the level of IPAWS where the alert goes to all cell phones because there were a lot of tourists in our area for Jeep Safari weekend or Easter weekend, so that alert was successful. And we did notify DEQ and that's how I got in touch with Tom and Hannah and we scheduled this training afterwards. So I could learn more about the Division of Environmental Quality and you all could as well. And they mentioned the Tier II reporting - there is that portal to submit those. You can also submit those to me as well. And that's kind of how this meeting got established so the public could learn more about the hazardous chemicals in our area and ensure that we have a response plan for that.

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Cora Phillips: We do not have any immediate training opportunities to announce.

Cora Phillips: Do we have anyone that would like to provide an update from their organization? We can do a roundtable. Tammy, did you have something else from the airport?

Tammy Howland: We have four new workers and are working on maintaining our compliance standards. We are planning for full scale exercise in the future.

Cora Phillips: Anyone else that would like to provide an update from their organization?

Presentation: I guess I will introduce myself, I'm Paul Christensen. I'm your State Fire Marshal. I fyou need support or hazmat training let me know. I brought some business cards to pass out. A little background on me: 13 years in the fire department, hazmat tech, and I teach many hazmat and other classes throughout the state.

Cora Phillips: Thank you.

Cora Phillips's Presentation: Anyone else? Excellent. Well, we have Five more minutes. Is there? Anything went online that would like to provide an update. Thank you all for coming. Our next LEPC is in a place scheduled for August 24th and which I believe is a Thursday again in person. Thank you.

Meeting ended after 00:52:32 🖐️