United States Environmental Protection Agency

Summary of Actions

Mossville Community
Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana **October 2010**

The community of Mossville is situated in an unincorporated area near the cities of Lake Charles, Westlake and Sulphur, Louisiana. The EPA has worked with the community of Mossville and the Mossville Environmental Action Now (MEAN) group since 1997 regarding a number of environmental and public health, as well as other environmental justice concerns in the community. MEAN and the Advocates for Environmental Human Rights (AEHR) published a report by Subra Company in July 2007 that criticized the work done by ATSDR and EPA, utilizing Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) data to link industrial releases to exposure in the Mossville community. In May 2009, MEAN published a health survey of 69 individuals living in Mossville. This report discusses possible links between health outcomes and industrial releases. In March 2010 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights accepted a human rights complaint filed by AEHR on behalf of people living in Mossville, Louisiana.

In response to concerns expressed by the Mossville community, the EPA committed to the following actions:

- investigate the long term legacy of contamination;
- conduct an assessment of Mossville's drinking water system;
- work with the state and industries to limit the occurrences of flaring and accidental releases;
- work with the community and ATSDR to address health concerns, and access to health care; and
- improve awareness and availability of data and information.

The EPA is working with numerous community representatives and state and federal agencies to make significant strides toward completing these actions. To date, the Agency:

- completed a Superfund Preliminary Assessment, February 2010, and collected samples from soil and tap water, April and August 2010.
- conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the Mossville water system, April 2010; and preliminary results that the water is safe to drink and that the water system needs upgrading were shared with the community, August 2010.
- completed Risk Management Plan inspections at PPG Industries, Inc., Conoco-Phillips Refinery, Louisiana Pigment, Calcasieu Refining Company, Westlake Petrochemical, Sasol, and Firestone in 2010.

In addition, ATSDR reached out to the community through a health promotion campaign. The campaign entitled, "Its All About Your Health," was conducted in Mossville from March 13 – April 10, 2010. ATSDR also is working with the community to provide other consulting and educational services available through the American College of Medical Toxicology and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). On August 21, 2010, ATSDR presented and discussed options and cost for access to health care with the community.

EPA continues to work with the Mossville community to honor the Agency's commitments. To help the community become healthier and more sustainable, the Agency created a comprehensive approach, consisting of the following four focus areas:

- Improve Access to Healthcare - Develop a partnership with industry and Community Based Organizations (CBO's) to improve access to health care for industrial workers and for the community.

- Secure Safe, Clean and Viable Drinking Water - Develop a program to improve access to safe drinking water. The Mossville Comprehensive Water System Evaluation uncovered some issues that require administrative, fiscal and operational improvements. For example, additional operators are needed to assist with the day to day operations.

- Ensure Safe Air Quality - Partner with industry and the state to facilitate better communications at the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) level and to perform air monitoring to document the safe operations of the facilities.

- Determine the Sustainability of the Mossville Community – Determine the interest and develop support for an expansion of green-space or a buffer zone around the industry to afford residents the opportunity to sell their property.

EPA will review information and revise its approach from time to time, as deemed necessary, to ensure the community's concerns are being effectively addressed through a holistic, multimedia approach.

For more information…

Sam Coleman, Director
Superfund Division
214.665.3110 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)

Brenda Cook, Site Assessment Manager
U.S. EPA (6SF-TR)
214.665.7436 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)

Bill Little, Community Involvement Coordinator/SEE
U.S. EPA (6SF-VO)
214.665.8131 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)

George Pettigrew
ATSDR (6SF-T)
214.665.8361 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)

Information Repository
McNeese University
Frazar Memorial Library
Government Document Department/4th Floor
4205 Ryan Street
Lake Charles, LA 70609
337.475.5740

To have your name and address added to the Mossville site mailing list call 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free).

For press inquiries, please contact the Region 6 Press Office at 214.665.2200.