Timeline of Government Actions

Mossville, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana

June-December 1997: Mossville Environmental Action Now (MEAN) appears before the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council during its semi-annual meetings.

July 1998: Calcasieu Parish (Mossville) residents meet with Deputy Regional Administrator at Region 6 Offices to discuss their concerns.

December 1998: Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) conducts Dioxin Exposure Investigation based on sampling of blood from 28 individuals after confirming that 3 of 11 Calcasieu Parish residents in an earlier sample had elevated dioxin levels.

March 1999: The first quarterly meeting between EPA and Calcasieu Parish residents.

1999-2001: EPA begins an estuary-wide Superfund investigation that included Bayou Verdine and Bayou d'Inde. EPA also completed detailed compliance inspections of major facilities, including public water and industrial facilities.

April 14, 1999: Public availability session and public meeting held in Mossville hosted by ATSDR, EPA, and state agencies to collect community health concerns.

May 1999: Fact sheet mailed to the Mossville community with the results of the ATSDR Mossville Exposure Investigation.

June, 1999: EPA fact sheet mailed to the Mossville community with the results of dioxin testing of the Mossville public water system, which was conducted in direct response to the dioxin blood survey. Dioxin was below health-based standards.

June 3, 1999: Meeting with Mossville residents and ATSDR, EPA, and state agencies to discuss the formation of the Mossville Public Health Response Workgroup.

June 17, 1999: Follow-up meeting of the Mossville Public Health Response Workgroup to establish sub-workgroups to focus on specific areas of community health concerns (Environmental Characterization Group, Demographics Group, Health Data Group, Health Education/Outreach Group, Media Group).

January 14, 2000: Mailing to 211 medical providers in Calcasieu Parish Medical Community about the results of the Dioxin Exposure Investigation.

2000-2001: EPA, LDEQ, and industry conduct pilot study to monitor for 104 volatile organic compounds and 24 targeted dioxin and dioxin-like compounds with additional air toxics monitors at five locations throughout Calcasieu Parish. One of the monitors was located directly in Mossville.

May 16, 2000: Meeting hosted by ATSDR, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDHH), and Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) with the Mossville community to discuss the next steps in ATSDR's Dioxin Exposure Investigation.

June 20, 2000: ATSDR presents findings of the Dioxin Exposure Investigation to the Mossville community at the request of MEAN.

November 15-16, 2000: Meeting with Mossville community members and stakeholders to discuss past and proposed public health actions by ATSDR.

2001: ATSDR reassesses its Exposure Assessment findings.

March 28, 2001: ATSDR conducts briefings with elected officials, media availability session, and a public meeting to discuss ATSDR plans for further blood dioxin testing in Calcasieu Parish.

January 15-17, 2002: ATSDR hosts community meetings to present information about 2002 Dioxin Study.

2002: LDHH develops a Residential Needs Assessment to determine the community's environmental and public health concerns. LDHH also uses the assessment to determine methods for communicating information to residents.

2002: Pursuant to a consent decree arising out of *Sierra Club v. EPA* (2002), EPA approves the Calcasieu TMDL document, which imposed sampling and reporting requirements and introduced goals for the reduction of copper, mercury, and other pollutants in Bayou Verdine and the Calcasieu River.

2002: ConocoPhillips and Sasol North America begin to address contamination in Bayou Verdine pursuant to CERCLA administrative orders issued by EPA.

2003: LDHH becomes the primary agency for implementing health education activities in the Mossville community in place of ATSDR.

April 29, 2003: ATSDR Assistant Director and Staff meet with MEAN at the Mount Zion Baptist Church, Mossville, to discuss the Dioxin Exposure Investigation and ATSDR assisting Mossville in obtaining a health clinic.

April 29 and May 1, 2003: ATSDR conducts public meetings about the 2001 Dioxin Exposure Investigation and the 2002 Dioxin Study of Calcasieu and Lafayette Parishes.

2002-2004: A time-critical action for removal of high levels of ethylene dichloride in the sediments in Bayou Verdine is conducted by Conoco-Phillips and Sasol under an Administrative Order issued by EPA.

2003-Present: A non-time-critical action to address sediment contamination in the lower reaches of Bayou Verdine is developed through an Engineering Evaluation/Cost Assessment prepared by Conoco-Phillips and Sasol under an Administrative Order issued by EPA.

September 2004: The Calcasieu Community Health and Environmental Forum is held at McNeese University to learn about the possible causes of anencephaly and other neural-tube birth defects. Dr. Juan Manuel Acuana, of the Centers Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), states that "there is no factual evidence that supports a correlation between birth defects and industrial toxins."

May 2, 2005: The second Calcasieu Community Health and Environmental Forum on Anencephaly is held at McNeese University.

September 2005: Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

March 15-16, 2006: ATSDR public meeting regarding follow-up Dioxin Exposure Investigation and the parish-wide dioxin studies.

May 2006: ATSDR releases its studies of blood dioxin levels in Calcasieu Parish and Mossville.

July 2006: EPA completes time-critical recovery work in Calcasieu Parish.

October 9, 2006: LDHH site visit to determine how many residents remained in the Mossville area following the 2005 Gulf Coast Hurricanes in order to revise their communication strategy and to determine current populations' needs.

December 2006-January 2007: LDHH Health Educator and MEAN president and counsel discuss communication plans for Mossville and possibility of holding meetings to address residents' concerns.

February 13, 2007: LDHH participates in the LDEQ Office of Environmental Services' "Listening Session" to strengthen the agencies' working relationships with communities. MEAN, Calcasieu League for Environmental Action Now (CLEAN) and other community groups also attend and provide LDHH with their environment-related health concerns and how the agency could collaborate with the public.

2008: EPA issues the Vessel General Permit, introducing effluent limits and monitoring and reporting requirements for vessel discharges.

July 2009: Mossville community members participate in Environmental Justice Listening Session in New Orleans and NEJAC meeting in Washington, DC.

August 2009: EPA tests water at the tap at 5 Mossville properties.

August 2009: EPA initiates a Preliminary Assessment under CERCLA for Mossville, based on requests from the community.

November 2009: EPA responds to recommendations by Wilma Subra in "Industrial Sources of Dioxin Poisoning in Mossville, LA" by providing history of involvement at the site and by listing future and ongoing activities in a letter to Advocates for Environmental Human Rights, MEAN, and Wilma Subra.

December 2009: Mossville residents meet with ATSDR Director in Atlanta.

January 2010: EPA holds a meeting to discuss the planned assessment of the Mossville community. EPA briefs the community as to the Superfund process and solicits input and participation.

February 25, 2010: A meeting is held in New Orleans with EPA, the Louisiana Bucket Brigade, Louisiana refineries, the LDEQ, plant workers, and community representatives. Participants engage in a structured dialogue to share information and ideas about reducing accidental releases from refineries. The Louisiana Bucket Brigade is an environmental health and justice organization working with communities that neighbor the state's oil refineries and chemical plants.

March 2010: ATSDR begins a series of health-related workshops for the Mossville community. Workshops are scheduled for March 13, March 20, March 27 and April 10.

April 13, 2010: EPA holds a meeting to discuss the draft Preliminary Assessment and present the proposed sampling plan to the Mossville community.

April 21, 2010: Representatives from EPA hold a conference call with LDHH, Mossville Water System, and Lake Area Industry Alliance (LAIA) to discuss water system needs and opportunities for assistance.

April 26, 2010: The EPA Site Assessment Manager hosts an evening informal question-and-answer session with the Mossville community prior to the field sampling for that week.

April 26-30, 2010: EPA conducts Risk Management Program Inspections at PPG Industries, Inc., Lake Charles Plant, and Calcasieu Refining Company.

April 27-30, 2010: EPA conducts field sampling at over 100 locations including residential taps, private wells, soils, sediments and the public water system.

April 27, 2010: EPA and the Lake Charles Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) host a community-wide meeting focused on improved communication between community members and industry, and community members and the LEPC.

April 29-30, 2010: EPA conducts a comprehensive evaluation of the Mossville Public Water System, including the collection of water samples from well and access points within the system.

May 14-21, 2010: EPA conducts supplemental field samples. Samples are collected from one residential tap, a fish tissue sample was collected from one stock pond, and passive soil gas samples are collected.

June 30, 2010: EPA holds a conference call with community representatives to discuss the irregularities with the dioxin data and outlined plans to resample. The community requests that EPA provide a fact sheet to the public describing the irregularities and the need to resample.

June 2010: EPA completes compliance inspections at Sasol, Westlake Petrochemical and Firestone facilities. Inspections in the Mossville area include review for satisfaction of hazardous substance release and Risk Management Planning (RMP) requirements. Region 6 is planning increased emphasis RMP requirements and communication under the Clean Air Act and the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act.

August 2010: EPA mails a fact sheet to residents announcing the upcoming meeting to discuss the results of the recent Comprehensive Evaluation of the Water System and sampling conducted in Mossville in May and the need to re-sample. In addition to the fact sheet, EPA sends letters to all residents who had samples collected from their property detailing the results of the April 2010 water sampling.

August 16, 2010: EPA holds a meeting to discuss the preliminary results of the Comprehensive Evaluation of the Mossville Water System. EPA informs the community that their drinking water is safe, provides an update of the Superfund Site Assessment process, and solicits input and invites participation.

August 17-19, 2010: EPA re-samples for dioxins in Mossville, sampling soil, tap water, surface water and sediment. These samples will replace the dioxin samples that could not be used from the May sampling.

August 20-21, 2010: ATSDR and EPA meet with the community, MEAN, Restore Explicit Symmetry to Our Ravaged Earth (RESTORE), the Bureau of Primary Care and Rural Health, LDHH, HRSA, and a doctor of naprapathy. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss options and cost for access to health care in the Mossville area. Reasons why Mossville did not have a health clinic are discussed with an agreement to hold a follow-up teleconference in September to start the process for deciding on what options should be pursued. This call is being coordinated by ATSDR. In addition, EPA discusses the drawbacks to potential relocation of Mossville residents.

October 8, 2010: ATSDR organizes an Access to Health Care Teleconference with Mossville stakeholders to start the process for deciding on what options could be pursued under a plan of action for getting health care to the Mossville community. A committee is formed that will initiate the information/data collection effort.

October 12, 2010: The United States and Louisiana lodge two consent decrees settling claims for the Calcasieu Estuary site under CERCLA and the Clean Water Act and requiring ConocoPhillips and Sasol North American to perform clean-up work of hazardous substances along Bayou Verdine.

October 18, 2010: EPA meets with LAIA to discuss industry participation in the action plan. Industry committed to consider each of the elements of the plan.

November 18, 2010: EPA releases "Summary of Actions" describing EPA's actions in Mossville to date and focus areas for ongoing action.