



# Local Emergency Planning Committee

2000 Radcliff Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45204: 513-263-8010: lepc@hamilton-co.org: www.hamiltoncountyohioema.org

**BOB HARPER**  
Co-Chairman  
**MICHAEL SNOWDEN**  
Co-Chairman  
**BARY LUSBY**  
Emergency Coordinator  
**EDWARD FRAMBES**  
Information Coordinator  
**KIM BURKE**  
Communications  
**DALE FARMER**  
Exercise / Training

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**What is the Hamilton County LEPC?** The local emergency planning committee was authorized by an Act of Congress, and created by a statute enacted by the Ohio General Assembly. In October, 1986, Congress passed the Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA) as Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA). EPCRA is intended to (i) impart information to citizens about the hazards of chemicals stored in their communities; (ii) require those who store hazardous chemicals to provide reports to appropriate government officials; and (iii) provide for emergency planning and response preparedness to deal with releases of hazardous chemicals. After the World Trade Center attacks of September 11, 2001, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has relied upon local emergency planning committees to assist in emergency planning to prevent, and respond to, attacks on stores of hazardous chemicals in our communities.

In order to implement EPCRA in Ohio, the Ohio General Assembly passed Chapter 3750 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) in 1988 to establish the regulatory structure for management of EPCRA's mandates at the state level. Chapter 3750 created the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), appointed by the Governor, which has statewide responsibility for ensuring implementation of the protections afforded by EPCRA and ORC Chapter 3750. On the local level, ORC Chapter 3750 established local emergency planning committees (LEPC), which in Ohio generally follow the county jurisdictional boundaries.

In Hamilton County, OH, the Hamilton County Commissioners are responsible for appointment, subject to the approval of the Ohio SERC, of members of the LEPC who represent government agencies, emergency responders, hospital officials, civil defense managers, elected officials, regulated community, community

**What Does the Hamilton County LEPC Do?** The Hamilton County LEPC has both mandatory and discretionary obligations that it implements:

- The LEPC receives reports from facilities subject to EPCRA and ORC Chapter 3750 of the quantity and identification of certain classes of hazardous substances managed at facilities in Hamilton County, OH. In addition, the LEPC receives emergency plans from facilities managing certain classes of hazardous substances to assist the LEPC and emergency responders in evaluating risk and planning responses to releases of chemicals.
- The LEPC appoints an Information Coordinator and a Community Emergency Coordinator. The Information Coordinator is responsible for maintaining the LEPC's files and fulfilling public requests for information. The Community Emergency Coordinator is responsible for development and implementation of the chemical emergency response and preparedness plan of the LEPC district.
- The LEPC carries out a program to monitor regulated facilities within the district. The LEPC is required to submit an annual report to the SERC of compliance activities during the previous calendar year.
- The LEPC is responsible for preparing and submitting to the SERC a chemical emergency response and preparedness plan, and to conduct an exercise of the plan on an annual basis.



**How is the LEPC Funded?** The LEPC is funded by a combination of public and private grants. In Ohio, ORC Chapter 3750 provides that the SERC shall establish a grant mechanism funded by the collection of annual fees from the regulated community to assure operation of all LEPCs. Other grants are available to LEPCs, including the

Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant Program (U.S. DOT).

**What are the Exercises Conducted by the Hamilton County LEPC?** A variety of exercises are conducted by the LEPC in order to test the Hamilton County emergency preparedness plan. These range from tabletop exercises to partial and full-scale field exercises. Emergency preparedness requires the coordination of a vast number of individuals, governmental agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs): police, fire, hazmat teams, hospitals, homeland security, EMTs, chemical experts, and the media.

**What Reporting is Required to the LEPC?** Reporting by facilities managing hazardous substances is required by EPCRA and ORC Chapter 3750. Facilities subject to the law are required to report by March 1 of each year for the preceding calendar year for Tier 1 and Tier 2 reports (Sections 311-312 of EPCRA). In addition, extremely hazardous substances (Section 302 of EPCRA) must be reported if managed in sufficient quantities at regulated facilities. In addition to the LEPC, facilities subject to Sections 302, 311 and 312 are required to report to the local fire official. In Ohio, the fire chief for the local jurisdiction is the designated local fire official.

**What is Hamilton County LEPC's Voluntary Inspection Program:** The Hamilton County LEPC has instituted a voluntary inspection program to allow regulated facilities to improve their understanding of their obligations under EPCRA, ORC Chapter 3750, and general emergency preparedness in a non-adversarial setting. Participation is voluntary, and involves an experienced LEPC staff person meeting with company personnel at the company's facility to review compliance and preparedness. Participation in this program has been greeted warmly by the regulated community, and is at no cost to the participating company.

### **Materials Subject to Release Reporting**

- \* Extremely Hazardous Substances 40 CFF; Part 355; Appendix A and B,
  - \* CERCLA Hazardous Substances 40 CFR Part 302; Table 302.4, and
  - \* Oil (definition includes without limitation to, gasoline, petroleum, fuel oil, sludge, oil refuse, and oil mixed with wastes other than dredged spoil).
- a) The Reportable Quantity (RQ) for the discharge of oil including crude oil into or upon navigable waters is an amount which causes a visible film or sheen upon the surface of the water;
  - b) The RQ for the release of oil into the environment, excluding navigable waters, is an amount of 25 gallons or more; and
  - c) The RQ for the release of crude oil from an oil and gas extraction storage facility into the environment, excluding navigable waters is 210 gallons.

The release notification for 24-hour reporting of spills in the State of Ohio is:

In Ohio call: **1-800-282-9378**

If the 1-800 number does not work, call:  
**614-224-0946**

In addition, facility must call:

- \* LEPC Coordinator
- \* Jurisdictional fire department