

WEST COUNTY COMMUNITY TASK FORCE
MEETING MINUTES
April 20, 1999

Location: Louisville Urban League, 1535 West Broadway
Time: Meeting began at 7:10 p.m., Arnita Gadson facilitator

ITEM: Jonathan Miller and Clarence Dykstra of DuPont Dow Elastomers

ACTION: Jonathan and Clarence discussed DuPont Dow, the products they make, and their Environmental Care Management program.

Clarence:

DuPont Dow is an elastomer company that makes neoprene, which is a polychloroprene. The company's two plants in Kentucky and Louisiana are the only plants in the US that still make neoprene-type elastomers. DuPont makes all the chloroprene monomers at their plant in Louisiana. Forty percent of the rubber chips they make are made in Louisiana and shipped to Kentucky, while the other 60 percent of the monomers are made in Louisville. The rubber chips are then sold to other companies to make other products.

The company has 351 employees and because of downsizing for profitability, they will have less than 300 employees by the end of the year. However, Dow will be increasing production.

Since the plant operates in close proximity to neighborhoods, DuPont tries to be a good corporate citizen. They try to become involved in the community such as being a part of the WCCTF. Because of such close proximity to neighborhoods, they run the plant safely. Chloroprene is a very reactive monomer. As it heats up it reacts with itself and can explode. When the monomer is transported it must be kept cool. The company has 21 days to get the product from the Louisiana plant to Louisville. Because this monomer is so highly reactive it cannot be left alone. This fact makes the company very focused on safety management.

DuPont's safety plan is so in-depth that OSHA has used their "safety book" as a guide for other companies to follow. Therefore, they focus on being in compliance. To date, other than their previous problems with MSD, they have no big regulative issues. The issue with MSD cost them \$4 million in fines and the company has agreed to add a \$4 million rubber removal process to keep rubber out of the waste stream.

Jonathan:

Neoprene is mid-performance elastomer. It is used for auto parts such as gaskets, hoses, belts, and CV joint covers. It is also used to make boots, gloves, wet suits, and sandals. Neoprene could possibly replace latex (natural rubber) because so many people are allergic to it.

At the plant, waste such as hydrochloric acid was at one point injected into the deep wells where it could be neutralized by the limestone. Now it is shipped to the plant in Louisiana where they have a combustion unit that can recover the hydrochloric acid and use it in their process.

Recent Accomplishments/Current Plans

- Recycling waste such as chlorine and turning it back into the form of hydrogenchloride.
- Added vent condensers that help reduce VOCs by 15%.
- Adding a filtration process that takes the excess rubber out of the wastewater.
- DuPont plans to streamline their processes to reduce chloroprene emissions by 10% or 35 tons per year.
- The company is also looking at other ways to reduce emissions, wastes, and pollutants.

Question asked:

Q. If someone has been exposed to a chemical, who do they contact?

A. Air Pollution Control District, the Health Department, OSHA, the Safety Director, or Public Works.

ITEM: Sites for air monitors

ACTION: We need to start looking at sites to place the air monitors. We will use the data from the LOJIC maps to help determine air monitor placement.

ITEM: MSD Odor monitoring

ACTION: MSD is conducting odor monitoring, and they are planning a community meeting for May 6, 1999 at the MSD conference room. The meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m.

ITEM: By-laws

ACTION: On April 22nd we will be meeting at the Commissioners Office, Old County Court House, 527 West Jefferson 1st floor, Room 101, at 12:00 noon.

ITEM: Meeting place

ACTION: The rent has gone up at the Urban League, from \$20 to \$50, so we need to find a new location. Suggestions were made for several locations. Tom Herman suggested that we keep our meetings at the Urban League and ask each of the industries to pay the difference in rent. He said that Zeon would pay the extra \$30 for the May meeting.

ITEM: Earth Day

ACTION: Thank you to: Linda Thompson, LaLetta Jenkins, Mayme Whaley, Laura Hackett, and Jonathan Miller for their help in passing out information at the West County

booth on Earth Day. We received a plaque for participating, which Arnita will keep at the Center. The Judge and Mayor stopped by our booth to say hello.

ITEM: Phone Book

ACTION: The WCCTF needs to be listed in the phone book. We are looking for funds to pay for a listing.

ITEM: Adopt the Center

ACTION: All the Rubbertown industries have been asked to adopt/fund the Center for one month.

ITEM: New Computer

ACTION: The new Arc View computer is up and running at the Center. Task Force members are welcome to come by and see it.

ITEM: Superfund Training

ACTION: Arnita highlighted her Superfund training in Colorado.

Meeting adjourned 8:36 p.m.