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TEXAS CHEMICAL COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
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I. Chairman's Report - J. Foster

Mr. Foster discussed where the TCC Environmental Health Committee needed to focus its attention during 1987. While the Texas Legislature is in session, the committee will need to keep alert to proposed legislation that may be of interest to TCC members.

The biggest problem that will be addressed by this session of the legislature will be the budget. It is going to be difficult to cut the budget and raise money without raising taxes. The Bullock proposal would increase by over 50% the amount of tax paid by some TCC member companies.

The issues that will involve the TCC Environmental Health Committee are:

1. What is to be the role for the Texas Department of Health (TDH) in the area of risk analysis? There is a bill proposed by the TDH giving them some as yet unidentified role in risk analysis. This may be a bill that TCC will want to support.
2. What will be the funding status of the Texas Right-To-Know Law?
3. A bill has been proposed to certify asbestos handlers in the State of Texas.

The TCC Environmental Health Committee will continue to develop a working relationship with the TDH. The TDH will become more involved in chronic health risks, risk assessment, risk management, and risk communication to the public. The TCC can assist the TDH and the general public in the area of chronic health risks. The TCC may be able to influence the TDH and the State of Texas in how to deal with the questions concerning chronic health risk.

J. Sollock raised the question of how would the Environmental Health Committee be able to develop an organized response to proposed regulations. It was determined that TCC Environmental Health Committee members would review the Federal Register, Texas Register, conduct liaison with appropriate agencies, and conduct liaison with the TCC Legislative Committee in order to determine if any proposed rules or legislation would be of interest to the TCC Environmental Health Committee. The TCC Environmental Health Committee Chairman will assign committee members to prepare a response to specific issues.

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II. Committee Reports

A. Health Effects Information Center - C. Owen

A letter was drafted and sent to TCC member companies in September of 1986, to determine what the health information contact person would be at each facility. A second letter is being prepared to better define what is being requested from each facility. Some responses have been received and more have been promised. A software program has been developed for an IBM PC to handle the data that is coming in from the responses to the information requests. The project is proceeding well. It appears that the smaller companies can provide information sooner than the larger companies due to the size of the respective databases.

B. State of Texas Risk Assessment - J. Solook

The Texas Chemical Council Risk Assessment Subcommittee met with three state agencies:

- Texas Air Control Board
- Texas Department of Health
- Texas Water Commission

in an effort to determine each agency's role and responsibility in risk assessment. Based upon the 1-2 hour meetings, the following summary comments/recommendations are made:

TACB

- Only agency actively involved in risk assessment through the permitting system.
- Considers current methodology as guidelines rather than rigid standards, i.e., therefore, flexibility in system.
- Manpower resources and the scientific data bases are limited.
- The Medical Resource Advisory panel is available for expert consultation, but is not consulted the majority of the time.
- TACB health effects review is generally not a critical path item in the permitting system (engineering review and lack of complete explanation of the why, how much, etc. slows the system).

TWC

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- Presently do not use risk assessment methodology, but will increase activity in the future.
- Recognized that TDH can assist in risk assessment, but currently not used.
- Desires a simple system which establishes a standard, i.e., what's the number and Go. exceptions should be handled on a case-by-case situation (realizes that some flexibility must be in the system).

- Rely almost exclusively on EPA guidelines (provides easy implementation, i.e., Washington puts it out and TWC implements).
- Water quality standards (surface and ground) will be key issues for future use of risk assessment. Will be seeking input from TCC with regard to water quality stream standards.
- Resources limited for comprehensive involvement in risk assessment.
- TWC must review hazardous waste permits with TDH. Presently, this does not occur.
- TWC would like to receive as much toxicity data as possible when submitting for a permit regarding effluent discharges.

TDH

- Historically, all environmental programs were within TDH but present day operation minimal (lost to other agencies).
- TDH is in a reactive mode, i.e., an effect is identified and a cause is looked for rather than the classical cause-effect methodology.
- Only agency that has trained medical, industrial hygiene and epidemiology personnel to perform risk assessment.
- TDH is "informally involved" with risk assessment but desires to be lead organization.
- Manpower resources are extremely limited as is funding (example is Texas Right To Know legislation).
- Participants on the Interagency Coordination Council on Solid Waste Management and an "informal network" composed of TDH, TACB, TWC and Department of Agriculture.
- Only involvement in risk assessment is in municipal waste sites (TDH lead agency) and coordination with TWC for industrial solid waste incineration and hazardous waste sites (but, limited activity).

A general conclusion to be drawn is that risk assessment is conducted in an arbitrary manner and not based on sound scientific information. The methodology is dependent upon a modification of workplace standards, but "flexible" to handle special situations.

It is recommended that efforts begin to have the Texas Department of Health designated as the referee (appeals level) in health risk assessment issues.

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It is recommended that TCC support, whenever possible, the concept of using a simple screening model for determining risk assessment.

It is recommended that the Risk Assessment Subcommittee continue functioning in a monitoring mode within the respective member agencies and be informed of legislative activity in the risk assessment area.

Detailed notes and organizational charts are contained in a separate document to be distributed by the Subcommittee upon request.

C. Fence-line Issues - R. Daniel

A Harold Scarlett article before last Christmas showed the Legator Mousemobile. The new project leader is Ms. Judy Henry. The work for 1986 was completed and a peer review was held. A report to the TACB was prepared by the investigators.

The study involves low level mouse exposure to different concentrations of benzene, a chloroprene/xylene mixture, and epichlorohydrin for 22 hours/day for a six (6) week period. Five (5) different assays are run on the test animals at sacrifice: spleen lymphocyte, pulmonary alveoli macrophage, micronuclei, unscheduled DNA synthesis in mouse sperm, and liver enzymes.

Benzene appears at this time to be the most sensitive chemical to this testing procedure. There was a statistical increase in spleen lymphocytes and lung macrophages. These findings were evident at 1.0 ppm and 0.1 ppm.

Chloroprene in high doses had an effect on male mouse spleen lymphocytes. The female mice tested did not respond in the same way.

The experiments using epichlorohydrin will have to be repeated due to a compressor failure during the initial experimentation.

This project is receiving a majority of the TACB research funds for this year. There is also a study of the Dallas area air quality being funded due to the large decline in visability over the last 10 years.

During 1987, the benzene exposure concentrations to be studied will be 0.1 ppm, 0.04 ppm, and 0.02 ppm. In addition, slides will be prepared to store sperm unscheduled DNA synthesis results for later examination. A new team member was added whose expertise is in the area of toxicological immunassay. The intent is to develop dose-response curves. As the study exposures get lower and lower, they will approach ambient background levels. The mousemobiles may then be moved to local communities to determine what effects may occur.

The entire study is short of funding and they need assistance. The TCC member companies may be asked to provide funding if a specific need can be identified. In addition, the project staff is trying to obtain money from superfund.

Some people are opposed to this entire project because they feel that the universities should be tasked with research of this type.

A TCC Environmental Health Committee position on this study is to be developed. It appears that there may be grounds to support the study based on the fact it may turn out to be "good science". Dr. Cowles will review the study protocol and provide a second opinion on the merit of the project.

D. Texas Right-To-Know - L. Freeland

The TDH has passed a schedule of fines and it is now law. As a part of the law, an annual update of hazardous chemicals is required to be submitted to the TDH.

The Texas Civil Liberties Union has filed suit against the TDH for exclusion of farm workers in the R-T-K regulations. The potential outcome of this suit is unclear at this time.

A training booklet has been completed with the assistance of the TCC Environmental Health Sub-committee on R-T-K. This booklet will be used as a basis for a course presentation in the Longview, Texas area in March, 1987. D. Pringle will make presentations along with some of the local TDH staff.

In the enforcement area, the TDH seems to be going after the smaller chemical producers and issuing fines where possible. The TDH is considering a \$10.00 filing fee each year for the required hazardous chemical list.

The sub-committee members were recognized for their efforts in working to implement the Texas R-T-K regulations.

III. Risk Communication Seminar/Workshop - J. Foster

Last summer the TCC reached the conclusion that something should be done to assist in the area of risk communication. As a result of this decision, the TCC is one of the many sponsors for a Risk Communication Seminar/Workshop to be held in October, 1987. J. Foster (TCC) and D. Sheridan (Texas Environmental Coalition) are the co-chairs for the event. Other sponsoring entities are: Sierra Club, League of Women Voters, TDH, EPA, UT School for Communications, UTSPH, AIHA, and AIHC. The Center for Rural Studies may also be a sponsor at a later date.

One of the objectives of the event is to develop a plan to communicate chronic health risks to the public. This seminar/workshop will only be useful to the chemical industry if it is perceived as not being a chemical industry activity.

IV. Asbestos Handlers - D. Gray

D. Gray was appointed as chairman of the committee to investigate the proposed legislation concerning certification of asbestos handlers and develop a TCC response.

One of the provisions of the proposed legislation (HB 36 by L. Chris) is that asbestos workers must be certified. Mr. Joel Smith of the TDH is the liason for this bill. There are several provisions that may change before the bill is actually passed. If training certification is needed as a result of the bill, the UH/CLC has approached EPA to perform the training. There is a possibility that facilities that are already under the OSHA Asbestos regulations may be exempt from the proposed HB 36.

The next meeting of the TCC Environmental Health Committee is set for April 23, 1987, at 9:00 am. The exact location will be determined later.