



**Safety Council of Greater St. Louis
Risk Management Program Work Group**

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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St. Louis—A regional group of manufacturers, emergency responders and state regulatory agencies formed to educate citizens about safety procedures at local facilities called the cooperative effort a success.

"We all share a goal of protecting the environment and keeping communities safe," said Patrick Justis of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources Division of Environmental Quality. "By working together we will all be more effective."

The group was formed to create a broadened public dialogue about potential safety incidents at local facilities and how the sites are prepared to respond. It is called the Safety Council of Greater St. Louis RMP Work Group, named for a federal Environmental Protection Agency rule called Risk Management Program or RMP.

Members range from food and beverage manufacturers to the chemical industry, from providers of water and sewage services to regional emergency response agencies. Geographically they represent the city of St. Louis, the Missouri counties of St. Louis and St. Charles, and the Illinois counties of Madison and St. Clair.

"We applaud the initiative and are glad to be part of it," said Stanley Krushas of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. "By working together we all more effectively meet the true objectives of the RMP rule: public education, strengthened emergency preparedness and improved incident response."

Some of the facilities operated by members are required to develop and submit a detailed risk management plan to EPA by June 21, 1999. That plan must include quantities of a specific EPA list of materials kept on site, an analysis of potential risk, a review of safety practices, and an action plan to improve them.

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"Members of the Safety Council Work Group know that safer facilities mean safer communities," said John Steiniger, executive director of the Safety Council, which has served regional members since 1916. "It is unlikely that any emergency scenarios described in site risk management plans will occur, but companies and emergency responders are prepared anyway."

Captain Robert C. Young, chairman of the St. Louis County Local Emergency Planning Commission and commander of the county Police Department's office of emergency management, talked about the importance of sharing information and strengthening relationships.

"Working with this group through the Safety Council has been a benefit for everyone involved," he said. "That means the biggest winners are the people living in our communities who will be even safer because of what we've learned about facilities in the region and from each other."

The EPA created the RMP regulation in 1990 as an amendment to the Clean Air Act. The risk management rule requires facilities with certain quantities of chemicals and other regulated substances on a specific EPA list to disclose certain information. Those facilities must make publicly available the preventive measures and emergency response programs they have in place to prevent incidents and protect the communities. Members of the Safety Council Work Group represent the thousands of facilities across diverse industries that fall under the RMP regulation.

"The initiative provides an opportunities for greater dialogue between industry, the public, regulators and emergency responders," said Chief Donald R. Feher of the Fairview Fire Department, who also is chairman of the St. Clair County Local Emergency Planning Committee. "As a result we will all better understand related issues and strengthen relationships."

While the EPA requires that risk management plans be publicly available, there is no requirement that the kind of communication undertaken by the Work Group's members take place.

"Our members are willing sources of information about their sites and want to work together to make the St. Louis region an even safer place to live, work, and play," Steiniger said.