CAP Success: Olin CAP Conference

The focus of discussions included how panels can help address key issues such as environmental justice and risk management planning and communication.

The second annual Olin panel conference included panel members, their independent facilitators, and Olin managers from plants ranging from Mesa, Arizona, and McIntosh, Alabama to Rochester, New York. The focus of discussions included how panels can help address key issues such as environmental justice and risk management planning and communication. The idea of an evaluation process that panels can use to continuously improve their effectiveness was also discussed.

Participants identified five critical categories that every panel must address to ensure long-term effectiveness: Organizational Structure, Participation, Diverse Participation, Information Exchange and Community Outreach.

The group also discussed a common issue that every Olin plant and panel will face in the coming years: risk management communication. The attendees first learned lessons from Olin's involvement in 1994 in the first-ever regional reporting of chemical accident scenarios. Although such reporting won't be required by law until 1999, 13 chemical plants in the Kanawha Valley of West Virginia teamed up with panels and local emergency responders to publicly share worst-case and more likely accident scenarios, each plant's preventive risk management plans, and emergency response plans.

During another key session, panel members emphasized that in educating panelists and the community about a plant, managers should avoid acronyms, break complex subjects down into understandable segments, focus on the benefits of the products made rather than on "chemistry lessons," and always remember that everyone's favorite radio station is WIIFM — what's in it for me!

For more information, contact Laura Tew, Olin, at (318) 491-3288.

CAP Success Part Deux: Dow CAP Takes Charge

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At Western Canada Operations, the CAP advised Dow on the establishment of a toll-free phone line as well as a bi-monthly newsletter for immediate neighbors. The panel also provided Dow with an excellent sounding board as it went through dioxin testing on its vinyl chloride monomer operation. A member of the panel participated on the Responsible Care® Verification Team. And in the spring of this year, the panel developed a newsletter which outlines its work with Dow and was published in two local newspapers.

Most recently, the CAP worked with Dow to develop a public perception survey for the City of Fort Saskatchewan and surrounding residents. The panel hoped to validate its response to the company, and the company wanted to measure perception in the local community. Together they developed a valid instrument, the data for which has

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