

DSHE receives 1997 EPA Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Partnership award

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently recognized the APG Directorate of Safety, Health and Environment for its commitment to community emergency planning.

The Harford County Local Emergency Planning Committee nominated DSHE for the EPA Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Partnership Award for going beyond the requirements of the law to promote understanding and include the LEPC in the APG compliance program.

According to the nomination and the EPA award citation, when the DSHE Pollution Prevention (P2) Office and Fire Department began planning for compliance with the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act under Executive Order 12856, they contacted the LEPC and encouraged them to participate in program planning and implementation. LEPC and state representatives attend monthly P2/EPCRA subcommittee meetings, work groups and numerous training sessions.

For the past two years, the DSHE Pollution Prevention Office has been creating a central database for tracking the many chemicals used at APG, the Hazardous Material Management System. Besides making the reporting process easier and more accurate, this database has helped the LEPC with chemical identification, material safety data sheet retrieval and emergency contact numbers.

Accepting the award on behalf of DSHE was Robert Solyan, Pollution Prevention Program manager.

"The spirit of cooperation between the local community and APG benefits everyone," he said. "We need the participation and understanding of all to ensure that we can plan for contingencies as well as respond to emergencies. Pollution prevention's most important benefit is creating a safer, healthier place for people to work and live. That's what this program is all about."

For more information about DSHE's Pollution Prevention Program, call Robert Solyan, 410-278-9834.