Integrating Participatory Communication and Structured Public Involvement Processes to Better Address Superfund Issues:

The Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant Future State Vision Project

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The Project

The Kentucky Research Consortium for Energy and the Environment (KRCEE) at the University of Kentucky is charged with soliciting and integrating public, regulatory, and technical community input to produce a publicly approved Future State Vision Report for the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant (PGDP) National Priority List Superfund site and the surrounding affected areas.

The project team, which includes the UK Superfund Research Program Research Translation Core, has developed a public engagement methodology that integrates participatory communication appraisal and Structured Public Involvement to ensure maximum participation and project ownership by stakeholders. The team is guided philosophically by the Energy Communities Alliance’s The Politics of Cleanup, which examines community involvement in clean-up activities at Rocky Flats, Mound, and Oak Ridge nuclear facilities.

Goals

Identify community, regulatory, and technical stakeholders
Solicit stakeholder input regarding potential end states for the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant

Provide technical support to foster stakeholder understanding of technical issues
Facilitate focus groups and public meetings to further develop and integrate future state visions
Utilize CAsewise Visual Evaluation (CAVE) to develop a community preference model for additional future state visions
Provide document support and facilitation for the development of a “PGDP Future State Vision Document” that, while not decisional, will be available to inform future Department of Energy decisions related to the disposition of the PGDP

The Elements

Community-Based Participatory Communication
- Raises awareness and understanding about social reality, problems, and solutions
- Fosters two-way relationships in which stakeholders enter into conversations and form partnerships with internal and external communities to yield mutually beneficial outcomes
- Favors decentralization, democracy, people involvement, dialogue, bottom-up and horizontal communication
- Uses traditional and modern forms of communication and organization
- Protects tradition and cultural values, while facilitating the integration of new elements
- Creates an environment that empowers individuals and groups, giving them freedom to voice their perceptions of reality and to act on these realities

Structured Public Involvement (Community Meetings, Keypad Technology, CAsewise Visual Evaluation)
- Inclusiveness: Hundreds of people can participate
- Fairness: Everyone gets equal voice
- Quality: People can understand the issues
- Respect: Everyone’s time is valued
- Verification: Everyone sees the results in real time
- Accountability: Results are recorded, modeled, and analyzed
- Relevance: Results are incorporated into the planning process

The Integration

Future Vision Advisory Panel (Representatives Drawn from Stakeholders)
(1) Stakeholder Interviews
(2) Stakeholder Focus Groups
(3) Stakeholder Community Meeting(s)
Assessment Protocol/Initial Scenarios
Final Scenario Matrix
SPI
Community Preference Database

For more information about the KRCEE PGDP Future Use Vision Project, visit www.uky.edu/krcee/project23.html