



PUBLIC EDUCATION & INFORMATION COMMITTEE

PROGRAMS

JULY 2024



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Enabling Legislation	3
Committee Charter	4
Committee Members	4
Definitions	4
Vision/Mission/Goals	5
Alerting and Notification Program	6
Education and Information Program	7
Accountability	8



ENABLING LEGISLATION

Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA) Section 301

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Primary Responsibilities Under EPCRA:

The LEPC's main responsibility is to develop an emergency response plan to prepare and protect the community and emergency responders from **chemical accidents**.

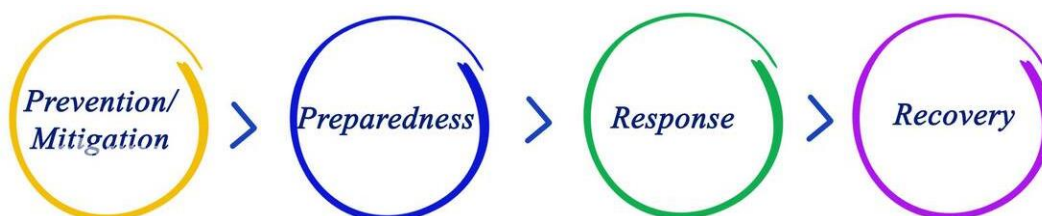
In addition, the Calcasieu Parish LEPC has the responsibility as directed by the State of Louisiana to develop community preparedness plans for **all hazards**, which may include planning and responding to natural hazards (e.g., tornadoes, hurricanes, flooding), including pandemics. LEPCs should reach out to State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) for assistance and guidance in meeting these additional responsibilities. EPCRA expressly intends that the LEPCs serve as a focal point in the community for information and discussion about hazardous chemical emergency planning and health and environmental risks. They also play a key role in effective all-hazard planning.

The community preparedness process followed today by most state, tribal, and local agencies:

- Identify the hazards in a community - The "community" includes all community members, not just emergency response agencies.
- Identify the community's capability for addressing the hazards - "Capability" includes awareness of the hazards and the degree to which all community members are prepared to take action to protect themselves, families, and property.
- Gaps in "capabilities" will often be obvious, and it is the function of these agencies to strategically plan to fill these gaps in order to improve community preparedness.

The plan needs to be understandable, readable, and realistic.

Emergency Management



COMMITTEE CHARTER

According to the Calcasieu Parish LEPC bylaws, the Public Education and Information (PE&I) Committee shall be responsible for the development of a **public alert and notification program**; public relations with affected communities and the public at large; all publicity of the LEPC; development of a **public education and information program**.

PE&I COMMITTEE MEMBERS (2024)

LEPC Chair – Mason Lindsey

PE&I Committee Chair – Ron Tower

LEPC Members – Jay Bergeron, Richard Gremillion, Jared Maze, Richard McGuire, Megan Powell, Gerald Pullin, Jim Rock

OHSEP Support Participants – Erika Fontenot, Jason Lionberger

Facilitator – Nancy Tower

DEFINITIONS

ALERT: A mechanism for getting attention often using an audible or visual means. “The LEPC uses a variety of systems including sirens and texts to alert the public to a potential hazard.”

EDUCATION: Efforts to provide or enhance understanding of information or a situation. “The LEPC engages in education efforts to help the community know how to respond in the event of an emergency.”

INFORMATION: Facts and data provided to others. “The LEPC works with the National Weather Service to ensure that information is shared for the safety of the community.”

NOTIFICATIONS: Information conveyed through a variety of means to inform the community as needed. “The LEPC provides both short and longform notifications to various groups.”

PROCESS: A series of actions or steps taken to achieve a particular objective. “There is a Process followed by the LEPC to ensure accountability and sustainability.”

PROGRAM: Multiple projects and/or services working together with the intent to meet a public need. “The Program addressed by this committee is owned by the LEPC.”

SYSTEM: A group of components including organizations and physical means to serve a need of a community. “Systems owned by multiple organizations are an important part of the LEPC’s program.”

VISION/MISSION/GOALS

VISION - The PE&I Committee’s descriptive view of a desired future state:

“An informed community, knowledgeable and confident about their response, role, and responsibility when informed of potential hazards.”

MISSION - The PE&I Committee’s statement in support of our purpose in the bylaws, which includes program expectations:

“To create, update, and deliver a comprehensive and reliable public alert and notification program aligned with an ample public education and information program.”

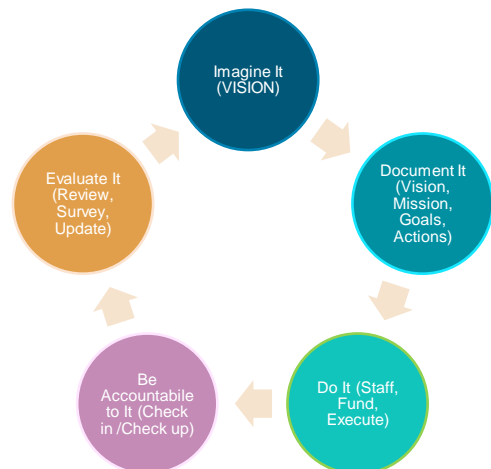
GOALS – The PE&I Committee’s goals will change over time as supporting action items are accomplished. Goal statements will change from “create” to “maintain,” and from “design” to “update,” but the category of goals listed below should stay reasonably stable:

- 1) Approve documented **programs**, create and populate the committees needed to oversee the programs.
- 2) Create ownership clarity and expectations for maintaining and using **alerting and notification systems**.
- 3) Drive consistency in **alerts and notifications**.
- 4) Design techniques and delivery mechanisms to provide accurate and timely **information**.
- 5) Implement an effective public **education** campaign to support the alerting and notification systems.
- 6) **Maintain accountability** with metrics to share Key Performance Indicators which are updated as needed.

This document provides the Vision, Mission, and Goals that serve as the foundation for the required programs.

Along with the supporting tables and list of action items, the PE&I programs for 2024 and beyond have been established. We have documented **what good looks like**. The hard part comes next.

Executing the programs will require resources, political will, and a fully engaged LEPC.



GOAL #1: Approve documented programs, create and populate the committees needed to oversee the programs. This goal is initiated with the adoption of these programs. It is also suggested that the LEPC consider a bylaws change to break this standing committee into two committees; one to address the alerting and notifications systems, and the second to focus on the information and education component.

ALERTING & NOTIFICATION PROGRAM

To provide emergency alerts and notifications to the public, in a manner consistent with meeting our vision, goals #2 and #3 have been identified. Each goal includes additional information and resources to assist the committee(s) in delivering the desired outcomes.



GOAL #2: Create ownership clarity and expectations for maintaining and using alerting and notification systems.

- 1) Table S-1 has been developed to document this information.
 - a) The table includes existing systems and potential use of privately owned systems which could be incorporated.
 - b) To complete the table, work hours will need to be allocated or donated. This information is the foundational element of the LEPC Program for Alerting and Notifications.
 - c) The table should be updated when new information or systems are added.
- 2) Set standards for participation in the alerting and notifications systems:
 - a) These systems have been put in place over time with grants and donations. While multiple governments and organizations may have ownership of various alerting and notification systems, only one government entity should be responsible to maintain and drive collaborative efforts to enhance these systems.
 - b) An authority in Calcasieu Parish must define requirements for the consistent participation in and use of these systems and those requirements should include an enforcement mechanism.

GOAL #3: Drive consistency in alerts and notifications.

- 1) Table AL-1 has been initiated to define emergency threat levels and determine the appropriate alerting and notification system activation for each.
 - a) To complete this table, collaborative discussions with the owners and activators of the various systems will need to be conducted and resources will need to be allocated to follow the system activation levels.
 - b) This table, when complete, will provide a clear guide during an emergency, will set a standard for evaluation, and will drive the consistency needed to gain public trust.
- 2) Expand training opportunities for all potential On Scene Incident Commanders who might have occasion to activate an alerting or notification system.
- 3) Maintain and support high level training for 911 and OHSEP staff regarding these systems.



PUBLIC EDUCATION & INFORMATION PROGRAM

This program must both provide accurate and timely information (goal #4) and provide the public with the education/knowledge to respond appropriately in the event of an emergency (goal #5).

GOAL #4: Design techniques and delivery mechanisms to provide accurate and timely information.

Information provided to the public in the event of a potential hazard must be clear, accurate, and timely.

- a) Expectations regarding notifications of information-only events as well as events with recommended action should be defined, documented, and required.
- b) Table I-1 has been developed to identify potential information providers and methods to ensure that the information is accurate and timely.
 - i. To complete the table and action items, work hours will need to be allocated or donated.
 - ii. Table-top drills and or training events should be made available annually to test information accuracy and timeliness.

GOAL #5: Implement an effective public **education** campaign to support the alerting and notification systems.

There are countless opportunities for education efforts to address a multitude of emergency preparedness and response messages. It is imperative that key messages are developed and consistently delivered in the most cost-effective way.

- a) Table E-1 has been developed to document suggested key messages, targeted audience(s) for each, suggested mediums for sharing each message, suggested partners, and budget ideas.
 - i. These messages must work in concert with the alerting and notification systems and must be applicable to the information that is provided.
 - ii. To complete the table and action items, work hours will need to be allocated or donated.
- b) The effectiveness of the education component should be evaluated regularly with surveys or focus groups. Engaging area industry Community Advisory Panels could provide useful feedback on the education efforts.



*The primary **public relations and publicity responsibilities** of the Committee are based on the key messages outlined in the Information and Education program documents. Additional public relations and publicity requirements of the LEPC will be addressed on an as needed basis.

ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

GOAL #6: Maintain **accountability** using metrics to share Key Performance Indicators which are updated as needed.

All successful organizations have Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure performance. These indicators are informed by metrics that are regularly evaluated.

Example KPIs and Metrics for consideration by the committee(s) may include:



KPI	Metric(s)
Alerting and notification systems are well maintained and information on each is updated in a document such as S-1.	Annual inspection of systems and existing documentation.
Compliance with System Activation Levels documented on Table AL-1.	Each LEPC meeting to include a review of system use (including tests, information-only notifications, and incidents requiring public action) to determine compliance percentage .
Reduced time between the following: event ▶ notification ▶ activation ▶ information.	LEPC review of each information-only notification and incidents requiring public action to calculate durations between events .
The public is consistently provided with the required information.	Each LEPC meeting to include discussion on events that should have resulted in an information-only notification or more. Documentation on percent compliance with rules.
Quality of information provided to the public.	Each LEPC incident review to evaluate the accuracy of the information provided to the public.
Public acceptance of LEPC key messages.	Bi-annual survey result indicating confidence level in personal response capabilities. Focus group responses to measure community trust . Number of impressions per year.

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