

**NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND CHEMICAL EXPOSURES  
SERVING COMMUNITIES WORK GROUP**

**Meeting No. 8 Summary  
Teleconference  
June 7, 2010**

<b>Upcoming Meeting</b>	<b>When and Where</b>	<b>Suggested Agenda Items</b>
<i>National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures</i> Serving Communities Work Group (Serving Communities Work Group) meeting	August 18, 2010 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Washington, DC  Times TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Review draft work group report and agree on final language to submit to the <i>National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures</i> Leadership Council (Leadership Council)</li> </ul>

**I. Action Items**

<b>Plan for the Development of Recommendations</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>By When</b>
1. Items are delineated on timeline on pages three and four.	All	See table on pages three and four for dates.

**II. Agreements Reached**

The Serving Communities Work Group agreed to the timeline that is inserted on pages three and four.

**III. Meeting Summary**

**Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review**

Peggy Shepard, chair of the work group, welcomed the group to the call. Kathy Grant, a RESOLVE facilitator, reviewed the call agenda and reminded the group that she had sent the 14 recommendations that the Serving Communities Work Group is considering. Ms. Grant noted that the goals for the call were to review the recommendations, discuss the Leadership Council's feedback on the group's recommendations, and to agree to a work plan to finalize the draft report and recommendations.

**Feedback from the Leadership Council**

Ms. Shepard said she thinks the Serving Communities Work Group is on track with its work. She mentioned that the Leadership Council wanted more specifics in some areas and shared that the work group must continue to refine its recommendations to make them detailed and actionable. This might require more research in some areas. For example, some members of the Leadership Council wanted to know why the group had specified "20%" in the recommendation that "Twenty percent of new Federal Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)

created by Health Care Law will be established in disadvantaged environmentally burdened communities by 2013.”

Ms. Grant recounted that the Leadership Council repeatedly asked if the recommendations (from all the *National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures* work groups) were actionable. Clearly the Leadership Council will be focusing on this in developing its action agenda. The Leadership Council will be more likely to consider the group’s recommendations if they are specific. Some Leadership Council members asked how the Serving Communities Work Group defines “community” and whether the group means the same thing each time it uses the word.

Regarding our current recommendation No. 10 (Ensure effective compliance of industrial and department of defense facilities and agricultural operations), Lois Gibbs, Executive Director of the Center for Health, Environment, and Justice, suggested that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) consider using its power more frequently. For example, she noted that CDC can declare something an imminent health hazard, which will trigger specific actions. Ms. Gibbs asked if something can be done to increase the use of this declaration.

Ms. Shepard shared that at a recent visit to CDC, she learned that the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) uses data and research that other agencies and corporations have collected but does not gather its own data. She came away from her visit recognizing more strongly than ever that changing the culture of the organization will require leadership from the top. Ms. Shepard agreed to forward a copy of the United States code that lays out ATSDR’s mandate. The group concurred that this might help them in developing any recommendations for ATSDR.

A member asked about the Leadership Council’s commitment to follow through on the recommendations that become part of the final action agenda. Ms. Shepard said that it is hard to know for sure, and that everyone is waiting to see who will be the new National Center for Environmental Health/ATSDR director. Ms. Grant reminded the group that the Federal Coordinating Committee (a subset of the Leadership Council) will be meeting soon. Their goal is to coordinate and help ensure that any recommendations aimed at their agencies are considered seriously.

### **Critical Examination of Recommendations**

The group reviewed the recommendations that Ms. Grant compiled. Ms. Grant noted the need to flesh out the recommendations to include the expected outcomes and improvements, and the need for a proposal for implementation, a suggested timeframe (near-term and long-term), and mechanisms for evaluating and tracking outcomes. Naming the potential actor or actors is optional.

Ms. Grant shared that she, Ms. Shepard, Carolyn Harper, an NCEH/ATSDR senior liaison, and Kim DeFeo, an NCEH/ATSDR staff member, had reviewed their draft recommendations and thought that No. 6b (Establish, facilitate, and promote training programs for government employees, community groups and residents, academia and Americorps-like volunteers—community groups and residents) could be combined with No. 2 (Provide communities with funding and other resources to become effective self advocates). The group agreed and Mark Mitchell, subgroup leader for the Community Advocacy, Leadership and Research subgroup that developed recommendation No. 2, agreed to add No. 6b to their recommendation and also to add a timeline and information about its evaluation.

The work group also agreed to merge all but the last two sentences of recommendation No. 11 (Mandate government agencies to engage the community in siting, permitting, site remediation, health assessments, community notification, and closure decision) with recommendation No. 1 (Mandate government agencies to involve communities in environmental decision making processes).

The Serving Communities Work Group then discussed how to merge the last two sentences in recommendation No. 11, which refers to using the precautionary principle, with recommendation No. 14 (Incorporate and apply the new health risk assessment paradigm). In the discussion, the work group noted that a new approach to decision making should shift the burden of proof to industry, and involve data gathering and analysis of best available science, precautionary principle, and community based research. It should also apply these data types to decision making, including applying community level data, and determine measures to modify authorities (e.g., laws, rules) to implement the new approach. Suzi Ruhl who works for the EPA agreed to capture the group discussion about how best to do this.

The work group further discussed recommendation No. 13 (Provide access to health and health care). The Serving Communities Work Group acknowledged that its suggestion that 20% of new FQHCs be established in disadvantaged environmentally burdened communities was arbitrary. The work group agreed it did not have the resources to determine what the exact percentage should be, but noted that more needs to be done to ensure that overburdened communities have access to these types of health centers. A Serving Communities Work Group member shared that a formula based on income determines where FQHCs will be located. The group suggested that a new criterion considering the environmental burden of communities be added to the selection process. A work group member suggested that instead of recommending that 20% of FQHCs be established in disadvantaged communities, we could recommend that a community's environmental burden be a consideration in siting these facilities.

### **Plan for the Development of Recommendations**

The Serving Communities Work Group agreed to the following timeline:

June 11, 2010	Recommendations due (in required format)
June 18, 2010	Language due for the "vision" section of the report, definitions, and references
June 21, 2010	Ms. DeFeo compiles and sends out to the Serving Communities Work Group a very rough (cut and paste), one-text version of the report using language from subgroup reports  Subgroups will be asked for specific missing information
July 1, 2010	Missing information and general comments on the rough draft due
July 6–12, 2010	Ms. DeFeo compiles a refined version of the report; sends it to Serving Communities Work Group by July 12, 2010 for comments
July 26, 2010	Comments due from Serving Communities Work Group

August 11, 2010	Revised version of report sent to Serving Communities Work Group; work group reads the report in preparation for the August 18, 2010 in-person meeting
August 18, 2010	Serving Communities Work Group meets in person to finalize the report
August 31, 2010	Report due to Leadership Council

#### **IV. Participation**

##### **Members Present**

Lisa Conti, Florida Department of Health  
Jeannie Economos, Farmworker Association of Florida  
Rita Harris, Sierra Club Environmental Justice Program  
Mercedes Hernandez-Pelletier, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health  
Michael Kent, Contra Costa Health Services  
Scott Levy, The Permanente Medical Group  
Pamela Miller, Alaska Community Action on Toxics  
Mark Mitchell, Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice  
Suzi Ruhl, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Arturo Uribe, Mesquite Community Action Committee

##### **Regrets**

Nancy Bock, The Soap and Detergent Association  
Steve Crawford, Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point  
Melinda Downing, U.S. Department of Energy  
Jerome "Jerry" Ensminger, Camp Lejeune Citizens Advisory Panel  
Karla Fortunato, Health & Environmental Funders Network  
Lori Geckle, US Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine  
Derek Guest, formerly of Eastman Kodak Company, currently of Environmental and Sustainability Solutions  
Elizabeth Guillette, University of Florida  
Egide Louis, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4  
Mildred McClain, Harambee House Inc./Citizens For Environmental Justice  
Sarah Norman, Baltimore City Health Department  
Liam O'Fallon, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences  
Barbara Sattler, University of Maryland School of Nursing  
Hilda Sheppard, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry  
Kenneth Smith, National Association of County and City Health Officials  
Susan West Marmagas, Virginia Tech

##### **Facilitation and Staff Team Members Present**

Peggy Shepard, WE ACT for Environmental Justice chair  
Carolyn Harper, NCEH/ATSDR senior liaison  
Kathy Grant, RESOLVE facilitator  
Kim DeFeo, NCEH/ATSDR staff