

Q. What is the role of the public in the planning process?

A. In order to develop comprehensive emergency plans, community input is essential. It is the goal of the Kent County Emergency Planning Committee to seek input by offering informational presentations to a variety of groups such as businesses, neighborhood and service organizations.

These presentations will provide an opportunity for direct participation between the Kent County community and the LEPC.

In addition, quarterly meetings are held at the Kent County Sheriff Dept. These meetings are open to the public.



Q. What other information is available to the public?

A. Under the law, anyone can request information about hazardous materials stored or used by facilities within Kent County. The LEPC will make available a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for those facilities that use or store reportable volumes of hazardous substances under SARA Title III (Sections 311, 312 & 324). Contact the LEPC at the address on this brochure to obtain information.

For additional information please go to our website at www.accesskent.com/LEPC. If you have questions about emergency planning for chemical releases in Kent County or to request a form to obtain information available to you under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act, please call or write:



Kent County Local Emergency
Planning Committee
Office of Emergency Management
701 Ball Ave. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
(616) 632-6256

If your organization, group or club would like a presentation about hazardous materials, the emergency planning process, or Community Right-to-Know, contact the Kent County Local Emergency Planning Committee at the above address and phone number.



Your Right to Know:

Hazardous Chemicals In Our Community



Thousands of chemicals are used by industry every day to produce goods we use. While many of these chemicals provide great benefits, their use also involves potential risks.



Your Right To Know:

Hazardous Chemicals In Our Community

Hazardous chemicals are present throughout our community—they are used in industry, in farming, and even in schools and hospitals. You have a right to know what hazardous chemicals are present in your community and what the known risks are. How are these chemicals used and where are they stored? What if an accidental chemical release should occur in Kent County? Would you know what to do? Are fire and police departments prepared for such an emergency?



Q. What is the “EMERGENCY PLANNING AND COMMUNITY RIGHT-TO- KNOW ACT”?

A. It is a 1986 law which requires communities to plan for emergencies should an accidental release of hazardous chemicals occur. It also provides government and the public with information concerning potential chemical hazards present in our community.

This law, the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act, is also known as SARA Title III. SARA is short for the Superfund Amendments and Re-authorization Act. Title III is the section of law where the emergency planning and community right-to-know components are found.

Q. What are the major provisions of this law?

A. The law requires:

State and local governments, along with industry, to have an emergency response plan for chemical accidents to protect public health and the environment.

Industry to report the amount and types of Extremely Hazardous Substances (EHS) it stores and uses.

Emergency notification of chemical accidents and releases.

This information will be made available to the public.

Q. What is an Extremely Hazardous Substance (EHS)?

A. Any chemical that could cause serious health problems if it were accidentally released into the environment. More than 350 commonly used chemicals have been classified as Extremely Hazardous Substances. Here are a few examples:

Chemicals	Use
Chlorine	disinfectant
Ammonia	fertilizer/ refrigeration
Formaldehyde	preservative
Nitric Acid	etching steel
Sulfuric Acid	batteries
Gramoxone	pesticide

Q. Some of these substances are found in my home. Are they subject to this law?

A. No. Only facilities that store or use chemicals in specified volumes are covered by this law.

Q. So why should I be concerned?

A. Thousands of chemicals are used by industry every day to produce goods we use. While many of these chemicals provide great benefits, their use also involves potential risks. You have a right to know which of these hazardous substances are present in your community and what the known risks are.



Q. Who is planning for chemical emergencies in Kent County?

A. The Kent County Local Emergency Planning Committee, with assistance from the Kent County Office of Emergency Management, is responsible for the planning. Under the law, planning districts are created throughout the state. The goal of the Kent County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is to implement the federal law for all of Kent County (outside the City of Grand Rapids, which has its own local emergency planning committee).

The Kent County LEPC has developed comprehensive emergency plans for over 240 facilities in Kent County that use and/or store extremely hazardous substances.