

**SANGAMON COUNTY LEPC**  
3807 Ware Road, Springfield IL 62707  
(217) 789-2280

**AGENDA**

May 20, 2004  
8:30 AM

Office of the State Fire Marshal

1035 Stevenson Drive  
Springfield, IL 62703

Meeting called to order by David Butt, Chairman

Acceptance of minutes from last meeting (03/18/2004)

Recognition of LEPC members and visitors

**Old Business**

Update on 2003 Tier II forms  
Other

**New Business**

Fire and Explosion at Formosa Plastics plant, April 23, 2004  
Other

Next meeting: July 15, 2004

Motion to adjourn

# **SANGAMON COUNTY LEPC**

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### MINUTES OF THE SANGAMON COUNTY LEPC MEETING – May 20, 2004

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. at the Office of the State Fire Marshal, 1035 Stevenson Drive by David Butt, Chairman. Members present were: David Butt, Sangamon County ESDA; Brian Churchill, St. John's Hospital; Ray Cooke, Springfield Department of Public Health; David Farris, CWLP; Tom Fraase, Sangamon County Board; Matt Helms, Springfield Fire Department (retired); Mike Moos, Village of Sherman ESDA; Matt Roberts, Springfield Department of Public Health; Bill Russell, Sangamon County Rescue Squad; Anu Singh, Dominion Energy; Kim Spann, Sangamon County Department of Public Health and Kevin Switzer, Springfield Fire Department. Visitors were: Jim Leach, WMAY Radio Station (for Member Glen Gardner) and Lisa Stelzer, American Red Cross.

- I. The Chairman, David Butt, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
- II. On a motion was made by Dave Farris and seconded by Anu Singh, the minutes of the March 18, 2004 LEPC meeting were approved as written.
- III. Members and visitors introduced themselves. The Chair welcomed the members of the Sangamon County LEPC and visitors. Kim Spann was recognized as the LEPC's newest member and she presented the Chair with a copy of her resume to be forwarded to the SERC.

#### **IV. Old Business**

Update Tier II Forms: The Chair gave a final report on 2003 Tier II forms. A total of 81 forms had been received by the March 1, 2004, due date. After follow-up, we now have all 90 of the 90 forms we expect for 2003.

#### **V. New Business**

The Chair identified that the balance of the meeting would recount the Formosa Plastics Plant explosion and fire of April 23, 2004, focusing on the roles and observations of several of our LEPC members and visitors. Members of LEPC were recognized with respect to their roles during the incident.

Kevin Switzer of the Springfield Fire Department became the Incident Commander and briefed the group with regard to his role. Dispatch informed him of the incident and as he moved out he received clarification of a mutual aid request for a fire incident. The situation escalated rapidly. A plume was recognized, and taken into account regarding incident management. As the Incident Commander, Kevin was located a safe distance from the site. When he was relieved he was finally able to see the scene in person, and fully-recognized the magnitude.

Radio communications caused problems due to length of the incident, so cell phones were highly utilized. Tom Faulkner was OPS Officer and worked with the Fire and HAZMAT teams. Several HAZMAT sources were identified, and all were considered dangerous. The call was to let things burn to a safe level, given the level of hazard. A plan of action was drafted for each HAZMAT source. Kevin recognized the great effort on the part of the volunteer fire teams, as well as Springfield Fire Department, dealing with all stages of the fire, especially with decontaminating recovered bodies. EPA was recognized for plume monitoring. A lot of self-evacuating occurred, perhaps unnecessarily, but only those within a one-mile radius were required to do so for safety.

Brian Churchill was introduced by the Chair to discuss the hospital and EMS response. Characteristics of each of the victims, with respect to gender and location were discussed. Brian Churchill commended John Brennan with the Memorial Medical Center burn unit and current trauma center. EMS operations went well; some EMS responders were located too close to the hot zone, but then pulled out. A decon and shower bay was prepared in case of the scenario worsening. IDPH and IEMA activated EOCs. No need to activate regional plans, but both hospitals did run their own hospitals plans. No need to activate IMERT teams.

Mike Moos was introduced by the Chair and mentioned his response from State EOC and as his role from the State Fire Marshall's Office. State EOC fully activated by 12:20 a.m. and began collecting and processing information. Mike heard of the particulars and communicated with site IC regarding resources. He contacted Red Center (Dispatch for MABAS) and began to address strained resources and assets to see if they would need to be mobilized. State Fire Marshall was notified. His Arson Unit was there to help with any investigation and other important information. IEMA, IEPA, ISP helped. State WMD team was alerted but not needed (for added monitoring). Between 2:00 and 3:00 a.m., he began to feel comfortable. State EOC shut down at 9:00 p.m. Saturday night and IEMA dispatch kept on standby for any alerting.

David Butt brought up his role as ESDA Director, and mentioned rumor control and communication. He introduced Jim Leach from WMAY Radio Station. At 10:41 p.m., Jim felt the explosion and began to call his contacts (public and radio). He kept in close contact with local emergency coordinators, provided live coverage of the incident, helped to provide information to the public, and also provided information that helped ESDA. Jim stayed on from 11:00 p.m. until 4:00 a.m. He mentioned that EAS could have been activated to notify the public through local media. David Butt discussed his contact with other local media and felt WMAY and Channel 20 did the best jobs. Jim mentioned that WMAY was examining procedures to increase night time transmitting power in the event of an emergency. Mike Moos mentioned there was no press control around the forward command post. Kevin was unaware of media difficulties, and was in the van for the entire incident. A suggestion was made to always create a media staging area.

The Chair introduced Lisa Stelzer from the Red Cross. She summarized the victim relocation scheme and mentioned how Red Cross had provided support for the displaced individuals from Hickory Point Mall at Forsyth. A high school was used as a shelter, and then displaced people were put up in a hotel because of low members for shelter staffing.

The Chair introduced Matt Roberts who discussed the Springfield CERT response, pertaining to assistance with displaced families at K-Mart parking lot.

In conclusion, the Chair reflected on our luck on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and on the many lessons previously learned in our state from a railroad accident in Tamaroa. Environmental sampling was conducted throughout, but more could have been helpful. Brad Steward (Illioapolis Fire Chief) requested critique, and it was a more generalized discussion to provide information for Illioapolis. Matt Helms introduced ideas regarding better preparation by the County should Formosa rebuild.

The Chair discussed the importance of LEPC planning for future events and learning from past events. This “hot topic” and should be utilized to develop our request for a HAZMAT Emergency Planning (HMEP) grant. Mike Moos suggested going to Formosa to look for funding. He also suggested a full debriefing of lessons learned, etc.

There being no further business, the motion to adjourn was made by Brian Churchill, seconded by Matt Helms, and approved unanimously. The Chair adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:02 a.m. The next LEPC meeting will be held July 15, 2004, at 8:30 a.m. at the Office of the State Fire Marshall. Note – In past years we have skipped a mid-summer meeting and the Chair will notify members whether we will reconvene in July or wait until September 16, 2004.