



## Deer Park Community Advisory Council

### Summary of October 23, 2017 Meeting

#### DPCAC Looks at Safety of Chemicals Then and Now

Using two common chemicals whose emissions the group tracks annually, Deer Park Community Advisory Council (DPCAC) members invited speakers to explain the characteristics of benzene and 1,3-butadiene, how a company manages them, and how the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) assesses risk and sets concentration limits to prevent harm to human health and the environment. In a dramatic example of how exposure limits have become stricter over time, members learned that benzene, which is subject to low exposure limits now, was used in the 1900s as an after shave because of its sweet smell.

Joseph "Kip" Haney of TCEQ's Toxicology Division provided an overview of how the agency reviews air data, assesses risk, sets permit levels, communicates risk, and publicizes data for policymakers. The complexity of the state environmental agency's processes helped members understand their efforts to be cautious when determining exposure limits and using them to evaluate plant permits.

Benzene and 1,3-butadiene are typical refinery products, and an input to many chemical processes, so DPCAC members asked Shell Deer Park to speak. Environmental Manager Kathy Daniels explained the chemicals' properties, uses, and hazards and how a plant manages them. Angie Espinoza spoke about the corporation's Product Stewardship program, which looks at a chemical's health, safety, environmental, and security aspects throughout its entire life cycle from research to waste disposal. Product Stewards also monitor chemical safety practices of suppliers, transporters, customers, and others involved in the supply chain that surrounds the manufacture of chemicals.

Asked how the public may obtain more information about these chemicals, speakers suggested specific TCEQ Toxicology publications, Shell's Product Stewardship Summaries, Safety Data Sheets, and the DOT Emergency Response Planning Guide. Links to these resources are listed on the DPCAC website.

DPCAC meets again on November 27 for its Annual Air Quality Report, which will also cover changes in ozone standards over time. Visitors are welcome. For an invitation and details about the 6:00 p.m. meeting, contact the DPCAC facilitator at [info@deerparkcac.org](mailto:info@deerparkcac.org). Visit [www.deerparkcac.org](http://www.deerparkcac.org) to read about recent meeting topics, find links to useful resources on

emergency communications and the environment, see lists of DPCAC community and plant members, and read our mission and purposes.