

Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) Local Emergency Planning Requirements

EPCRA Sections 301-303

The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) emergency planning requirements are designed to help communities prepare for and respond to emergencies involving hazardous substances. Every community in the United States must be part of a comprehensive plan.

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What facilities are subject to the EPCRA emergency planning requirements?

- Any facility with any [Extremely Hazardous Substance \(EHS\)](#) on-site greater than the relevant Threshold Planning Quantities (TPQs).
- Any other facility designated as subject to the emergency planning requirements by the Governor of State or the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), after a period of public comment.

What are facilities required to do?

- Cooperate in emergency plan preparation and designate a facility emergency coordinator to participate in the planning process.
- Notify their SERC and LEPC within 60 days of becoming subject to the emergency planning requirements (such as from a shipment or production of an EHS).

What are State Emergency Response Commissions (SERCs)?

The Governor of each state has designated a SERC that is responsible for implementing EPCRA provisions within its state. The SERC's duties include:

- Establishing procedures for receiving and processing public requests for information collected under EPCRA
- Reviewing local emergency response plans

- Designating local emergency planning districts
- Appointing a Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC) for each district
- Supervising the activities of the LEPC

What are Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs)?

LEPCs must develop an emergency response plan, review it at least annually, and provide information about chemicals in the community to citizens. Plans are developed by Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) with stakeholder participation. There is one LEPC for each of the more than 3,000 designated local emergency planning districts. The LEPC membership must include (at a minimum):

- Elected state and local officials
- Police, fire, civil defense, and public health professionals
- Environment, transportation, and hospital officials
- Facility representatives
- Representatives from community groups and the media

How LEPCs can measure their effectiveness?

- [Measuring Progress in Chemical Safety: A Guide for Local Emergency Planning Committees and Similar Groups \(PDF\)](#) (12 pp, 360K, [About PDF](#))

What are the required elements of a community emergency response plan?

- Identification of facilities and transportation routes of extremely hazardous substances
- Description of emergency response procedures, on and off site
- Designation of a community coordinator and facility emergency coordinator(s) to implement the plan
- Outline of emergency notification procedures
- Description of how to determine the probable affected area and population by releases
- Description of local emergency equipment and facilities and the persons responsible for them
- Outline of evacuation plans
- A training program for emergency responders (including schedules)
- Methods and schedules for exercising emergency response plans

Where can I get more information on these requirements?

For more information on local emergency planning, see [EPCRA sections 301-303 \(42 USC 116\) or 40 CFR part 355](#). For more information on state and local EPCRA implementation, visit the [National Association of SARA Title III Program Officials \(NASTTPO\)](#).