



Sedgwick County...
working for you

Sedgwick County

525 North Main Street 3rd
Floor
Wichita, KS 67203

Legislation Text

File #: 19-210, **Version:** 1

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Membership Approval.

Recommended Action: Approve the nominations for LEPC membership for submission to the Kansas Division of Emergency Management (KDEM) and Commission on Emergency Planning and Response.

Background: The LEPC is a product of federal legislation that was passed after the Bhopal disaster in India, where thousands of people died because of an accident involving an accidental release of a hazardous chemical. To prevent similar occurrences in our own communities, Congress passed the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA), also known as the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA Title III), in 1986. EPCRA has four major provisions: Emergency Planning (Sections 301); Emergency Release Notification (Section 304) Hazardous Chemical Storage Reporting Requirements (Sections 311) and Toxic Chemical Release Inventory (Section 313).

The Community Right-to-Know provisions in EPCRA help increase public knowledge and provide them access to information on chemicals at individual facilities, their uses, and releases into the environment. The Kansas Legislature also enacted Right-to-Know laws that are very similar to the existing federal Right-to-Know laws. As a result, states and communities, working with industry, are better able to protect public health and the environment.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), other federal agencies, state agencies, and the chemical industry are cooperating with local communities to make EPCRA and related state laws effective. The LEPCs are the link between citizens, industry, and government. Because LEPCs are most familiar with the hazards in their community, and because local citizens tend to be the first responders for emergencies, LEPCs are in the best position to assist local governments in developing plans to respond to hazardous material emergencies and natural disasters.

Alternatives: N/A

Financial Considerations: N/A

Legal Considerations: Kansas Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (K.S.A. 65-5703) and the Emergency Planning and Committee Right-to-Know Act of 1986 (P.L. 99-499, Section 301) establish the LEPC and membership requirements. The BOCC nominates persons to the State Adjutant General's Department, Commission on Emergency Planning and Response, which makes the final appointments to the LEPC.

Policy Considerations: N/A