United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Region 5
77 West Jackson Blulevard
Chicago, IL 60604

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EPA

Metro East Environmental Resource Guide

Introduction

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5, Lewis and Clark Community College and other sponsors coordinated an environmental conference, "Partnering for a Healthy Environment: Government, Business, Teachers & Community," on June 28, 2001.

The conference was part of a collaborative effort to educate community members, teachers and small- to medium-sized businesses in the Metro East region of southwestern Illinois about the environmental issues affecting their day-to-day lives.

The conference was designed to provide information and networking opportunities aimed at helping communities improve their quality of life and to encourage collaborative working partnerships among participants to address these issues. Additionally, the conference provided information and strategies to enhance their ability to work together to improve the environment and economy of the Metro East region. The conference featured three concurrent tracks:

Track 1—Community members and local governmental officials–gave community members and local governmental officials practical, "how to" information on addressing sustainable development and health issues. Many local experiences were highlighted as examples. The seven Track 1 sessions provided information on a range of health and environmental topics, including indoor and outdoor air issues, asthma, Supplemental Environmental Projects, community involvement in cleaning up neighborhoods, regional planning for environmental issues, lead and mercury problems, environmental job training and careers and brownfield redevelopment.

Track 2—K-12 school teachers–offered state-certified continuing education to K-12 teachers on environmental education. This training was designed to provide environmental educators with tools and resources to enhance the awareness of air quality and pollution prevention. Participants learned team participation projects and hands-on exercises to use in the classroom. They received an age-specific Environmental Resource Guide and an instructional manual with lesson plans ranging from simple pencil-and-paper exercises to more elaborate laboratory experiments.

Track 3--Small/medium-sized businesses–was geared to help small- and medium-sized businesses understand the most common air, waste and water environmental problems and learn steps to avoid them and comply with regulations. The three Track 3 sessions provided up-to-date environmental information and education on a wide range of current issues, including asbestos, air permits, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, storm water runoff programs and pollution prevention.

Purpose

Conference organizers felt that Track 1 provided information valuable enough to preserve and share with the general population. While Track 2 and Track 3 generated useful information, they were intended for more specific audiences.

Track 1 information was compiled into this guide to environmental resources in Metro East. As is common at conferences, much of the material was presented in a bullet-point format. That format has been retained in this guide.

This Resource Guide will serve as a reference on sustainable development and health issues for:

- community residents and groups
- church and civic organizations
- business owners
- nonprofit organizations
- federal, state, county and local governments
- industry
- educational institutions

It briefly describes population, environmental, and economic conditions and some special collaborative action programs in Metro East. The main portion of this guide summarizes the "how to" information on addressing sustainable development and health issues presented at the Track 1 sessions. After each session summary, resources for further information are listed from conference presenters and other sources. The resources include government, private, educational and nonprofit institutions and demonstrate the potential range of partners that can work together for a healthful environment. Organizers hope that this guide will help government, business, teachers and residents to connect with partners and share resources to achieve a healthful environment for everyone in Metro East. Additional resources may be found in libraries and community governments.

Background

For purposes of this project, Metro East, Illinois, is defined as the metropolitan area east of St. Louis, Missouri, comprising Madison and St. Clair counties. It lies at a hub of American crossroads, long known as the "gateway to the West," a region connected to the nation and to the world by major shipping, airport, rail, highway and communication infrastructure.s For many decades, Metro East has been a major center of transportation, manufacturing, commerce and education. In this dynamic place, many complex population, economic and environmental factors have been interacting and leading to change—in positive and negative ways. Many people in governmental, community, educational, nonprofit and private organizations have recognized that partnering and sharing resources to address the interrelated health, environmental and economic problems facing Metro East is the best recipe for success.

The People

In general, the population of Metro East is growing. Madison County increased 3.9 percent between 1999 and 2000, but the population of St. Clair County declined by 2.6 percent.

The Metro East population density is relatively high. St. Clair County has about 357 people per square mile; Madison County about 386 people per square mile. These counties have the fifth and sixth highest acreages of built-up area in the state.

The Economy

Poverty and unemployment in Metro East are moderate, but St. Clair County tends to have higher levels. In 2000, the unemployment rates in St. Clair and Madison counties were

5.9 percent and 4.7 percent, respectively. The percentage of the population living below the poverty level in St. Clair County in 1997 was estimated at 16 percent with 25 percent of children below the poverty level. In Madison County, about 11 percent of the general population and 17 percent of children were below the poverty level.

The Environment

Because of its location at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, Metro East encompasses unique natural resources. The nation's largest flyway for migrating birds stretches over the area. St. Clair County contains the third largest areas of wetlands and bottomland hardwood forest in the state of Illinois. Madison County ranks 12th in the state for amount of bottomland hardwood forest. Springs, caverns, bluffs, loess hill prairie and sinkholes in this area represent unique ecosystem components in the state.

The combination of these wet ecosystems with the dense and growing population of Metro East has created problems with storm water runoff and flooding. Since 1993, floods have resulted in the declaration of presidential disaster areas four times in Metro East. Often, new development in an upstream community has contributed to flooding problems in older communities downstream.

Traffic patterns and the manufacturing economy of Metro East contribute to environmental hazards such as poor air quality. The area does not meet health-related air quality standards for ozone and lead, for example. Older homes, buildings and industrial sites in declining urban core areas have created environmental problems in Metro East. According to Illinois Department of Public Health data, more than 1,600 children in the East St. Louis area have elevated blood lead levels, second only to Chicago. Metro East has 52 sites that are being investigated by EPA's Superfund or Resource Conservation and Recovery Act corrective action programs, plus numerous brownfields. Metro East residents have expressed concern about illegal dumping, open burning, and abandoned and deteriorating houses.

Special Collaboration Programs

Recognizing that a regional, multifaceted approach is the most efficient way to address the interrelated challenges facing Metro East, partners from many institutions and organizations have come together in collaborative action programs. Partners in these programs include federal, state, regional, county and local governments; educational institutions and teachers; small businesses and large industries; professional associations; church and civic organizations; residents and neighborhood groups; social service and economic development groups; nonprofit organizations; and health services institutions

The Partnering for a Healthy Environment Conference and this Resource Guide were aimed at providing information to these groups of people to help stimulate resource sharing and collaborative action in Metro East. Current collaborative action programs in Metro East that have received federal funds from EPA include:

- Brownfields Showcase Communities Initiative to develop a regional, partnership-based approach to brownfields revitalization
- Environmental Monitoring for Public Access and Community Tracking to provide useful and timely environmental information to communities
- Gateway Initiative to focus federal, state and local resources on environmental issues and community-based programs

- Brownfield Worker Training Program to combine job training, technical expertise, and social service resources to meet local employment needs
- Supplemental Environmental Projects to turn an environmental infraction into an opportunity to improve the environment and community relations
- Federal Interagency Environmental Justice Demonstration Pilot to reduce lead contamination exposures and protect children's health

Many of these programs are described in the conference session summaries in this Resource Guide.

Summary of Conference Resource Information

Plenary Session

John Baracevic, chairman, St. Clair County Board
David Ullrich, acting regional administrator, EPA Region 5
Richard Mark, CEO and president. St. Mary's Hospital
J. R. Behnken, former member, St. Clair County Board
Debra Powell, mayor, East St. Louis

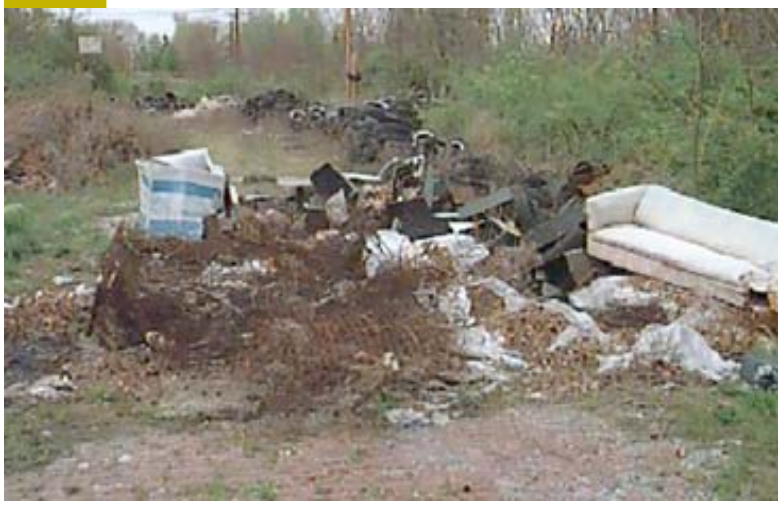
Speakers welcomed conference participants and set the collaborative tone of the conference. Baracevic cited the construction of MidAmerica Airport as an example of a project where collaboration benefitted the environment. EPA, Illinois EPA, Sierra Club and other environmental groups participated in the planning and, as a result, 700 acres of forest in St. Clair County were preserved and procedures were implemented to safeguard air and water resources. Ullrich cited the conference as a powerful way of bringing people together and making contacts to make real progress in improving The Metro East environment through such programs as brownfields cleanup, lead poisoning prevention and job training. Mark highlighted collaborative programs in Metro East to identify causes of and solutions to upper respiratory problems in children and to implement broad-scale screening for and prevention of children's lead exposure. Behnken described the interrelated environment/economic development cycle in Metro East that results in economic decline in older city areas, people migrating out of these areas, new development in the areas surrounding the community, new environmental problems such as flooding, and further economic decline in the older community areas. He highlighted several recent, positive collaborative development or redevelopment projects in the region, including the Casino Queen, State Street

Center, Metro Link, Parsons Place, and American Water Company. Powell stressed that the participation of a range of people in collaborative partnerships helps to maintain the focus of the solution on the real, human impacts of the situation.

The speakers provided many valuable insights, such as:

- no single person or organization has all the resources needed to solve complex problems alone
- one plus one equals more than two in collaborative partnerships, which combine and multiply the creative solutions, finances, energy and support of individuals
- it is important to begin communications and make direct contact with key partners early in the collaboration process
- all collaborative partners who come to the table have different constituencies and points of view, and this diversity of ideas can be an asset
- people's health is directly linked to their environment, and the quality of their environment is directly linked to the status of the economy
- collaborative partnerships can create opportunities from problems, like the mythical phoenix rising from the ashes
- positive changes are coming to Metro East, thanks to the work of collaborative partnerships

TRACK 1 SESSION SUMMARIES



Healthy Homes / Healthy Lives

Denise McClearey, solid waste coordinator, Madison County Building, Zoning and Environment Department
Greg James, environmental health scientist, St. Clair County Health Department
Dr. Tipu Sultan, physician, Environmental Health and Allergy Center, Florissant, Mo.

The presenters detailed the legal framework of solid waste management, examined factors that

affect indoor air quality, and focused on how persons can recognize signs of environmental sensitivity based on exposure to chemicals in daily living. All three identified conditions that can affect quality of life and recommended actions to reduce exposure to contaminants.

Counties are responsible for helping to enforce state laws regarding burning, dumping and illegal landfilling and local laws addressing weed control, burning and property standards.

Burning: In Illinois, it is generally permissible to burn landscape waste generated on site, such as fall leaves. However, many local jurisdictions prohibit or restrict landscape waste burning within their boundaries. For example, leaf burning is prohibited in Edwardsville and restricted in Glen Carbon. Burning of trash, such as paper, construction and demolition debris or tires, is seldom allowed in the state. The only exception to this rule is for incineration facilities certified and monitored by EPA.

Dumping: Illegal dumping, known as open dumping or fly dumping, is a crime against property. If someone dumps trash on another person's property, the property owner or resident can be held responsible for causing or allowing the dumping. Responsibility will shift to the dumper if that person can be identified. To encourage residents to report illegal dumping and to discourage illegal dumpers, two programs have been implemented in Madison County:

- a reward program that encourages residents to report incidents of illegal dumping by providing $100 for tips that lead to arrest.
- fines and a confiscation program that allows authorities to impound vehicles used in illegal dumping activities.

Managing solid waste from the home

Residential recycling programs reduce the amount of material sent to landfills. Special collection days allow residents to dispose of household hazardous waste and other materials not suitable for normal landfill waste treatment. Special household hazardous waste collections are funded through collaborative partnerships.

Indoor air contaminants

Most people spend 70 to 90 percent of their time indoors with 50 to 60 percent of that time strictly within the home. A number of typical household appliances, building products and common household products can influence indoor air quality. Local health departments do not have the resources to routinely test residences for air contaminants, but they can provide referrals to private companies and laboratories that provide such services.

Air contaminants include:

- gases produced from appliances and activities, such as:
  - nitrogen dioxide from gas, wood and coal burning stoves
  - carbon monoxide from gas, wood and coal burning stoves; automobile exhaust
  - formaldehyde from building materials, furniture upholstery, adhesives and cigarette smoke
  - radon from soil or rock under the foundation of a home or building
- fibers, such as asbestos from roofing, insulation and heating equipment that become a problem when airborne biological pollutants, such as
  - fungi
  - molds
  - bacteria
  - dust mites
  - animal hair
- toxic chemicals
- potassium hydroxide, used in oven cleaners, lye and fertilizers

Preventive measures to help maintain indoor air quality

- maintain appliances and furnaces in good operating condition
- seal exposed asbestos material with plastic and tape until professional removal
- regularly clean and disinfect household furniture and surfaces, especially appliances such as air conditioners, humidifiers and dehumidifiers
- eliminate exposure to second-hand cigarette smoke by quitting smoking, smoking outside or exhausting one room to the outside.
- have a certified professional test residences for radon
- avoid using toxic cleaning chemicals, especially in a sprayed form
- do not operate cars, trucks or vans in closed garage
- never use ovens or ranges as a source of heat

The environment and health

Our health and well-being reflect the conditions we live in and choices we make with respect to nutrition, medicine and lifestyle. It is important to recognize the number of potential environmental contaminants people are in contact with in their homes and from their food, as well as the air, water and soil. Increasing amounts of chemical pollutants, some 50 percent of them invented by people, are in the environment. There are more than 60,000 commercial products containing many chemical compounds. A factor aggravating indoor health problems is airtight buildings designed to conserve energy, which concentrate pollutants if proper air exchange is not achieved. Another issue is the tendency of many health care providers to prescribe drug treatments rather than identifying and attacking potential environmental and behavioral problems underlying health problems. It is important for people to educate themselves on health issues and to question their health care providers.

Signals of sensitivity to environmental conditions include sneezing, headaches, nausea, vomiting, burning, watering eyes, dizziness, skin irritation and fatigue.

Practical steps to maintaining a healthful environment include:

- reducing exposure to contaminants by improving indoor air quality
- avoiding the standard American diet high in fat and chemical preservatives
- drinking more water
- quitting smoking
- preventing exposure to chemicals in the home, school and workplace by using alternatives to chemical cleaning and personal hygiene products

Resources

For landscape waste burning restrictions, contact your local government.

Report illegal dumping or trash burning local to your law enforcement agency, with violator's license plate and location information.

Other contacts:

Madison County illegal dumping hotline – (618) 692-4433

Madison County Sheriff – (618) 692-6087

St. Clair County Office of Environmental Health – (618) 233-7769

St. Clair County Sheriff environmental crime in progress hotline: (618) 277-3500
To leave an anonymous message:
(800) 640-DIME

Household hazardous waste and special collections

East-West Gateway Coordinating Council
10 Stadium Plaza
St. Louis, MO 63102
(314) 421-4220 or (618) 274-2750
http://www.ewgateway.org/susreg/hhw/hhw.htm#guide

Illinois EPA Bureau of Land Waste Reduction Unit – (217) 785-8604

Indoor air quality:

EPA free publications – (800) 490-9198
http://www.epa.gov/iaq

Recycling programs

Local governments

Madison County Planning and Development Department,
Recycling Program Division
157 N. Main St., Suite 254
Edwardsville, IL 62025
(618) 692-7040, ext. 6664
recycle@co.madison.il.us

St. Clair County –
(618) 277-6600

Asbestos:

R. Kent Cook
Asbestos Abatement Section
Illinois Department of Public Health
525 West Jefferson St.
Springfield, IL 62761
(217) 782-3517

Radon:

Mike Moomey
Environmental Toxicology
Illinois Department of Public Health
525 West Jefferson St.
Springfield, IL 62761
(217) 782-5830

Marjorie Walle
Radon Programs and OES Quality Assurance
Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety
1301 Knotts St.
Springfield, IL 62703
(800) 325-1245 (Illinois residents only)
(217) 786-6398

Healthful eating:

National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences Recommended Daily Allowances –
(202) 334-2000
http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/Dietary/rda.html

Asthma control

Your health care provider

American Lung
Association of Illinois
3000 Kelly Lane
Springfield, IL 62707
Phone: (217) 787-5864;
or (800) LUNG-USA
info@lungil.org
http://lungusa.org/

St. Clair County Health Department
19 Public Square, Suite 150
Belleville, IL 62220
(618) 233-7703

Madison County Health Department
(618) 692-8954

Chemical exposure and environmentally safe products:

American Health Foundation
(800) 428-2343

The Ecology Box
(800) 735-1371

SEPs: How Your City Can Benefit

Debra Klassman, EPA
James Morgan, Office of the Illinois Attorney General
Don Ridenhower, Solutia, Sauget, Ill.

The presenters defined Supplemental Environmental Projects, discussed aspects of planning a SEP and described an example of a successful SEP.

What are Supplemental Environmental Projects?

A Supplemental Environmental Project, or SEP, is an environmental project "above and beyond the call of duty" that a company (or institution) volunteers to perform as part of a legal settlement to an environmental law violation. A SEP must be an action, not just a monetary donation, that improves, protects or reduces risks to public health or the environment. There also has to be a relationship between the SEP and the environmental law broken. For example, if air quality standards are not met, the SEP should address some aspect of air quality. The SEP must be a

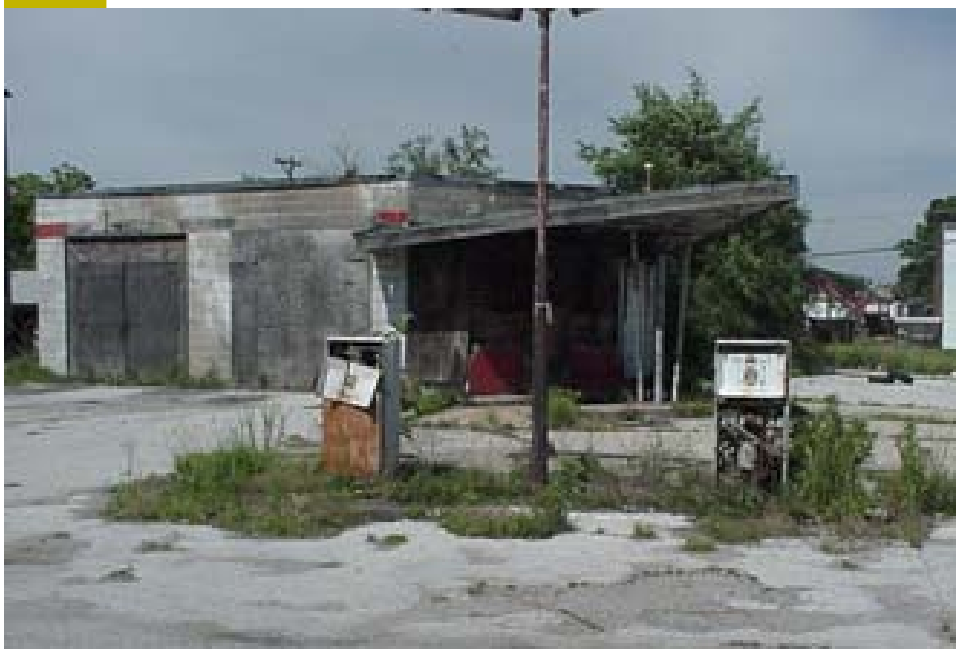
new, voluntary project, not something the company would be required to do anyway. A SEP is not an alternative to compliance with environmental law.

SEPs may include:

- addressing public health
- changing company operations to prevent pollution by reducing or eliminating the source
- restoring or protecting the environment
- planning or preparing for emergencies
- assessing/auditing company environmental impacts beyond what standard business practices require
- helping other companies reduce pollution and comply with environmental laws

How is a SEP planned?

After proving that an environmental violation has occurred, EPA begins confidential settlement discussions where it may be determined that a SEP is appropriate. A prosecuting authority, such as the state EPA or state attorney general may also be involved in these discussions. A SEP that matches the situation may be identified from an "idea bank." Anyone may submit suggestions to these idea banks. The SEP conditions are developed on a case-by-case basis. What works in one situation may not be appropriate for another. EPA reviews the acceptability of proposed SEPs and verifies their completion, but does not become directly involved in their implementation. The SEP must be entirely planned and managed by the company.



Not all SEPs will directly affect the community, but for those that do, community involvement in the SEP is encouraged. Community involvement guidelines include:

- identifying a known local interest
- making sure everyone understands the process and has realistic expectations
- keeping the community informed through such means as public meetings or newsletters

In some cases, the proposed SEP may be put up for public comment before a final, legal agreement is reached.

For community-based SEPs, it is important to build cooperation and involvement. The Illinois Attorney General's office is working to strengthen contacts with local agencies to help identify violations and to develop ideas of local needs that could be addressed through SEPs.

What benefits do SEPS provide?

For the company that violated environmental law, fines may be reduced. The SEP offers more flexibility. In addition, a good-faith effort to improve the environment and reach out to the community may improve the company's image. Communities may receive expertise, equipment and other assistance to make environmental improvements they could not accomplish on their own—real needs can be met. The extra energy the company puts into the SEP will help to create and maintain a safer, healthier environment for everyone.

SEPs in action

An example of a successful SEP began when a rail car overturned and was punctured, highlighting the community's need for emergency response capabilities. In this community, which is a hub of rail and road transportation near water, the local fire department did not have money or resources for a hazardous materials response. It would have been too expensive for the community to start such a program on its own.

The SEP, which took 2000 hours of volunteer work to execute, began with a drive to bring ideas, experienced people, donations, loans and corporate support to the effort. The project was completed in one year with a budget of $1 million.

Planning highlights of the SEP included:

- public education and communication plan with a monthly newsletter and media coverage
- technical input from experienced people
- drills and critiques to improve team response

- cooperation with fire chiefs association and state fire marshal's office
- addressing industry concerns about legal issues

The results of the SEP provided:

- emergency plans for addressing numerous hazardous materials incidents, including transportation spills, special rescues, illegal drug labs and terrorism
- nationally recognized training for volunteers, response leaders and rescuers with technical training and practice working as a team
- team organization chart with communications linked through 911 system
- specialized equipment that is checked monthly
- mission to save lives and protect property with a focus on quick response
- community-wide and regional response capabilities
- increased sense of community and pride among the volunteers

Supplemental Environmental Project Resources

To submit ideas for SEPs or for more information:

Don de Blasio
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EPA Region 5 (P-19J)
77 West Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 886-4360
deblasio.don@epa.gov

Janet Haff
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EPA Region 5 (WPTD)
77 West Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 353-7923
haff.janet@epa.gov

Debra Klassman
EPA Region 5 (C-14J)
77 West Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 886-6742
klassman.deborah@epa.gov

John Justice
Illinois EPA
2009 Mall St.
Collinsville, IL 62234
(618) 346-5120

Jim Morgan
Illinois Attorney General's Office
500 S. 2nd St.
Springfield, IL 62706
(217) 524-7506

Eyesores in Your Community: How to Clean Them Up

Kim Hobley, East St. Louis Community Action Network
LaTonya Webb, Neighborhood Technical Assistance Center
Kathleen O'Keefe, Neighborhood Law Office in East St Louis
Mike Jones, executive director, St. Louis Regional Empowerment Zone

The presenters discussed collaborative community cleanup programs in the Metro East area and the importance of economic development in sustaining and improving communities.

An example of a collaborative community cleanup program

The University of Illinois developed a program to teach grassroots organizations how to address problems in their cities. The East St. Louis Community Action Network , or ESL CAN, was started in 1990 as a collaboration between UI and a coalition of neighborhood groups. The purpose of this collaboration was to combat deterioration, lessen the burden on the government, defend human and civil rights, work for relief of poverty, identify resources for self-help and develop civic partnerships.

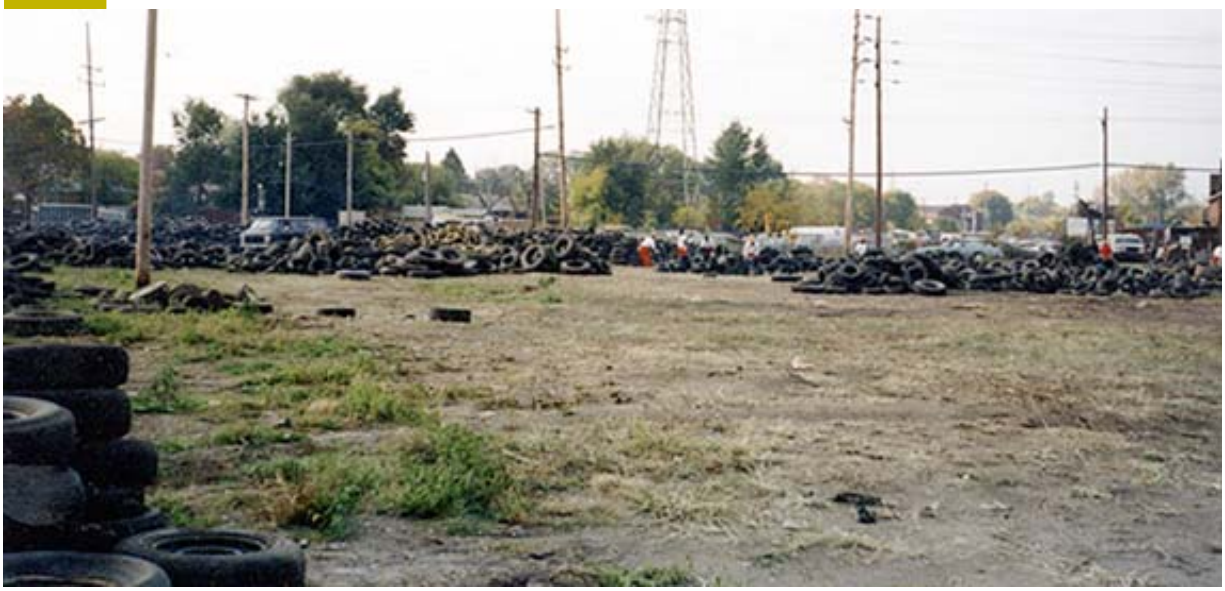
In the fall of 1995, ESL CAN conducted a survey to determine what people thought were the biggest problems in their neighborhoods. The top issues were debris-filled lots, weeds, derelict buildings and abandoned cars. Planners determined that because these were code enforcement violations that the city was responsible for, it would be important to develop a way to identify and deter violations. Through a collaborative partnership of ESL CAN, Neighborhood Law Office, New Spirit Neighborhood Organizing and Neighborhood Technical Assistance Center, organizers set up a code enforcement hot line to document sanitation violations.

In addition to identifying code violations, ESL CAN worked to improve communication within the city. Actions included:

- developing a process to get the community to do its job, such as keeping a master log of code violations
- targeting community officials and pressuring them into addressing the problems, such as by picketing, appearing everywhere the community officials went, filing large numbers of complaints, following up with officials on every complaint filed and making sure that fines collected were used to solve community eyesores
- identifying residential concerns about properties
- identifying owners of problem properties and finding less costly ways of getting this information

A strategy was developed to deal with neighborhood eyesores:

- send a written notification to community council members detailing expectations, codes and dates and, if there is no response, visiting the council members
- hold a block meeting after a formal request is made to develop a strategy of needed actions and who will take each role
- pressure owners to clean up their property by advertising a "derelict owner of the month" in newspapers, signs on the property and news conferences



- identify other interested partners, such as insurance agencies and schools
- educate community members about community codes and legal remedies

An example of a collaborative community action program:

The Neighborhood Technical Assistance Center

NTAC helps provide equipment, tools, and proposal and planning assistance to address neighborhood problems. Easy and inexpensive access to information is a big issue for communities. NTAC provides information services including user-friendly software such as Geographic Information Systems and organization and distribution of information such as through mapping.

NTAC also teaches residents to use this information in planning projects to clean up their neighborhoods. Planning steps include identifying problems, developing alternatives and seeking funds and other assistance.

NTAC helped to assess problems in the Lansdowne neighborhood in northern East St. Louis, where some 50 percent of the buildings were vacant. Students were sent into the neighborhood to perform an assessment of conditions. Then major property owners were identified. Another issue the NTAC helped to address in this neighborhood was Kill Creek, which was engineered to run underground and which contributed to flooding and trash buildup.

Using the law for community cleanup

The Neighborhood Law Office in East St. Louis is a not-for-profit agency that helps eliminate community eyesores and derelict buildings. Some issues the Neighborhood Law Office addresses are:

- finding unknown or deceased property owners
- lack of money to demolish derelict structures
- the limits of lawsuits and how much time they take

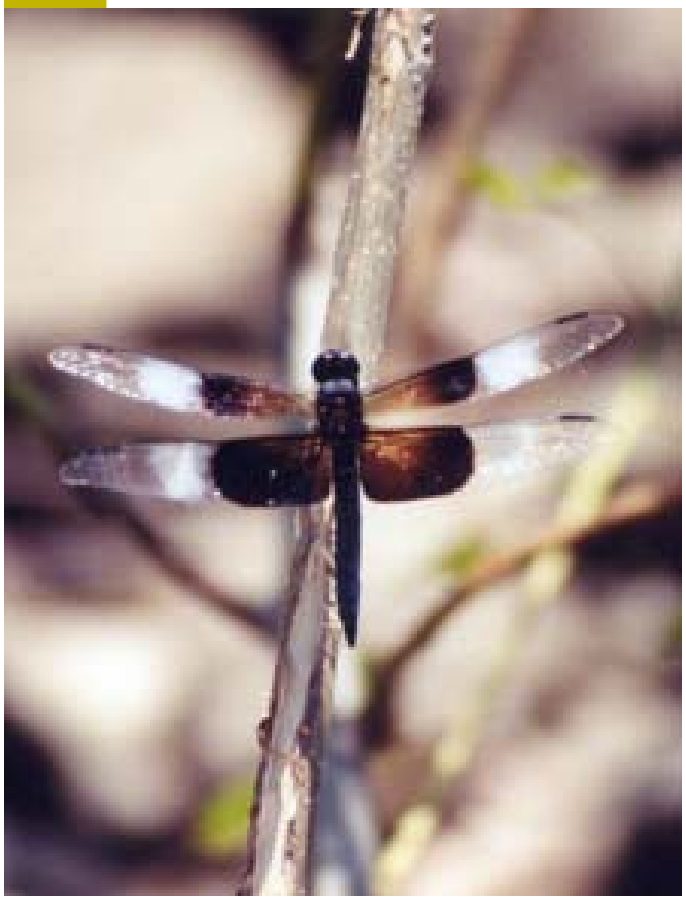
If a property is determined to be dangerous, it is easier to move to action because the community is responsible for the health and safety of its residents. While the city of East St. Louis is poor, it does have funding sources in place to assist with demolition. The city must hold property owners accountable and enforce codes. If it does, it will be repaid for its efforts through increased tax rolls.

The city of East St. Louis has the power to collect property cleanup fees, but this is rarely used because of the low rate of return. One solution is to place a lien against the property

for the cleanup costs. This lien comes before any liens on equity debt. Properties could be seized based on delinquency. Quick seizure is best because it creates pressure to act.

The importance of economic development in sustainable community cleanup

A growth strategy and market-based community plans are key to maintaining and stabilizing a neighborhood and community. In the past there have been many cycles of gathering ideas, drawing up plans and estimating expenses, but nothing getting done because it's too expensive. The range of possible solutions needs to be based on what people will spend money on. Depressed areas need new money and new people; they need to attract outside capital debt and investment. To help attract this investment, a community could assemble land and prepare sites that would attract businesses. To develop an effective economic development plan, one needs to:



- anticipate where opportunities are going to be
- think about projects that will result from the first project
- think beyond your neighborhood
- analyze the situation
- organize the information
- make a decision based on the facts

An economic development project in inner city areas should:

- consider local businesses that could supply services
- attract money and people from the outside
- create jobs with a living wage without a high cost of entry

Key points to keep in mind include:

- capital goes where invited and stays where welcome
- it's harder to do business where there are fewer businesses
- one economic development project should set up the next five

- economic growth will remove community eyesores
- there is great value in grassroots work, law, collaboration and economic development partnerships

What development incentives are available for Illinois communities?

Empowerment Zone programs can provide some startup assistance for documented ideas with a chance for success. Authority for tax-exempt bonds have a high impact on real estate development, but are hard to use due to employment requirements. Federal grant programs are available for

- community development, housing, public infrastructure and parks;
- assistance in keeping existing businesses and developing new ones;
- workforce development, including high-end training for marketable and portable skills; and
- industrial and commercial site development.

The federal Mississippi River Corridor Brownfields Initiative is helping to develop riverfront plans and market-based feasibility studies for East St. Louis. Other brownfield programs can provide assistance to restore properties to useable condition.

What can residents do to help clean up eyesores and promote economic development in their communities?

Some actions that residents can take to work on improving their communities are:

- report illegal dumping to local law enforcement agencies
- report suspected hazardous waste to Illinois EPA
- contact EPA, the Illinois attorney general or Illinois EPA with ideas for supplemental environmental projects
- look at the limited resources in the city budget, evaluate your priorities, determine what you are willing to give up and talk to your government
- find ways to make local governments accountable in areas with low economic development
- support local business owners and ask them to keep their business there

Resources

For information or technical assistance on community improvement programs in Alorton, Brooklyn, Centreville, East St. Louis and Washington Park or the East St. Louis Community Action Network:

Neighborhood Technical
Assistance Center
348R Collinsville Ave.
East St. Louis, IL 62201
(618) 271-9605

Neighborhood Law Office programs :

Kathleen O'Keefe
Neighborhood Law Office
705 Summit Ave.
East St. Louis, IL 62201
(618) 271-0821

Empowerment Zones in the Greater St. Louis area:

Greater St. Louis Regional
Empowerment Zone
Management Corporation
611 Olive St. , Suite 1641
St. Louis, MO 63101
http://focus-stl.org/zone/

Kathryn Carr
kcarr@stlouis.missouri.org
(314) 622-3400, ext. 669

LeaAnne DeRigne
lderigne@stlouis.missouri.org
(314) 622-3400, ext. 670

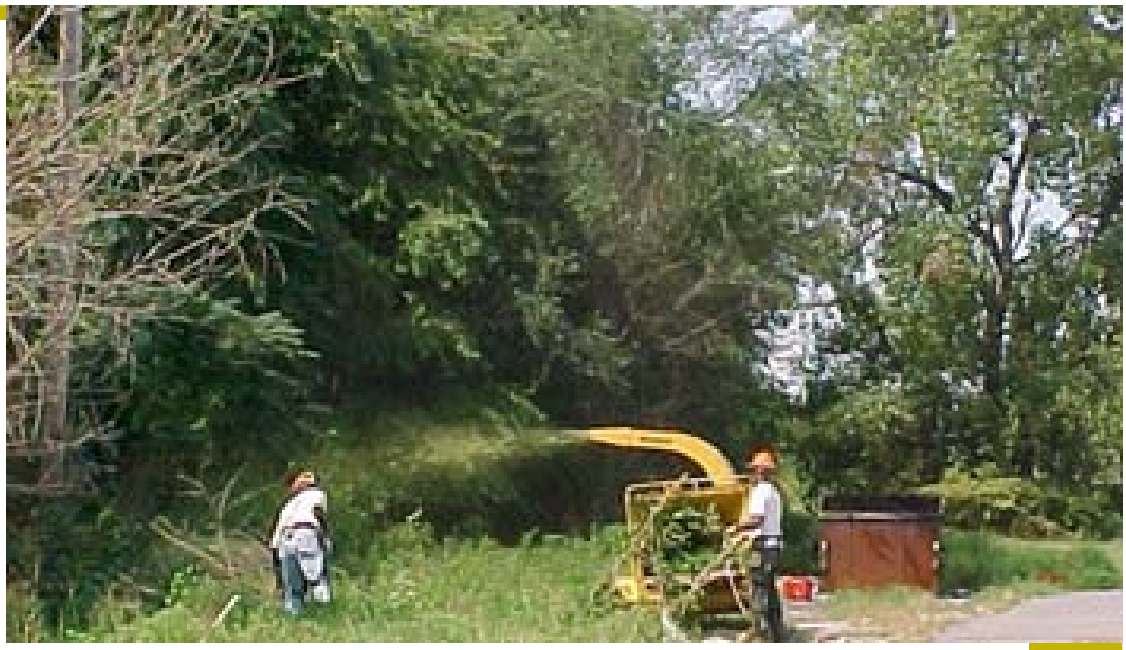
Environmentally sound economic development strategies:

Institute for Local Self-Reliance
1313 Fifth St. SE
Minneapolis, MN 55414
(612) 379-3815
http://www.ilsr.org/

Keep Illinois Beautiful
(312) 984-0448
http://www.kab.org

Make East St. Louis Beautiful
Geraldine Jenkins, Executive Director
(618) 482-6621

Proud Partners, Inc. (Belleville)
Louis Teiemann, Coordinator
(618) 236-2606



Regional Environmental Issues: How Your City Fits In

Penni Livingston, attorney, Livingston Law Office, Fairview Heights
Ed Weilbacher, coordinator, Southwest Illinois Resource Conservation and Development
Ted Shekell, planning director, City of O'Fallon

The presenters talked about development of a county ordinance to address regional storm water issues, the status of natural resources in Metro East and how a community creates a healthy environment for its residents.

How is storm water a regional environmental problem?

When more impervious surfaces are constructed, such as buildings and pavement, rain water can't be absorbed into the ground in these areas and builds up on the surface. When water channels are diverted, they can erode and begin to fill up. These situations cause water to build up more quickly, which leads to flooding. In the past, people haven't managed development for storm water. Generally, the effects of new development on existing development have not been addressed.

How can regional storm water problems be addressed?

Develop minimal storm water control measures. While EPA has had some involvement, the participation of local cities and governments is important.

Key elements of developing storm water control measures include:

- broad effort to involve a wide range of participants through education and outreach
- public involvement and participation, such as through panel groups, meetings, and hearings
- identification of a lead agency with expertise and statutory authority
- addressing specific problems, such as construction-site storm water runoff and illegal dumping
- consensus-building process to improve the control measures and address concerns
- providing certification of compliance with the control measures to address lawsuits

In a proposed St. Clair County storm water control ordinance, the lead role was given to the county Soil and Water Conservation District. The district got this role because it had the knowledge and statutory authority to address soil erosion and land management issues. Additionally, the district provided a regional influence that would help overcome conflicts between municipalities. The Home Builders Association was an important participant in the draft ordinance consensus-building process. In Madison County, efforts are under way to get more community commitment and participation by local leaders to develop a storm water ordinance development.

Status of natural resources in Metro East

St. Clair and Madison counties contain rich and unique natural resources, including wetlands, bottomland hardwood forests, rest areas for migrating birds along the nation's largest flyway, sinkhole plains, loess hill prairie, scenic bluffs, freshwater springs, caverns and habitat for wildlife. However, these ecosystem resources have been degraded over time due to development. As result:

- wetland, floodplain forest and prairie acreage declined
- many septic systems not meeting state codes for discharge
- many private water wells contaminated with coliform bacteria
- four presidential disaster designations declared since 1993.
- urbanization increasingly causing habitat areas to be fragmented or eliminated with negative impact on animal species

This decline in Metro East ecosystems is caused by a failure to understand the resources. People appreciate these resources and want:

- open space
- clean water

- no flooding
- healthful ecosystem
- forests
- good quality of life

How can you help protect resources in Metro East?

Residents should participate in protecting community resources. Actions they can take include:

- make an effort to understand resources, especially the natural resources
- develop a local legacy program to inventory the natural, cultural and historic resources
- recognize the true cost of development and the loss of community identity
- understanding how water resources flow among communities in their watershed
- working to reestablish habitat corridors
- educating themselves and others
- letting leaders know what is important to them
- initiating regional cooperation and appeal to communities upstream

A city's perspective on creating a healthy community

Cities are responsible for providing many services to residents, including:

- police, fire and other emergency services
- water and sewer systems, roads and storm drainage
- schools and libraries
- green, open and civic spaces and other environmental amenities
- planning, building and zoning

- services to assure a safe and stable stock of homes and other buildings and working toward a sustainable community

When a community grows, there is an accompanying competition for resources that causes strain on services and finances. Typical resident complaints about growth include:

- loss of environmental qualities
- traffic congestion
- loss of locally owned businesses
- expanding schools with an increasing property tax burden

Growth in Metro East communities may be the result of many factors:

- national economy and interest rates
- regional economy and spill-over from west county St. Louis
- great school systems
- environmental qualities
- small-town amenities close to St. Louis

The strains placed on a community by growth and development force policymakers to address new policy challenges. For example, single-family home developments cost more to service then the direct economic benefits they provide to the community, and these developments are often subsidized by commercial developments.

When annexations and developments are considered, decision-makers need to carefully weigh the development costs with the economic benefits and tax revenues likely to be generated. For a community to be sustainable in the long term, the community must consider many new policy questions:

- Is there a way for new development to pay for its own infrastructure and services?
- How can environmentally sensitive development be encouraged?
- How will the impacts on schools be addressed?
- Can the community's economic base be diversified?
- How can the community cooperate with county and neighboring community governments?
- Is a greater emphasis on urban design and property maintenance laws needed?
- How can reinvestment in the community's older core areas be encouraged?

Whatever policies are implemented, communities must be careful to follow federal and other laws when considering development proposals because when a development proposal is denied, the community is often sued.

Some environmental goals the city of O'Fallon created to help address the challenges of growth and development include:

- adopting an environmental plan
- protecting habitat
- educating residents about their environment
- requiring that new development not make storm water runoff problems worse
- promoting development policies that maintain as much of the natural environment as possible
- encouraging non-polluting transportation systems

Resources

Flooding and storm water issues

St. Clair County Soil and Water Conservation District
2031 Mascoutah Road
Belleville, IL 62220
(618) 233-5583
sccswcd@compu-type.net

Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District
7205 Marine Road
Edwardsville, IL 62025
(618) 656-5166
Fax (618) 656-5187

Metro East Watershed Planning Office
535 Edwardsville Road, Suite 210
Troy, IL 62294

Home Builders Association of Greater Southwest Illinois
100 E. Washington St. Suite 200
Belleville, IL 62220-2206
(618) 234-4483
(618) 234-6829 (fax)
info@hbaswil.org

Sierra Club
Piasa Palisades Group
223 Market St.
Alton, IL 62002
(618) 462-6802
(618) 462-0282 (fax)
cfavilla@ezl.com

Natural resources in Metro East and Southwestern Illinois RC&D services:

Ed Weilbacher, Coordinator
Southwestern Illinois Resource Conservation & Development
406 E. Main St.
Mascoutah, IL 62258
(618) 566-4451
www.swircd.org

Local watershed:

Surf Your Watershed
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Mail Code 4503F
401 M St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20460
(202) 260-7444
http://www.epa.gov/surf/

Regional planning information:

Madison County Building, Zoning, and Environment Department
157 N. Main St. Suite 254
Edwardsville, IL 62025
(618) 692-7040, ext. 4468

St. Clair County Zoning, Mapping, and Platting Department
10 Public Square
St. Clair County Courthouse
Belleville, IL 62220
(618) 277-6600

Southwestern Illinois Metropolitan Area Planning Commission
201 West Main
Collinsville, IL 62234
(618) 334-4250

The Silent Epidemic: Lead and Mercury

Tony Camillo, director, Corporate Health Center, St. Mary's Hospital, East St. Louis
Joan Scharf, CD housing coordinator, St. Clair Intergovernmental Grants Department
Cheryl Jouett, program administrator, Madison County Development Program
Toni Corona, environmental health services manager, Madison County Health Department

Presenters discussed collaborative health initiatives to prevent lead poisoning and the health risks of mercury and how to address mercury in the home.

Lead and human health

It does not take much lead to exceed healthful limits and cause lead poisoning. Lead can get into the body by inhalation of dust, ingestion of dust and ingestion of paint chips. Once taken

in, the body takes up lead as it does calcium, with lead going deep into the bones. Health problems include hyperactivity, hypertension and kidney damage. Lead levels in the body can be determined by a simple finger-prick blood test. When mental and physical symptoms of lead poisoning appear, it is too late to prevent permanent damage.

Lead hazard sources include:

- hazardous waste sites
- former industrial sites, such as an abandoned lead smelter
- contaminated biosolids (sludge) disposal areas
- contaminated soil around homes
- household paint in older homes (pre-1978)

Programs to address lead problems provided by St. Clair and Madison counties, St. Mary's Hospital and other collaborative partners include:

- screening children for lead exposure
- sharing costs for remediation of rental homes
- rehabilitating homes to bring them up to code
- providing homeowners assistance program to inspect and test homes built before 1978
- weatherizing residences of low-income residents while addressing some lead issues
- providing emergency shelter grants for families living in lead-contaminated homes
- educating and reaching out to families, professionals,and other community members
- educating and licensing of construction workers to assure the proper handling of lead-containing materials.

Collaborative programs to address lead poisoning

When a blood test shows lead exposure, a team of Metro East partners begins an investigation to determine the source of the lead and attack the problem. The partners

come together to identify problems, share data and perform tests. Metro East partners in lead programs for investigation, remediation and education include:

- St. Mary's Hospital in East St. Louis
- St. Clair County government, including the Health Department
- Madison County government, including the Community Development Department
- Illinois Department of Public Health
- EPA
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- East Side Health District
- East St. Louis Community Action Network
- Head Start programs
- American Red Cross
- churches and neighborhood organizations
- lead contractors

Remediation of residences is important in areas where the buildings are old, such as in parts of St. Clair and Madison counties. It is important to use only properly trained and licensed contractors for lead remediation and to make sure that problem areas around windows and doors are addressed. Lead dust can enter a home through open windows and may be recirculated through the home when heating and cooling systems are turned on. A follow-up to cleaning a home for lead includes cleaning carpets, mopping floors and cleaning windowsills.

Mercury and human health

Mercury's physical and chemical properties have made it useful to people and have also made it a health problem. A liquid at room temperature, mercury expands and contracts uniformly as its temperature changes, which makes it useful in thermometers. Mercury evaporates easily, conducts electricity and combines easily with other metals. It kills bacteria and fungi and collects in higher concentrations in creatures higher up the food chain. Because of these characteristics, mercury may be found in:

- food fish raised in contaminated water
- thermostats
- mercury thermometers
- alkaline batteries
- fluorescent lights

- lights in some shoes and toys
- chemistry sets
- latex paint manufactured before 1990

When it is disposed of, mercury is a hazardous waste. It should NOT be poured down sinks, toilets or flood drains, and it should NOT be vacuumed up. Mercury-containing products in the home should be disposed of during a household hazardous waste collection day.

Mercury can be inhaled or absorbed into the bloodstream. Young children and fetuses are most at risk because of the effects on their developing brains. About half of the mercury in a person's body can be eliminated within 60 days through urine and feces. Elevated mercury levels can be detected by testing urine, blood or hair samples. Among other problems, mercury poisoning can cause cerebral palsy, psychomotor disorders and adverse effects on the kidneys, brain and central nervous system.

How can mercury poisoning be prevented?

To help prevent mercury poisoning:

- do not eat fish more than once a week
- use thermometers containing alcohol or digital thermometers
- use rechargeable batteries instead of alkaline ones
- report mercury spills in your home so they may be cleaned properly
- properly dispose of materials containing mercury

How should a mercury spill in the home be handled?

A mercury spill in a home can vaporize slowly. Home mercury spills often result from broken thermometers and thermostats. The most common form of mercury is liquid metallic. Mercury can enter the body through the skin, but the bigger threat comes from the vapors of liquid mercury, which are readily absorbed by the lungs and could potentially reach the brain. Exposure over a long period can cause health problems, so immediate cleanup is important.

A small mercury spill, one that flattens out to no more than the size of nickel, can be cleaned up safely by most people if certain precautions are followed. To clean up a mercury spill in the home:

- Do not let anyone walk through the mercury.
- Remove children and pregnant women from the area.
- Increase ventilation in the area of the spill.
- Do **NOT** vacuum the area because that will only help vaporize the mercury.
- Pick up the mercury with an eyedropper, playing card or other thin, flexible material (e.g., business card, pocket calendar) or masking tape.
- Triple bag the mercury and any items used to pick it up in plastic bags with zip closures or twist ties.
- Call your local health department for advice on disposal of the mercury and contaminated items.

Larger spills should be sealed off and reported immediately to your local health department or fire department.

Resources

Household lead hazard reduction programs:

Madison County Community Development Department
130 Hillsboro Ave.
Edwardsville, IL 62025
(618) 692-8940

St. Clair County Lead Hazard Reduction Program
19 Public Square, Suite 200
Belleville, IL 62220
(618) 277-6790, ext. 3227

Lead and mercury, and information on lead screening programs

Youe healthcare provider

St. Mary's Hospital
129 S. 8th St.
East St. Louis, IL 62009
(618) 274-1900
http://www.ancilla.org/stmary/index.html

Madison County Health Department
2119 Troy Road
Edwardsville, IL 62025
(618) 692-8954

St. Clair County Health Department
19 Public Square, Suite 150
Belleville, IL 62220
(618) 233-7703

National Lead Information Center
(800) 424-LEAD(5323)

Household hazardous waste collection:

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Bureau of Land – (217) 785-8604

Mercury in Illinois fish:

Illinois Department of Natural Resources publishes two guides, "Illinois Fish and Your Health" and "Expectant Mother's Guide to Eating Illinois Fish." To order publications, (217) 782-7498. For specific information regarding DNR's programs, call (217) 782-7454.

Environmental Job Training and Careers

Matthew D. Robinson, senior vice president, Environmental Operations, Inc.
Jim Monahan, senior project associate, William J. Harrison Education Center, St. Louis Community College
Chris King, director, Center of Environmental Education and Training, St. Louis School of Public Health
Donald Anderson, retired, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

The presenters described what environmental careers entail, what it takes to pursue an environmental career, elements of a successful job training program, and environmental job training opportunities in the region.

What is an environmental career?

There is no single definition of what an environmental career is because there are so many different types of work that relate to the environment. Robinson and King described general categories of environmental careers for laborers, technicians, professionals, and advanced professionals, including:

- field services, which may include collecting data samples, operating heavy machinery, remediation work or project management
- information management, which may include databases and geographic information systems
- laboratory analysis services, which may include analysis of chemical or microbiological samples
- regulatory affairs, which may include policy analysis, litigation service and monitoring for regulatory compliance for government or industry

- engineering, which includes problem identification, description of the problem's significance and solution design
- research, which may include finding information on a brownfield property
- topical expertise, which may include endangered species identification or wetland evaluation
- communication, which may include public affairs and public relations work

The topics that an environmental worker may address include:

- air quality management, such as the air pollutant violations in the St. Louis area
- natural resources management, such as evaluation of wetlands, endangered species, geologic formations or archeological significance
- pollution prevention technology, which is a relatively new concept of changing processes to reduce environmental risks
- remediation technology, such as brownfields redevelopment or ground water cleanup
- occupational safety and health, such as monitoring OSHA requirements or industrial pollutant emissions
- solid and hazardous wastes, such as landfill regulation
- water and waste water treatment, such as the storm water, sewage, and drinking water treatment facilities found in nearly every community

What does it take to pursue an environmental career?

Depending on the level of environmental career, the education and skills requirements can vary. Field work may require only a license or certificate, while laboratory or engineering work may require an advanced degree. King described the levels of education that can help someone get started in an environmental career.

- certificate course that would provide training needed to obtain a legally required license or certification, such as for asbestos or lead
- short course on a specific topic that would provide information needed to pass a certification test, such as for

- water treatment plant operation
- academic certification or associate degree programs that often provide technician training
- bachelor's or advanced degrees

Robinson described what employers look for when hiring an environmental worker:

- Relevant education, which may include a certificate or academic degree. While in the past an academic degree was not required for many environmental careers, employers are increasingly looking for employees with academic degrees.
- Relevant experience. Employers prefer employees with some experience, such as from a previous environmental job, an internship or hands-on training.
- Multiple skills. A job candidate with a range of skills is more attractive to an employer–for example, a field data collector who can repair machinery or a laboratory technician who can write well.
- General job skills, including computer, communication and writing skills. Employers also look for someone who could help bring in new business and who has the ability to advance within the company.

What makes an environmental job training program successful?

Monahan described the elements of a successful job training program. The most important components are:

- clear mission or purpose
- defined recruitment techniques and strategies
- method of explaining program expectations to participants
- anticipation of retention problems
- curriculum targeted to meet the needs of employers
- job placement assistance
- provision of on-the-job training or internships
- partnerships to capitalize on multiple strengths

Monahan described the partnerships involved in the St. Louis Community College Harrison Education Center's Brownfield Worker Training Program that contributed to the program's success in winning an EPA environmental worker training grant. The center has experience in designing and implementing job training programs. Saint Louis University's Center for

Environmental Education and Training brought technical expertise, a curriculum targeted to the needs of area employers and a service area covering Missouri and Illinois. A network of other agencies–including New Spirit Neighborhood Organizing, Veterans Advocates, East St. Louis Fathers Center and Urban Male Resources–provides case management and social services. Monahan noted that the Brownfield Worker Training Program, offered at no charge to participants, is always looking for new partner agencies to refer more program participants.

What job training opportunities are there in the region?

St. Louis Community College Harrison Education Center's Brownfield Worker Training Program. After receiving life skills/job readiness training from a partnering agency, participants may enroll in the program and receive certification in OSHA standards for the construction industry, lead abatement, asbestos abatement and hazardous waste site worker protection and emergency response.

Saint Louis University. The School of Public Health Center for Environmental Education and Training offers continuing education for environmental careers. The School of Public Health also offers a master of public health degree in industrial hygiene and master's and doctoral degrees in public health in environmental and occupational health and safety. The College of Arts and Sciences offers bachelor's degrees in environmental geology and environmental chemistry.

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. The Environmental Resource Training Center provides training for state certification exams in drinking water and waste water treatment and includes hands-on training in association with the university's water and waste water treatment center. Degrees are also offered in environmental engineering and environmental sciences, including interdisciplinary advanced degrees. Most of the physical science degrees include environmental options.

Many other environmental job training programs exist in the region and throughout the country, some of which may be available over the Internet. In any environmental job training program, hands-on training is essential.

Resources

Job training programs:

Chris King, Director
Center for Environmental Education
and Training
Saint Louis University School of Public Health
Doris O'Donnell Hall
3663 Lindell Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63108-3342
(314) 977-3242
kingcc@slu.edu

Jim Monahan, Senior Project Associate
St. Louis Community College
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4666 Natural Bridge
St. Louis, MO 63115
(314) 381-1848
jmonahan@stlcc.cc.mo.us

Environmental Resources Training Center
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
P.O. Box 1075
Edwardsville, IL 62026-1075
(618) 650-2030

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Edwardsville, IL 62026-1800
(618) 650-5014 or (618) 650-2533
smorgan@siue.edu

Madison County Employment and Training
Department
(618) 692-8942

Ron McAtee
Illinois Department of Human Services
Office of Employment and Training
400 Iles Park Place, 2nd floor
Springfield, IL 62762
(217) 782-5709
dhsd62lx@dhs.state.il.us

Brownfields: Barriers to Development and How Your City Can Overcome Them

Keary Cragan, EPA
Tom Miller, Illinois EPA
Deborah Roush, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District
Cathy Nicholson, formerly with the City of Wood River

The presenters discussed how EPA encourages brownfield cleanup, brownfields assistance programs available through Illinois EPA, a brownfield pilot project in the East St. Louis area, and a community's experience in brownfield redevelopment.

Brownfields and barriers to their development

Brownfields are "abandoned or underused industrial and commercial properties with actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment." Barriers to developing brownfields include fears about environmental contamination, especially high cleanup costs, lengthy and complicated clean-up processes, potential liability risk and government involvement.

Brownfields assistance programs

EPA encourages collaborative approaches to brownfield redevelopment through grant and loan programs, job training grants and technical assistance. The Illinois EPA Office of Brownfields Assistance is responsible for administering many of these programs in Illinois.

- Underground Storage Tank Fund helps eligible storage tank owners and operators pay for investigation and cleanup of contamination from certain underground storage tanks.
- Illinois Brownfields Redevelopment Grant Program provides municipalities with up to $120,000 ($240,000 starting in spring 2003) in matching funds to inventory and investigate brownfields (grant funds cannot be used to fund the cleanup activities). These grants are not available to those who caused the contamination.
- Illinois Brownfields Redevelopment Loan Program provides low-interest loans of up to $500,000 to assist with certain brownfield cleanup activities under the voluntary Site Remediation Program.

The Illinois EPA Office of Brownfields Assistance also provides community representatives who:

- travel to communities to help identify and evaluate sites with brownfield cleanup potential
- assist in identifying funding resources
- explain complexities and requirements of the various cleanup programs
- assist in grant and loan applications
- follow up after grants and loans are issued

To promote brownfields redevelopment, collaborative approaches to flexible, risk-based cleanups are sought. The site conditions, past uses, ground water status and intended future use are considered in

determining the flexibility of cleanup and engineering standards. If this flexible cleanup option results in site restrictions, those restrictions are recorded with the property deed.

East St. Louis Brownfield Assessment Pilot

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, EPA and other partners are working together on Brownfields Showcase Communities under the Mississippi River Corridor Brownfields Initiative, which promotes the following redevelopment goals:

- restore urban property to productive use and increase property value
- increase local jobs and the tax base
- mitigate public health and safety concerns
- reuse existing infrastructure in a positive way
- eliminate neighborhood blight and improve community image

The St. Louis/East St. Louis area was chosen as a Showcase Community to develop a regional approach to brownfields revitalization, stress regional partnerships to remove the river as a barrier and establish a process that can be used in other communities.

More than a dozen partners representing federal, state, regional and local governmental agencies; educational institutions; private companies; and non-profit organizations are participating in the East St. Louis Brownfield Assessment Pilot. The goals of the project are to:

- promote economic growth through planned reuse of abandoned and underused properties
- target areas with the highest potential for redevelopment to meet community needs in revitalization
- identify and promote the use of federal, state and local resources to help brownfields redevelopment efforts

Some brownfield focus areas in East St. Louis include:

- **The Central Business District.** The reuse plan is being updated and the partnership is working with a private developer. Challenges include the private ownership of many properties and poor infrastructure.
- **The Riverfront.** Many existing plans for development in this area are being considered. Challenges here include multiple private property owners and infrastructure problems.

The Hunter Packer Site. This site has minimal contamination and is privately owned, but it is more of an immediate opportunity than a part of a long-term redevelopment strategy.

The Light Industrial area. This is the most contaminated and of most environmental concern, but it has a prime location and open land, giving it high potential. It is privately owned and has no comprehensive reuse plan. Involvement of the public and local businesses has begun.

The ALCOA Site. The company is working with EPA and the City of East St. Louis to resolve legal problems and questions. Ideas to revitalize the area are being developed.

The pilot showcase project funds are finite, assistance is limited to assessments only, and the ultimate success of redevelopment efforts is dependent on the goodwill cooperation of private owners. The project will help set priorities for infrastructure needs, identify environmental issues, identify property ownership and create maps.

Brownfield program projects need to:

- keep sustainability as a goal and maintain a strong focus on the highest and best use for selected brownfield areas
- expand the program and develop a network of local, state, federal and private alliances to focus resources on brownfield initiatives
- develop effective communication between developers and owners

An example of successful brownfield development

The City of Wood River is a small town that experienced tremendous growth as a result of industrial development. However, when the markets changed, the property tax base of the community decreased and the community began to decline. Tax rates had to increase to support community services, which became an impediment to further economic development. The population declined and the community began to lose its identity and sense of community pride.

However, several regional factors combined to provide the community with an opportunity to turn itself around with a tourism boom:

- national scenic byway program
- American River Heritage Initiative

- bike trail along the levee
- Alton Belle casino
- Melvin Price Lock and Dam
- Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center
- I-255 extension

The community had good transportation access, good infrastructure and development incentives by being in an enterprise zone. Community planners considered all this and developed potential projects while being realistic about what the market could support. The collaborative partners in brownfield redevelopment and their roles, in order of importance, were:

- property owners–commitment to cleanup
- regulators–assure safety and compliance
- developers/bankers/lawyers
- city redevelopment, including creation of a website to get developers interested
- changing zoning codes to make development easier

Key lessons learned included:

- stability in the collaboration team makes developers more comfortable
- competition for industry and development is intense
- underused properties should be redeveloped instead of using green fields
- public involvement, with an educated community that knows what to expect and knows where to go for information, is a must

Resources

Illinois EPA has extensive information on its "Brownfields Frequently Asked Questions" site:
http://www.epa.state.il.us/land/brownfields/faq.html

To request the services of an Illinois EPA Brownfields representative:

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Bureau of Land, Office of Brownfields Assistance
1021 N. Grand Ave. East
Springfield, IL 62794-9276
(217) 785-9407

EPA brownfields assessment demonstration pilot grants:

Keary Cragan
EPA Region 5 (SE-4J)
77 West Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 353-5669
cragan.keary@epa.gov
http://www.epa.gov/brownfields

Deborah Roush
St. Louis District, USACE
1222 Spruce St.
St. Louis, MO 63103-2833
(314) 331-8033

Brownfields redevelopment:

The National Brownfield Association
3105-C N. Wilke Road
Arlington Heights, IL 60004
(847) 870-8208, ext. 16

The Brownfields Non-Profits Network
http://www.brownfieldsnet.org/

Brownfields Redevelopment: A Guidebook for Local Governments and Communities (1998)
The Northeast-Midwest Institute
218 D St. SE
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 544-5200

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Waste Management and Research Center
Illinois Society of Professional Engineers, St. Clair Chapter
Southern Illinois Regional Employers Association
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Air and Waste Management Association
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St. Louis Rams
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