

SUPERFUND REGIONAL PUBLIC LIAISON

DESCRIPTION

The Public Liaison is a Regional official designated to help people with issues or concerns about Superfund site cleanups. Each Regional Office has a Public Liaison.

In implementing the Superfund program, staff in the Regions and at Headquarters are committed to being responsive to the public and to promptly and fairly resolving issues and concerns brought to their attention. In some cases, the individual or group raising the concern may believe the normal problem solving channels did not deal fully or objectively with their situation. In such cases, they may request assistance from the Public Liaison. A Regional Public Liaison can independently look into the circumstances and try to facilitate a resolution of the issues. A Public Liaison will assist people in obtaining information and mediating discussions with program staff. Public Liaisons do not have the authority to make or change Agency decisions. Their success depends on their ability to help the parties involved to develop mutually acceptable solutions.

USING THE RESOURCE

WHEN TO USE

Members of the public should call upon the Public Liaison after they have tried to get their questions answered or concerns resolved through the normal channel of the site team.

EPA staff should call upon the Public Liaison when existing channels for problem resolution have not worked or when there is a particularly contentious relationship where a more neutral party might be of assistance. The Public Liaison is a good person to consult early on when it appears that major individual or community dissatisfaction or polarization is developing. He/she will have knowledge and skills which can help to consider the available options and resources.

HOW TO USE

For more information, contact the Regional Public Liaison.

TIPS

The Public Liaison can play a positive role in helping concerned individuals and groups navigate through the Superfund decision making process and ensure there is objective consideration of issues and concerns.

- Public Liaisons cannot change site decisions;
- Inform your communities about the Superfund Regional Public Liaison;
- Consider involving the Public Liaison at contentious sites or when potential conflicts become apparent; and
- Consider using third-party facilitators/mediators if the situation does not warrant the involvement of the Public Liaison.

RELATED TOOLS/RESOURCES IN THE TOOLKIT

- [Community Visioning Process, Tab 9](#)
- [Facilitation/Conflict Resolution, Tab 14](#)
- [Partnering, Tab 28](#)

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