

CI IMPACT ANALYSIS

DESCRIPTION

The Community Involvement Impact Analysis Project is designed to determine whether community involvement efforts at Superfund sites are working and, if not, why not. The project consists of written questionnaires and focus groups conducted in communities with Superfund sites to understand how residents feel about community involvement efforts in their area.

REQUIRED ACTIVITY?

No.

MAKING IT WORK

WHEN TO USE

You should consider using the impact analysis project when you have a site community that is highly contentious or showing signs of becoming contentious, or when you have the feeling that nothing you try is working with a community. Although you can begin the impact analysis process at any point in the site's evolution, it will be increasingly more helpful to you the earlier you begin it. If your initial research into a community indicates a potential to become contentious, it is appropriate and beneficial to implement the impact analysis process in conjunction with the initial *Community Involvement Plan*. This will give you additional, valuable information to incorporate into your Plan. If you do this, it is then appropriate and beneficial to do follow up activities at strategic points as the site moves along the Superfund pipeline.

Typically the impact analysis process begins with, and is often limited to, the written questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to gather information on community perception of:

- The job being done by EPA to keep the community informed about the cleanup;
- The risk the site poses;
- The effectiveness of various outreach tools; and
- How well EPA is involving community members in the decision-making process.

Focus groups may be appropriate if there is a strong sense of conflict in the community that you want to delve into more deeply than a written questionnaire would allow. They are also appropriate if the written instrument reveals something totally unexpected or a pattern that merits further exploration.

HOW TO USE

CIOC currently funds this project and hires contractors to apply the instruments, enter data, and prepare conclusive reports with recommendations. If you think you might want to use this tool, contact CIOC's WAM to discuss the site in question, what you want to accomplish, and whether you will use the written questionnaire, focus groups or both. If you intend to survey 10 or more people, you will have to get OMB approval of the project.

An actual survey used in the field is included at the back of this tab. Pages 1 & 2 contain the core questions that CIOC has identified as being important regardless of the site; page 3 contains questions developed specifically for this site. You should discuss with the WAM and the contractor whether these are sufficient for your purposes or if there is additional informa-



[See Community Involvement Plans, Tab 7](#)

Last Updated:
September 2002

CI IMPACT ANALYSIS

[See Mailing List, Tab 23](#)



tion you will want to collect through custom designed questions. In any event, there should be no more than three pages of questions.

Every effort is made to minimize the impact on your workload. However, there are some things you will have to do to make the process go smoothly.

- provide the contractor with four sets of labels for your site mailing list
- work with the contractor to identify new information to be gathered
- work with the contractor to prepare the letters to be used
- work with the contractor to identify the boundaries of the affected community
- identify and recruit up to 15 participants per session
- identify one or more suitable locations

You will receive a written report following each survey application or focus group. These reports can be used to help you:

- Improve communication with residents by tailoring outreach efforts to meet their needs;
- Stay abreast of developing concerns and head off problems before they get too big; and
- Allocate your time and resources where survey feedback shows they are needed most.

Tips

- Use the impact analysis to “break the mold.” Avoid repeating the same community involvement activities over and over only because it has always been done that way. Use the feedback you receive to design outreach activities that fit the individual needs of your site communities.
- Look at and use the attached sample reports provided at the back of this tab, and transfer the information to other sites.

RELATED TOOLS/RESOURCES IN THE TOOLKIT

- [Community Interviews, Tab 5](#)
- [Community Involvement Plans, Tab 7](#)
- [Fact Sheets, Tab 15](#)
- [Public Availabilities/Poster Sessions, Tab 30](#)
- [Public Meetings, Tab 32](#)

ATTACHED ITEMS WITHIN THIS TOOL

- Attachment 1: Sample Impact Analysis Site Questionnaire
- Attachment 2: Sample Impact Analysis Site Report (Executive Summary)

ATTACHMENT 1: SAMPLE IMPACT ANALYSIS SITE QUESTIONNAIRE



What Do You Think About Public Input At [insert site name] Site?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is cleaning up the toxic wastes at the [insert site name] site in your community. EPA believes the active, meaningful involvement of community members is critical to the success of this cleanup effort. This survey is an opportunity for you to tell us how well we are doing at listening to your concerns about the cleanup and making it possible for you to participate in the planning and decision making process. Please take a few minutes to answer the questions. Your views are important and will help us be more responsive to your needs and interests. This survey is being conducted in accordance with the Federal Paperwork Reduction Act (OMB # 2050-0096). You will need about 10 minutes to answer the questions.

Directions:

- Do NOT put your name, address, or phone number on this form.
- Please place an "X" on the box for the appropriate answer.
- Please use the postage paid envelope provided to return this form to our contractors.
- Do NOT put your return address on the envelope.

1 How do you rate EPA at each of the following?

	Very Bad					Very Good
	1	2	3	4	5	6
a. Providing the information you need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Giving you accurate information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Making the information easy to understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Earning your trust	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Making it easy to get involved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Understanding your concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Responding to your concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Treating you courteously	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Having a fair decision making process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Using your input	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Explaining decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Cleaning up the site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Can you accept the decisions EPA has made so far about the site cleanup?

- Yes
- No
- I am not aware of any decisions EPA has made.

How concerned you are about the following in relation to the site in your community?

	Not at all Concerned					Very Concerned
	1	2	3	4	5	6
a. The site might harm the health of me and my family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The site might harm the environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The site might hurt property values.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. The site might take away jobs in the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. The site might hurt business in the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4 How have you learned about the site? (Check all that apply)

- EPA mailings (other than this survey)
- Newspaper articles
- Radio or TV news
- Community member
- Family or friends
- EPA's Internet site
- Public meeting or information session held by EPA
- Direct conversation with someone from EPA
- Information about the site is "common knowledge"
- Know someone who worked at the site

5 How would you prefer to receive your information about the site? (Check the one you most prefer)

- Short (1-2 pages), very focused (issue-specific) mailings, sent frequently
- Longer, general informational mailings, sent periodically
- Newspaper articles
- Radio or TV news
- A knowledgeable person in your community
- EPA's Internet site
- Short, very focused meetings, held frequently
- Longer, general informational meetings, held periodically
- A direct conversation with an EPA representative
- Other _____

6 What is the best way to get your participation? (Check the one you most prefer)

- Providing opportunities for you to give written comments about the site.
- Holding public meetings where you can voice your comments about the site.
- Providing opportunities for you to meet and talk informally with EPA staff.
- Providing a toll free telephone number you can call with your comments.
- Forming a community group to discuss citizens' concerns with EPA.
- Providing opportunities for you to talk with independent experts.
- Other _____

7 Please tell us whether you have ever:

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Provided information to EPA about the site and its history. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Expressed your concerns about the site to EPA. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Offered suggestions to EPA about how the site should be cleaned up. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Given comments to EPA on things that they have made available for public review. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Requested information from EPA about the site. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If "No" to any of the above, why not?

8 Would you like to see the [insert site name] site redeveloped?

- Yes
- No

9 If “yes,” how would you like to see the site used in the future? (Please mark the single option you prefer most.)

- As a recreational park
- As a commercial area
- As an historical landmark
- Other _____

If “No,” why are you opposed to redevelopment at the site?

10 EPA’s Brownfields Redevelopment Program provides incentives to companies to return vacant contaminated industrial properties (or “Brownfields”) to industrial use. How helpful do you think this Program would be to redevelop existing Brownfields in your community?

- Not at all helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Helpful
- Very helpful
- I don’t know enough about the Program to make a decision
- I don’t know enough about such sites in the community to make a decision

11 How confident are you that the [insert local water resource name] will be clean enough to use for recreational purposes once EPA has completed its cleanup of the [insert site name] site?

- Not at all confident
- Somewhat confident
- Confident
- Very confident

12 Do you feel EPA should spend part of the site cleanup funds for wildlife and habitat redevelopment around the river?

- Yes
- No

If “No,” why not?

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about this cleanup project?

Thank you for taking the time to share your views with us!



ATTACHMENT 2: SAMPLE IMPACT ANALYSIS SITE REPORT/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Final Report Community Involvement Surveys _____ Superfund Site

Executive Summary

Project Background

EPA's Community Involvement and Outreach Center (CIOC) designed and implemented the Community Involvement Impact Analysis Project (the Project) to comply with the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA). The goal is to determine how well the Superfund community involvement program is meeting the Agency's goals and the communities' needs. The Project uses written questionnaires, focus groups, and other interview methods to gather feedback from communities affected by Superfund and hazardous waste cleanup sites.

CIOC conducted a pilot project during 19xx and 19xx to develop and test research instruments and procedures. During this time, CIOC identified four measurable "outcomes" that it considers important results of the outreach effort. Research instruments were designed to gather community feedback on these outcomes, and were refined during Phase 2 of the Project, completed in the Summer of 200x. The _____ site is the first site studied in Phase 3, during which the refined research instruments will be used to implement the Project.

The [insert site name] Site

The _____ site is a fifty-four acre site which produced various chemical compounds and products from 1936 until 1978 at its main plant in _____, _____. EPA and the State of _____ are assessing the levels of dichloro-diphenyl- trichloroethane (DDT), chlorobenzene, carbon tetrachloride, trichloroethylene (TCE), other chlorinated compounds, polybrominated biphenyls (PBBs), copper, chromium, zinc, magnesium and hexabromobenzene (HBB) contamination in site soil, groundwater and sediments in the _____ River. Eating contaminated fish and wildlife from the area near the site poses potential risks to the community. In 1982, EPA, the State of _____, and _____ agreed on a Consent Judgment in which _____ agreed to construct a slurry wall and clay cap over the main plant site. In 19xx, EPA signed an Action Memorandum for a time-critical removal action at the site. The Record of Decision (ROD) was signed on _____, 19xx.

During the month of _____ 200x, written surveys were mailed to 800 randomly selected residents living within a two-and-a-half radius of the site. The purpose of this specific mailing was to gauge EPA's effectiveness at reaching and involving those people considered to be actually or potentially affected by the site, regardless of whether they had identified themselves in any way as being interested in the site. Identical surveys were also mailed to 198 individuals on the site mailing list, in order to compare and contrast their perceptions of EPA's community involvement efforts with those from the random sample.

The overall purpose of the survey is to gather public feedback on the effectiveness of the community involvement effort being conducted at the site. Information was gathered on community perception of:

- The job being done by EPA to keep the community informed about the cleanup;
- The risk the site poses;
- The effectiveness of various outreach tools; and
- How well EPA is involving community members in the decision-making process.

Summary of Results

A total of 306 individuals completed the survey (229 from the random sample/77 from the site mailing list), which is a 33.08% response rate after accounting for undeliverable mail. Respondents rated the job EPA does at keeping them

informed, for the most part, as mediocre. This may reflect the fact that while the majority of respondents prefer to get their information from EPA, they are not currently doing so. The majority of respondents indicated that they can accept the decisions EPA has made so far about the site, and rated the job EPA is doing at cleaning up the site fairly well. However, respondents are not confident that the _____ River will be clean enough for recreational use when the cleanup is complete, because the cleanup only addresses contamination on part of the River. Interestingly, there are only two areas in which responses from the random sample and the mailing list differ significantly. First, respondents from the random sample believe EPA does a better job at treating them courteously. Respondents from the site mailing list sample, on the other hand, believe that EPA's Brownfields Redevelopment Program would be significantly more helpful to their community than do respondents from the random sample.

Information and Outreach

Only 31% of the respondents who answered the question have received information about the site from EPA, while 84% have gotten information from newspapers and 35% from radio or TV news. In contrast, respondents indicated that EPA is their preferred source of site information. Reflecting this fact, EPA received mediocre ratings in terms of the job the Agency does at providing information that is accurate and timely. Respondents rated EPA more poorly in terms of earning community members' trust. Respondents indicated that the best way to get information to them is through short, issue-specific mailings that are sent frequently from EPA.

Perception of Risk

Respondents expressed generally high levels of concern over perceived threats posed by the site to the environment and to human health. Concern over the threat the site poses to the local economy was notably low. This may reflect, in part, the fact that the effect of the site on local jobs and businesses was felt primarily when the plant was shut down, years earlier.

Public Input and Involvement

Of those who answered the questions, 13.51% have, at one time or another, provided information about the site to EPA; 20.85% have expressed their concerns about the site to EPA; 9.24% have offered suggestions to EPA about how the site should be cleaned up; 10.84% have given comments to EPA on materials released for public review; and 14.40% have requested information from the Agency. Based on written comments from those who answered the questions, the relative lack of involvement on the part of respondents from both samples appears to result from four factors: a general lack of interest in becoming involved; a feeling among respondents that they are not knowledgeable enough to provide input; satisfaction with the job EPA is doing; and a belief that EPA will do whatever it wants, regardless of public input.

EPA Response to Community Input

Respondents who rated EPA on its responsiveness to public input indicated that they are not particularly unhappy with the Agency. Notably, 73% of those who answered the question and are aware of the decisions EPA has made so far about the site cleanup said they can accept those decisions. Furthermore, a majority of respondents who answered the question rated the job EPA is doing at cleaning up the site on the positive end of the six point scale.

Redevelopment in the ----- Community

The vast majority of respondents (85%) indicated they would like to see the _____ site redeveloped when the cleanup is complete, most into a recreational park. Among those opposed to redevelopment, their primary concerns were that the site would never really be safe and that future use would lead to future contamination. Respondents also supported using part of the cleanup funds for wildlife and habitat redevelopment at the site. In addition, 73% of those who felt knowledgeable enough to answer the question believe EPA's Brownfields Redevelopment Program would help their community.