

**Community Action
for a Renewed
Environment
A Community-Based Toxics
Reduction Initiative**

**Clean Air Act Advisory Committee
Economic Incentives and Regulatory
Innovation Subcommittee**

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What is CARE?

- CARE is a community based, multimedia approach to reducing toxics.
- CARE uses collaborative processes to address cumulative risk comprehensively.
- CARE educates communities about the pollution risks they face and offers EPA voluntary programs to address the problems they select.
- CARE empowers communities, local and state governments to develop neighborhood based solutions that will reduce toxic risks.

Background

- Linda Fisher requested that a proposal for a community-based toxic reduction budget initiative be prepared for the May, 2003 Annual Planning Meeting
- OAR and OCFO established a workgroup to develop 2005 budget initiative
- Workgroup continued development of the concept and prepared budget initiative
- Initiative was send to Congress as part of President's Budget
- We are working on program development to be ready for '05

Why This is the Right Time

- EPA is increasingly moving toward community based programs. For example:
 - Brownfields: OSWER
 - National Estuary Program: OW
 - Design for Environment: OPPTS
 - Environmental Justice Revitalization Projects: OEJ
 - Diesel Retrofits, Tools for Schools: OAR
 - Safe Communities Multiyear Plan: ORD
- We need to go beyond pilots and act in a coordinated and organized fashion.
 - We have long history of doing a great job on pilots and not as good a job on scale-up

Why This is the Right Time

- Community based work can produce meaningful results without raising high-profile, controversial national environmental issues that too often lead to “policy paralysis”.
- Working in a multi-media fashion in communities helps break down stove pipes in EPA and across Federal Agencies
 - Joint work across program boundaries can lead to more efficient integrated solutions
- It is becoming clear that national programs by themselves, are simply not sufficient to solve the problem of toxic hot spots.

Benefits of Community-Based Programs: External

- Provide risk reduction to those who need it most
 - Achieve local reductions not otherwise feasible through national regulations
 - Reductions make a real difference to public health
- Empower Communities and build capacity for environmental stewardship
 - Organized communities can continue to build on progress using other funding sources: foundations, etc.
 - People feel listened to and empowered
 - They can see the risk reduction activity

Benefits of Community-Based Programs: Internal

- EPA gains by being seen in a different light
 - An organization that listens and cares
 - An organization that works with others and focuses on real risks, results you can see
 - An organization that you want to see in your neighborhood

Program Goals

- **Produce Results!**
 - **Significantly reduce exposure to toxics in communities through voluntary, local action in partnership with EPA**
 - **Focus on getting quick reductions and use assessments to refine targeting and build community consensus**
- **Build community capacity and empower community decision-making**
 - **Priorities based on community choices**
- **Focus on all sources of toxics (air, water, waste, indoor, outdoor)**
- **Supplement regulatory programs**
- **Track, transfer and use results to improve public health**

Current Design: Organization

- Program organized around a hub and spokes system
 - A central EPA team supporting regional "centers". Regional centers support individual projects
 - Expect at least one community in each Region
- Central Team drawn from headquarters Offices and Regions to provide support for projects
 - Team centralizes overhead expenses and support which increases efficiency
 - Databases, facilitator training, tools, conferences, etc.
 - Tracks progress and evaluates program
 - Works with program offices, OPEI and ORD to fund the development of new tools or the adaptation of existing ones

Current Design: Cooperative Agreements

- Two categories of competitive cooperative agreements (CA).
- Intended grant recipients include state, tribal and local governments, community organizations and NGO's.
- First category is the Level 1 CA (\$50-\$100k)
 - create environmental toxic reduction partnerships,
 - assess the sources of exposure to toxic pollutants
 - estimate the most significant sources of human health and ecological risks in the community.
- After implementing the initial CA (or similar process) the community would be ready to select and carry out activities to reduce risks.

Current Design: Cooperative Agreements

- The second category is the Level 2 CA (\$300-\$500k)
 - These grants provide seed money to leverage and implement community-based projects that show actual risk reductions.
 - Eligibility based on ability to select and implement risk reduction activities.
- At first, many of these communities will be ones that we are already working with
- Over time, we expect that many of the communities that get the smaller CA will move on to these larger CA

Goals and Measures

- **Central team would track results**
 - **Track specific actions taken**
 - **By project, nationally and over time**
 - **Work with programs to develop metrics to convert actions to environmental results, wherever possible**
 - **E.g. 1 diesel retrofit = x tons of NOx, particulates**
 - **Develop and maintain tables with environmental results, quantitatively where possible, qualitatively elsewhere**
 - **Track collateral benefits, such as:**
 - **Capacity building and other social benefits**
 - **Economic benefits**

What are We Doing Now

- **Get ready for start of program**
 - Goal is to hit the ground running as soon as we get funding
 - We want organization, spending plan, grant RFP, results tracking system plus other program needs all ready to go at the start of the 05FY
- **Current Organization**
 - CARE being developed by 6 teams
 - Team report to the Executive Committee of senior executives which reports to the IAC
- **Work with Regions to have 10 FY'04 CARE communities**

The Six Teams And Their Tasks

- **Management Plan Team**
 - Draft the management plan for implementing CARE program and prepare '05 budget and work plan
- **'04 CARE Communities Support Team**
 - Provide support to the selected '04 communities
- **Resource Guide Team**
 - Develop resource guide and get it up on the web
- **Communication**
 - Develop communication and outreach plan
- **RFP Development Team**
 - Write the RFPs for grants and design system for selecting winning grantees
- **Tracking System Team**
 - Develop system for tracking results