



CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL TO LA PORTE INDUSTRY

LPCAC at 35 Years & How to Improve

Gowan said that LPCAC is a result of Responsible Care which was established in 1985 by the Chemistry Industry Association of Canada. This initiative was developed in response to growing public concerns about the manufacture, distribution, and use of chemicals, as well as their environmental and health impacts. The primary goal of Responsible Care was to improve the chemical industry's environmental, health, safety, and security performance, demonstrating the industry's commitment to corporate responsibility and fostering trust among the public, government regulators, and other stakeholders.

In 1988, Responsible Care was adopted in the United States by the American Chemistry Council (ACC). This adoption came three years after the initiative's inception, reflecting a growing international commitment to improving health, safety, and environmental performance in the chemical industry.

The Responsible Care Charter in the United States is a formal commitment made by ACC companies to uphold the initiative's guiding principles. Many LPCAC plants are members of ACC.

When joining ACC, companies sign a charter and pledge to do the following:

1. Continuously improve HSE performance.
2. Engage with stakeholders. Members agree to listen, engage, and seek to understand stakeholder concerns and expectations about their operations and products to improve trust and credibility. LPCAC is an outflow of this commitment.
3. Manage chemicals safely, from inception in the research laboratory, through manufacture and distribution, to ultimate reuse, recycling, and disposal.
4. Innovate for safer products and processes.
5. Reduce and, where possible, eliminate waste and emissions
6. Report performance. Companies must report on their environmental, health, safety, and security performance openly and honestly. This is why LPCAC has the Annual State of the Plant Report, Annual Worker Safety Report, Annual Report on Plant Emissions, as well as plant updates at each meeting.

Gowan also reviewed the LPCAC mission, purposes and objectives, and membership criteria.

Gowan asked “Who is the La Porte CAC?”. We are a small, diverse group of community stakeholders who meet regularly with petrochemical plant managers. Our goal is to create constructive, face-to-face dialogue built on trust and transparency. The topics we focus on most often relate to health, safety, and the environment, along with other issues that impact overall quality of life in the community. Through these conversations, we provide input and guidance to plants, helping them understand community concerns and identify opportunities for improvement.

Gowan explained “How does La Porte CAC actually advise plants?”. The group chooses industry-related meeting topics based on questions, concerns, or suggestions raised by the public about local plants. At each meeting, plant updates provide an opportunity for members to discuss incidents, injuries, and relevant business news. Engagement is encouraged through Q&A sessions, small group discussions, and worksheets. Community members can share concerns by contacting the facilitator or by speaking directly with a plant manager. Advice comes more often as a question than as a specific request, which helps promote open dialogue and productive discussion.

After the presentation, attendees participated in two small group sessions. Small Group Work Part 1 focused on gathering feedback on what participants like, dislike, and would like to see changed, as well as ideas for increasing current member participation. The group also discussed what information is needed about LPCAC to confidently invite a friend or neighbor to attend a meeting or to share LPCAC information with other groups in which participants are involved. Small Group Work Part 2 focused on brainstorming ways to increase visibility and membership through outreach, identifying seven possible strategies. The strategies from each group will be collected and sent out as a poll to the community and plants to select their top five choices for implementation.

The CAC is a forum for candid and constructive dialogue between those who live or work in La Porte, Morgan’s Point, and Shoreacres and the managers of 41 chemical plants in La Porte. The CAC welcomes visitors. It meets again on Tuesday, February 3rd at 6:00 p.m. to hear about the Local Road Projects. Contact info@laportecac.org if you wish to attend. The CAC shares information about its meetings and presentations at www.laportecac.org.