

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)

- **What is the Local Emergency Planning Committee?**

The Robeson County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is a federally mandated committee, established in Robeson County subsequent to the 1986 Superfund Amendment and reauthorization Act (SARA) to respond to the need for communities to know more about chemical hazards in Robeson County and to develop specific local response plans for Robeson County. The primary responsibility is to receive information about hazardous substances from industry and to use this information to develop comprehensive site emergency plans to handle emergencies and to protect the public health and the environment in Robeson County. This responsibility extends to informing and educating the public about methods it can use to protect itself and to assist governmental agencies to become better prepared to meet possible emergency events caused by these hazardous materials.

- **Why was the LEPC formed?**

When a chemical incident in India killed and injured thousands of people in 1985, there was concern as to whether that same kind of incident could happen here in the U.S. In answer to rising attention President Ronald Reagan signed the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) into law on October 16, 1986. Title III of that Act is known as the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA). One of the first actions of the Act was for each Governor to appoint a State Emergency Response Commission (SERC). This commission divided the state into Local Emergency Planning Districts (LEPD's) and appointed members of that community to the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC).

- **Who serves on the LEPC?**

Members from certain agencies and businesses who have an interest or play an active role in response to chemical emergencies serve on the LEPC. They assist in the formation and annual review of an Emergency Plan that is required by law. The membership of the LEPC includes state and local elected officials, police, firefighters, EMS, civil defense workers, public health, environmental, hospital, and transportation officials, industry representatives, news media, and individuals from specific agencies who assure that Robeson County has the planning and resource capabilities for Chemical Emergencies.