

2005 ANNUAL REPORT

Advisory Body Name: Hazardous Materials Commission

Advisory Body Meeting Time/Location: Fourth Thursday of every months, 4-6 pm, 2477 Arnold Industrial Way, Concord

Chair: Sabiha Gokcen, Contra Costa Taxpayers Association

Staff: Michael Kent, Contra Costa Health Services

Reporting Period: January-December 2005

ACTIVITIES

The Commission followed-up on internal operating recommendations from a self-evaluation conducted in 2004; evaluated the County's response to four major chemical accidents for potential policy changes; analyzed and took action on a California Energy Commission proposal concerning permitting oil refining-related projects; reviewed federal, state and local Environmental Justice policy implementation, reviewed and commented on the implementation of state and county drug-lab clean-up policies; analyzed for policy-recommendation consideration the County's Indoor Air Quality policy, electronic waste disposal program, Green Building program, stormwater management program related to household hazardous waste disposal, and pharmaceutical disposal program; and received presentations on the County's Community Warning System, the Hospital Council's Health Indicators report, the Hazardous Materials Area Plan, the Industrial Safety Ordinance public outreach strategy, the California Highway Patrol's hazardous materials response program, and two hazardous waste transportation studies conducted by the Hazardous Materials Program.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Commission's recommendation to the Board of Supervisors that they support a California Energy Commission policy recommendation on the oil refinery-related permitting process was accepted. (This recommendation was developed because early proposals by the California Energy Commission would have taken permitting authority away from local governments. Extensive study and comment on these earlier proposals by the Hazardous Materials Commission contributed to the final recommendation by the California Energy Commission being to leave permitting control with local governments.) The Commission wrote a letter of support for the adoption of the County's Green Business Program, which was adopted. Commission members met individually with each of the members of the Board of Supervisors to brief them on Commission activities and to learn about their issues of concern. The Commission

strengthened its guidelines by defining the eligibility requirements for candidates for the Environmental seat, and by allowing more flexibility for chair and co-chair eligibility. The Commission provided input to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control drug lab clean-up pilot program. The Commission analyzed for policy-recommendation consideration five county programs related to hazardous waste management.

ATTENDANCE/REPRESENTATION

The 13-member Commission has members from organized labor, environmental groups, industry, cities, environmental engineering firms, and the public at large. The Commission has membership from all regions of the County. All seats on the Commission were occupied this year. The Commission held 11 meetings this year, as well as 10 meetings of the Operations subcommittee and 9 meetings of the Planning and Policy Development subcommittee. All of the full Commission meetings obtained a quorum, with an average of 9.5 of the 13 members or their alternates being present at these meetings.

TRAINING/CERTIFICATION

No training or certification was provided or conducted.

PROPOSED WORK PLAN/OBJECTIVES FOR NEXT YEAR

Next year the Commission intends to continue monitoring the implementation of the County's Environmental Justice Policy, the DTSC pilot project on illegal dumping, county-wide electronic waste disposal programs, and pharmaceutical waste disposal policy development. The Commission also plans to complete the evaluation of policy options around household hazardous waste issues in stormwater permits and hazardous waste transportation emergency response. The Commission will continue to implement the changes and activities that came out of the self-evaluation process conducted in 2004. The Commission will also respond to any requests from the Board of Supervisors and continually evaluate emerging issues, including the Precautionary Principle.