

Workshop Session Summary
NIEHS National Trainers' Exchange

1. Session

Block #1, Workshop #3
Site Characterization Activity

Presenter:

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2. Summary

The object of this activity is to re-enforce the Site Characterization Module. The class is given an actual Super Fund Site, with names and locations changed to protect the innocent or guilty, and asked to begin an “Off Site Characterization” with the selection of 5 of 15 resources providing selected information. After time given with-in their groups they report their decision on development of their Safety and Health Plan. Five choices will not provide them with enough information to make a safe entry onto the property. At the end of the group activity they will be prompted to discuss what they would have done to correct the lack of information.

3. Comments and Questions from Workshop

Comments;

- Good tool for refreshers and initial course to reinforce subject.
- Like the way it can be adapted to different classes and situation.
- The class needs a complete list of choices for participants on paper.

Question:

- One participant asked if they were allowed to take information from the other groups during report back session
Answer – At the end of the activity, all of the information is given to everyone. The groups during report back session should use only the information they were able to receive from their choice of.

4. Methods

After the actual scenario is read to the class they are divided into groups. They are given 15 resources and given approximately 5 minutes as a group to decide on the 5 they believe will provide the most beneficial information to build a safety and health plan from. Example of choices would be fire department, utility companies, OSHA, news media, etc. Each team selects their five choices and given information those agencies or organization have about the incident. The instructor writes the groups choices on the board or flipchart.

The teams have been given a worksheet with several questions to answer with the information available to them. Groups are given approximately 15 minutes to answer the questions and prepare to report their findings to the class.

Each group responds to the answers they were able to complete and understand the importance of full information disclosure. In advance all 15 choices have been printed on a flipchart size paper.

The instructor places the 15 choices on the wall so all groups can view the information available to the entire class. As each group reports their information, or lack of, and how they will use it the instructor can identify information they may have received from other sources. Some groups may have very little information and others may have enough to proceed with their operation.

5. Main Points

- Gather information for On-Site Characterization – Phase II
- Before entry is made as much information should be obtained as possible and not just some of the information available.
- What information is needed prior to a safe entry?
- Information received is not always reliable.
- Good information may come from unusual sources.

6. References

- EPA National Priority List
- EPA's Site Characterization Procedures

7. Handouts

- Power Point Presentation
- Site Characterization Worksheet
- 15 choices for site mitigation