

# Wisconsin LEPC Newsletter

July 2023, Vol. 1

*This newsletter is a joint venture between a workgroup of Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) and statewide county emergency management representatives. This workgroup was formed to provide guidance and training to Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), as they work to reenergize and improve participation in emergency planning in their communities.*

## EPCRA

WEM serves as the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC). WEM is responsible for implementing the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) at the state and local levels. EPCRA is also known as the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) of 1986. WEM/SERC requires each of the 72 counties in Wisconsin to have an LEPC that is set up in accordance with federal legislation. LEPCs are responsible for implementation of EPCRA at the county level.

WEM/SERC is also responsible for administering the EPCRA Planning Grant, which provides formula funding to county LEPCs for local planning and program administration. WEM also administers the Computer and Hazmat Equipment Grant, which provides funding for computer equipment and hazardous materials response equipment.

## LEPC

Each LEPC must have members from across the community to include elected officials, law enforcement, firefighting, first aid, health, local environmental, hospital, transportation personnel, broadcast and print media, community groups, and owners and operators of planning facilities. It is a requirement that each county emergency management director be a member of the LEPC to ensure continuity and coordination of emergency response planning.

The LEPC must develop rules and meet publicly to discuss emergency plans, take public comments, and receive and process requests for information. For more information, please contact your local emergency management office.

## Do you have questions or topic ideas?

Email Darlene Pintarro newsletter questions or topic ideas at [pintarro.darlene@countyofdane.com](mailto:pintarro.darlene@countyofdane.com)

## Upcoming Funding Opportunities:

- Computer and Hazmat Equipment Grant – application due in Egrants by **July 14, 2023**.
- HMEP Grants will be released in July for continuation of Regional Commodity Flow Studies to include local roads, pipelines, and railroads. One county per region will serve as lead for administration of this grant. Also, the Core and Specialized Training Grant will be opening **end of July!** Please reach out to Anita Smith with questions, [anita.smith@widma.gov](mailto:anita.smith@widma.gov).
- EPA - CEPPS again has resources to support LEPC exercises in FY23 through July 2024. It is funding to develop and conduct exercises (\$15,000 per exercise). Contact Monika Chrzaszcz for more details: [chrzaszcz.monika@epa.gov](mailto:chrzaszcz.monika@epa.gov).

## Resources:

- <https://wem.wi.gov/epcra/>
- <https://www.epa.gov/>
- <https://wi.webeocasp.com/wi/default.aspx>
- <https://www.epa.gov/epcra/consolidated-list-lists>
- <https://www.epa.gov/cameo/what-cameo-software-suite>
- <https://www.epa.gov/cameo/cameo-data-manager-software>
- <https://www.epa.gov/epcra/national-lepc-tepc-handbook>

## Recent Incidents

On April 28, 2023, at 12:10 pm, a BNSF train derailed near De Soto, WI. The derailment occurred near Wisconsin Highway 35 and Wisconsin Highway 82 at the Crawford County and Vernon County line, with two rail cars floating further down the Mississippi River. Derailed train cars contained paint, oxygen, and lithium batteries, among many other non-hazardous mixed goods.



The Vernon County Type 3 Hazmat Team responded to the incident. Vernon County Hazmat Director Brandon Larson placed the La Crosse Hazmat Team on standby, early on, until it was known that none of the chemicals were leaking. A total of nine rail cars derailed, along with two of the freight train's three locomotives, resulting in a diesel fuel leak. Hazmat team members mitigated the leaking diesel by using patching and absorbents, while 400 feet of river boom was also deployed into the river as a preventative measure. A drone was used to identify rail car numbers to reference against the train manifest, with a research officer contacting BNSF dispatch to verify the contents of each car. Unified Command was established. Once all hazards were mitigated, a meeting was held with all stakeholders involved to determine next steps. The hazmat team was able to clear the scene by about 8:30 pm.



To assist with debris management, the La Crosse County Solid Waste Facility accepted 2,581.57 tons of material from the derailment. A large portion of those materials were recycled or reused, including steel from the train cars that went to a local recycler and general waste goods like food and other damaged merchandise. No hazardous materials were accepted from the derailment at this location.

*Photos by Chloe Hilles, River Valley Media Group*

This newsletter is issued quarterly to bring ideas and information for helping your LEPC and energizing them in your county.

The next issue will be released in September 2023. If you have ideas that you would like to share, please reach out to [Darlene Pintarro](#). Let's work together here in Wisconsin!

### *Did You Know?*

*The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Local Government Reimbursement (LGR) program provides **up to \$25,000** per incident for responding to the release, or threat of release, of hazardous substances. (This includes the cleanup of meth labs.) To qualify for reimbursement, the EPA requires that the community provide proper documentation of costs and certification that the municipality is unable to pay for cleanup.*

*To find out more, please click on the link below or contact the LGR helpline at 800-431-9209.*

<https://www.epa.gov/emergency-response/local-governments-reimbursement-program#application>