

What Is EPCRA

The Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA) is a federal requirement for facilities that store hazardous materials to report the quantities of those materials. The reports are then used by emergency management officials and emergency responders for developing response plans.

History

In 1984, a chemical release from a pesticide plant in Bhopal, India killed over 3,000 people. This incident showed the need for emergency planning in the event of an accidental chemical release.

In 1986, Congress created EPCRA to improve local emergency planning for accidental chemical releases and provide the public and local governments with information concerning potential chemical hazards present in their communities.

About WEM

WEM coordinates with local, tribal, state and federal agencies, as well as volunteer and private sector partners. We support 72 Wisconsin counties and bring emergency management services to the state's 5.7 million citizens.



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EPCRA

Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act



Information for Emergency Responders

Know the Hazards

Local response agencies are almost always the first emergency personnel on the scene of a hazardous material emergency.

When responding to a potential hazardous materials incident, responders need accurate, up-to-date information related to the kinds of hazardous chemicals stored in their communities.

This information allows for proper tactical decision making, reducing exposure to responders, the public and the environment.



Why It Matters...

Columbus Chemical, Columbus, WI. Firefighters refrained from using water on the fire. More than 150 people were evacuated from the area. First responders were able to make decisions that saved lives and protected surrounding property because they knew what was stored in the facility.

Patrick Cudahy Plant, Cudahy, WI. Emergency crews closely watched the large quantity of Anhydrous Ammonia stored within the facility. The plant worked with its Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) to develop an emergency response plan which was available to first responders as they arrived on scene.

The **Wisconsin Hazmat Online Planning and Reporting System (WHOPRS)** is a tool that is available to emergency responders to access information on substances stored at facilities that are subject to the EPCRA requirements.

How to use WHOPRS

Find out what hazards are in your community by contacting your LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee) via your county or tribal emergency management director to request access to WHOPRS.

Training is available on the system through Wisconsin Emergency Management.

Knowing the hazards in your community is the first step toward a safe and effective emergency response.

For more information or assistance, visit the WEM website at <https://dma.wi.gov/dma/wem> and click on the Preparedness & EPCRA link.

Detailed information on the program, and contact information for EPCRA program staff can be found on the website.