

**DRAFT GUIDELINES
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN RISK-BASED
SITE DECISION MAKING**

**MINNESOTA POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY
SITE REMEDIATION SECTION
SEPTEMBER 1998**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Positive relationships with citizens living and working near sites under evaluation for possible public health and environmental impacts can be achieved through a flexible and informal community involvement strategy. The site team (consisting of the regulatory program staff assigned to the project, representatives of the responsible or voluntary party, and involved local government units) needs to select the appropriate strategies and tools to develop informed consent among the general public about site processes and decisions. Among the site team's responsibilities are: identifying opportunities for public involvement in the site- evaluation process; developing goals for public involvement; determining who is responsible for community involvement; identifying the affected community; identifying outrage factors at controversial sites; assessing the community's preferred communication channels; selecting appropriate methods for public involvement; implementing a plan; nurturing long-term relationships with communities; and appropriately using resources to develop communication skills. While each community is unique and no set community-relations formula can be generally applied, three recommendations that apply to all risk-based site evaluations include, at minimum, copying local units of government and, if applicable, Minnesota Pollution Control agency regional offices on key correspondence and making sure to notify affected citizens without delay about confirmed public health risks.

