



In 1986, the United States Congress approved the **Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA)**.

EPCRA CAN ONLY WORK PROPERLY WITH COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT!

Utilizing the **Right To Know** by making a public records request can be a powerful tool for community members to oversee hazardous material usage/production and **how public officials are planning for emergency situations**.

If you live near Natural Gas extraction activities and are concerned about an emergency situation arising, **file a Right To Know request with your local public records officer** to access emergency plans and find out how local and county officials are planning for an emergency situation.

MCDONALD PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE:

Business Manager/Public Records Officer
110 Ft. Cherry Road, McDonald, PA 15057
Fax: 724-796-0065 Email: rtk@fortcherry.org

EPCRA is designed so that communities can protect themselves from harm by instituting comprehensive emergency planning, and by **creating a public forum for communities to access information from companies and community emergency planners**. This federal legislation has 3 important purposes specific to emergency planning and public access to information.

- 1.) To establish permanent emergency planning entities in every **county** in the United States, known as **Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC)**. LEPC's are **required** to hold meetings open to the public, and are also responsible for the creation of a county level emergency plan. The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency recommends that LEPC's meet *at minimum* once quarterly.
- 2.) To require companies whose work utilizes or produces hazardous materials to report specific and relevant information regarding such materials to emergency planners in a public forum, including amounts, types, and purposes of hazardous material usage/release.
- 3.) To institute a comprehensive system for citizens to access important information regarding hazardous material usage in their community by increasing company and government transparency, known as the **Right To Know**.

1.) Are emergency plans for natural gas well pads site-specific? Do they include information regarding nearby sensitive infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, or residences? Do plans differ from well site to well site?

Some plans are more specific than others, but many publicly available plans do not include information regarding specific infrastructure. Each company or emergency planning entity might include different information, but publicly accessible emergency plans can appear to be quite similar to one another. Each plan will contain specific GPS coordinates for the site in question.

2.) When is the next LEPC meeting in my county?

At this time, it is unclear when the next Washington County LEPC meeting is. Please contact members of the LEPC to further inquire.

Ryan Frazee, Washington County Emergency Planning Officer: 724-228-6911

3.) What if my municipality doesn't have any emergency plans for the well-pad near my house?

Try contacting your county LEPC or the company that owns the site. Both are required to possess an emergency plan that is publicly accessible.

4.) How do I submit a Right to Know request?

You can submit a right to know request by mail, email, or in person. The contact information for your municipal open records officers is listed if you have further questions regarding this process. This is the website where you can find all relevant forms:

http://openrecords.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/open_records/4434/forms/465304

5.) What if either my municipality or school district can't or won't make an emergency plan accessible?

Schools might not disclose emergency plans for security reasons. However, if a municipality will not disclose an emergency plan, you have a right to appeal their decision. You can do so with the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records.

Phone: 717-346-9903

Email: openrecords@pa.gov

6.) What should I do during an emergency event?

It is very important to receive the best information possible for this question. Therefore, it is recommended that you speak to your local emergency planners or attend an LEPC meeting. It is also recommended that should you need to evacuate your home for any reason, designate beforehand a safe location for you and your family.

7.) What could happen during an emergency situation?

Listed below is an excellent source for this information, an After Action Review (A.A.R.).

[http://files.dep.state.pa.us/OilGas/OilGasLandingPageFiles/Chevron After Action Report.pdf](http://files.dep.state.pa.us/OilGas/OilGasLandingPageFiles/Chevron%20After%20Action%20Report.pdf)