The Role Of Community Advisory Panels In The Aftermath Of Critical Incidents In The Chemical Processing Industry

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ABSTRACT

Since the advent of “Responsible Care” initiatives, Community Advisory Panels (“CAP”) have played an important role in ensuring community involvement in the safe operation of chemical facilities. Little consideration has been given, however, to how CAP’s should function in circumstances where process safety efforts have failed and explosions, fires, off-site releases, or other critical incidents occur.

In such circumstances, chemical processing facilities face a host of immediate and longer term concerns. These include rescue and response efforts; environmental and other notifications; assistance to governmental response agencies; damage assessments; insurance notifications; computer and other records recovery; public communications activities; site security and remediation, business continuation and recovery; and incident investigation. The role which CAP’s can and should play in these activities will be effected by the makeup of the CAP; the relationship of prior CAP activity to the critical incident; the nature and severity of the incident; the governmental response to the incident; and a number of other factors.

This presentation will consider critical incident response issues and evaluate the proper role of a CAP in emergency response and other post-incident activities.