



Superfund Community Advisory Group

Fact Sheet for the Community

Basic Information and Links to Resources

What is a Community Advisory Group?

A Community Advisory Group (CAG) is a representative committee, task force, or board composed of community members and other stakeholders affected by the Superfund site. A CAG represents the broad range of views and perspectives of community members regarding issues related to the Superfund site.

Why Join a CAG?

- Learn more about the site.
- Enhance communication between the community and EPA.
- Ask questions and discuss community concerns with the EPA, state and tribal agencies, and other parties involved at the site.

How is a CAG Formed?

If community members determine they want to form a CAG to enhance communications at a Superfund site, the following recommended steps typically occur:

1. Hold a CAG Information Meeting to discuss the purpose of a CAG, opportunities for membership, and terms for participation.
2. Establish membership. See CAG Membership box below.
3. Choose a name and develop a mission statement, operating procedures, and ground rules.
4. Select CAG leadership.
5. Organize, manage, and run regular meetings.

How Can EPA Help?

The EPA community involvement coordinator (CIC) for the site is the CAG's main point of contact. CICs can:

- Provide information on CAGs.
- Plan and sponsor the CAG Information Meeting.
- Assist with CAG formation.
- Attend CAG meetings to provide information and technical expertise on the site cleanup.
- Facilitate the discussion of issues and concerns relative to Superfund actions at the site.
- Assist with administrative and logistical support, especially during CAG formation.
- Provide training or briefing materials tailored to meet specific community needs.
- Assist with obtaining EPA technical assistance and facilitation support resources, if needed.



CAG Member Roles and Responsibilities



Learn about the site



Attend meetings



Represent views of the community



Express community preferences



Review technical information



Share information between EPA and the community



Collaborate with fellow CAG members



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What Are the Keys to a Successful CAG?

The following considerations are essential to developing and maintaining a functional and successful CAG:

- **Strong communication.** CAG members should communicate regularly with each other and the broader community to share information on site issues.
- **Participation by all parts of the community.** CAG membership should reflect the diverse interests of the community in which the Superfund site is located.
- **Establish CAGs early.** CAGs are most effective when formed early in the Superfund process. This allows more time to participate in and have an impact on site activities and decisions. However, CAGs may be formed at any point in the Superfund site cleanup process.
- **Commitment to the mission.** CAGs should maintain a sense of purpose, inclusiveness, and transparency; and continue to inspire the investment of time and energy by CAG members and the broader community.
- **Patience and persistence.** CAGs should learn how to handle distrust, competing interests, or divisive issues that may exist in the community or in the group.
- **Thoughtful formation.** The more thought that goes into the CAG formation process, the more successful a CAG will be. Strong leadership, thorough operating procedures, and regular and productive meetings are key. Without an organized structure, CAGs run the risk of becoming ineffective and unproductive.

Where to Go for More Information

The EPA's [CAG Website](#) provides useful information including:

- The [Where Are CAGs page](#), containing a list of CAGs in each region.
- A list of [regional CAG coordinators](#).
- [Guidance for Supporting Community Advisory Groups at Superfund Sites](#).
- [Additional useful resources](#) for learning more about CAGs.

CAG Membership

At least half of the CAG members should be members of the local community directly affected by the site.

CAG membership should also draw from some or all of the following groups:

- Residents or homeowners near the site
- At least one representative from the EPA or lead Agency (as a non-voting member)
- Anyone potentially affected by site contamination
- Local medical professionals
- Native American tribes and communities
- Minority and low-income groups
- Environmental or public interest groups
- State and/or local government representatives
- Facility owners
- Local business community members

This is not an exhaustive list. Please see the CAG Guidance for a full list of potential CAG members.

