

# Workshops

## DESCRIPTION

Workshops are formal, participatory seminars used to explore a Superfund subject, develop or improve citizens' involvement skills, or carry out a defined site project. They can be developed as mini-courses on a discrete topic relevant to a community site. A technical expert can be invited to offer an inside perspective and to increase the effectiveness of the workshop.

Workshops are a very powerful tool for formally educating small groups of citizens on: 1) site-specific issues and activities; 2) participation opportunities (*Community Group* startup, *Public Comment Periods*); and 3) how to become contributing participants in the Superfund process. They are a great way to address issues that have been identified in the *Community Involvement Plan*.

## REQUIRED ACTIVITY?

No.

## MAKING IT WORK


### WHEN TO USE

The educational, involvement, and empowerment values of workshops make them a key component of the community outreach and involvement process and your site *Communication Strategy*. Workshops provide more than just “another meeting;” they offer knowledgeable, active citizens the chance to gain in-depth understanding of site activities, to communicate directly with the CIC and site experts about advanced remediation concepts and issues, and to develop community organization and participation skills that will improve community involvement for all parties. Workshops are unique from other tools because they provide small groups of citizens with an interactive environment from which to learn.


A good workshop will involve citizen participation and provide an excellent forum for concrete planning of next steps—if not for outright action itself! Workshops are more focused than *Open Houses* or *Public Meetings* and more participatory than *Media* briefings and *Presentations*. Workshops also enable CICs to identify and respond to citizen concerns and suggestions. Workshops are most effective:

- When addressing specific issues identified in the *Community Involvement Plan*;
- When citizens are involved in the development of the workshop agenda and materials;
- When they help citizens actively take “the next step”;
- When they meet citizen needs for more detailed technical and procedural information by providing a participatory forum with the CIC and site experts;
- When they result in improved public participation skills;
- When conducted before formal public hearings or during *Public Comment Periods*;
- When they employ other CIC tools such as *Fact Sheets* and *Videos*; and
- When they supplement *Public Meetings*, *Media* briefings, and *Presentations*.


Do not use workshops for one-way transmittals of information from the CIC when they do not proceed from clearly defined objectives, or if participants are likely to leave without new skills or action items.




[See Community Groups, Tab 4; Public Comment Periods, Tab 31; Community Involvement Plans, Tab 7](#)



[See Communication Strategies, Tab 3](#)



[See Public Availabilities/Poster Sessions Tab 30; Public Meetings, Tab 32; Media, Tab 25; Presentations, Tab 29](#)



[See Fact Sheets, Tab 15; Videos, Tab 45](#)

**Last Updated:**  
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# Workshops

[See Frequently Asked Questions/Referrals, Tab 18](#)



## How to Use

Conducting a workshop includes the following steps:

- Planning the workshop (identifying a purpose and objectives; establishing an appropriate time and place; identifying guest speakers or technical experts);
- Advertising the workshop (notices in local *media*, flyers, brochures);
- Compiling existing or developing new presentation materials and handouts for participants (*e.g.*, ***Fact Sheets***, process diagrams and time lines, maps and photos, lists of ***Frequently Asked Questions***);
- Conducting the workshop (curriculum choices, expert participation); and
- Receiving and responding to citizen feedback about the workshop (evaluation forms).

## Examples

### EXAMPLE 1: FORMING A COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP

The formation of a Community Advisory Group spurred one region to conduct a workshop for community members on the principal site contaminants and the types of remedies that could be considered. The Remedial Project Manager (RPM) and CIC worked with the Community Advisory Group to develop the workshop agenda and materials. The workshop was successful because, prior to expending resources on feasibility analyses, it provided community involvement and allowed the region to screen out remedial alternatives that the community was unable to accept.

### EXAMPLE 2: COMMUNITY DECISION MAKING

Another region decided to “take the bull by the horns” as soon as one site was listed on the NPL and educated the surrounding community on opportunities for community decision making. Prior to listing, there had been a lot of bad publicity about the “toxic soup” of chemicals on the site and many irate calls from citizens. The region held a series of workshops on the Superfund pipeline and opportunities for community decision making at a number of local schools and churches. The workshops helped turn the tide. Now, instead of “butting heads” on issues, many of these once irate community members have become active and productive participants in the site decision making process.

## Tips

- Get citizens to help you identify and develop the curriculum for a workshop.
- Consider any special needs your audience may have (*e.g.*, primary language other than English, disability access to the facility).
- Plan workshops to coincide with upcoming Superfund actions (*e.g.*, release of Proposed Plan).
- Enhance your presentation with slides or overhead transparencies, computer data shows, ***Exhibits***, posters, large ***Maps and Photographs***. People remember 50% more of what they see **and** hear than what they simply hear.
- Consider using existing ***Videos*** to introduce a message or technical concept that you will discuss in depth during the workshop or as a general overview that will acquaint people with the Superfund decision making process.

[See Exhibits, Tab 13; Maps and Aerial Photographs, Tab 24](#)



- Ensure that the facility can be set up in a manner that is conducive to the participatory nature of a workshop; for example, set up tables and chairs in a horseshoe rather than traditional classroom lecture style.

## **RELATED TOOLS/RESOURCES IN THE TOOLKIT**

- [Communication Strategies, Tab 3](#)
- [Community Groups, Tab 4](#)
- [Community Involvement Plans, Tab 7](#)
- [Exhibits, Tab 13](#)
- [Fact Sheets, Tab 15](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions/Referrals, Tab 18](#)
- [Maps and Aerial Photographs, Tab 24](#)
- [Media, Tab 25](#)
- [Presentations, Tab 29](#)
- [Public Availabilities/Poster Sessions, Tab 30](#)
- [Public Comment Periods, Tab 31](#)
- [Public Meetings, Tab 32](#)
- [Videos, Tab 45](#)

## **ATTACHED ITEMS IN THIS TOOL**

- Attachment 1: Potential Workshop Topics
- Attachment 2: Workshop Evaluation Form Template
- Attachment 3: Sample Agenda



## **ATTACHMENT 1: POTENTIAL Workshop Topics**

- Superfund Risk and You
- The Superfund Response Process
- Opportunities for Community Decision Making
- Superfund Outreach: Getting Involved
- What is a “Presumptive Remedy” and How Will it be Used in My Community?
- Site Assessment: What To Expect
- Cleaning Up Contaminated Soil
- Cleaning Up Contaminated Groundwater
- Mercury: Treat with Caution
- Community Advisory Groups: What’s In it for Me?
- Common Chemicals Found at Superfund Sites
- TAGs: Helping Communities Understand Superfund Cleanup Efforts
- How to Recognize Symptoms of Methyl Parathion Exposure

## ATTACHMENT 2: Workshop Evaluation Form Template

Please evaluate the workshop by checking the appropriate box on the following form, and return the completed form before leaving the workshop. Thank you for participating.

### Content and Format

	5 = Excellent	4 = Good	3 = Average	2 = Below Average	1 = Poor
Organization of Workshop					
Content of Material Covered					
Amount of Material Covered					
Visual Aids					

### Presenters

	5 = Excellent	4 = Good	3 = Average	2 = Below Average	1 = Poor
Delivery (pace, diction, projection)					
Ability to Invoke Class Participation					
Knowledge					

## OVERALL COURSE

1. How could the content and/or format of this course be improved?
2. What were your expectations of the workshop? Were they met?
3. What aspects of the workshop did you find *most* effective?
4. What aspect of the workshop did you find *least* effective?
5. Do you have any other suggestions to improve the workshop content and/or presentation?

## ATTACHMENT 3: SAMPLE AGENDA

**Workshop Agenda - CREATING PARTNERS IN REVITALIZATION**  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1997 • 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM**

**Workshop Facilitator:** **Doris Sanders.** Manager of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Denver, specializing in cultural change in the workplace.

**Panel Moderator:** **Lawrence Jacobson.** Associate Director for Commercial Real Estate Finance (CREF) at the Mortgage Bankers Association of America in Washington, DC.

**Register and Continental Breakfast** **8:00-8:45**

**Welcome and Introductions** **8:45-9:00**

**Jack McGraw.** Acting Regional Administrator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Region 8.

**Keynote Address** **9:00-9:30**

**Theresa Donohue.** Manager, City of Denver, Department of Environmental Health.

**Educational Skit** **9:30-10:15**

Presented by the Denver Theatre Sports improvisational group, Denver's original competitive improvisational group performing Saturdays at 11 pm at the Theater at Jack's.

Redevelopment Tools: Prospective Purchaser Agreement, State Voluntary Cleanup Program, Comfort Letters, Plume Policy, Brownfields Pilots.

**Break** **10:15-10:30**

Beverages will be available.

**Panel 1** **10:30-11:15**

Community representatives (Clayton Neighborhood Association, Claudia Abernathy); developers (inner City Community Development Center, Leroy Smith); and government representatives (General Services Administration (GSA), John Robinson and Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA), Maurice Goodgaine) discuss the redevelopment processes, issues, and concerns surrounding a Denver property at 38th Avenue and York Street.

Audience feedback from Panel 1 - questions and comments.

**Participants fill out issue cards for the breakout sessions** **11:20-11:50**

**Break** **11:50-12:00**

**Agenda - Creating Partners in Revitalization**

**Lunch** **12:00 - 1:00**

Catered by the Home of Neighborly Services (Don Donell, 294-0188), a community-based organization that offers public catering and assists and benefits disadvantaged youth.

**Speakers:** **William Lamont, Jr.** Former Director of Planning and Community Development for Denver. Has worked on redeveloping a Brownfields property in Montana and collaborating with communities. Is currently working as a consultant for the City of Murray, Utah, in the cleanup of Murray Smelter.

**Lorraine Granado.** Director of the Cross Community Coalition and co-founder of Colorado People's Economic and Environmental Network (COPEEN). Currently working with her neighbors to form a community Economic Development Corporation in the Elyria/Globeville/Swansea neighborhoods of northeast Denver.

**Open House** **1:00 - 1:30**

Participants may pick up information and observe demonstrations of useful new computer tools from EPA and CDPHE, including Landview Database, helpful home pages on the Internet, Brownfield contact lists, and more.

**Panel 2** **1:30 - 2:15**

Success Story showing how Developers (Colorado National Guard, Gary Bress), the Community (Neighborhood representative, Paulette Hirsch), and Government (Coordinator, South Platte River Corridor Project, Mayor's Office, City and County of Denver, Marc Alston) are working together to redevelop the North Side Treatment Plant.

Audience feedback from Panel 2 - questions and comments.

**Break** **2:15 - 2:30**

Beverages and snacks will be available.

**Breakout session to discuss top issue card subjects** **2:30 - 3:15**

**Report back from the breakout session** **3:15 - 3:45**

**Closing Comments** **3:45 - 4:00**

*Many thanks to our sponsors: AGEISS Environmental, Inc.; Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment (CDPHE); Colorado People's Economic and Environmental Network (COPEEN); Cross Community Coalition (CCC); Land and Water Fund of the Rockies (LAW); and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).*

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