

# Pasadena Citizens' Advisory Council

www.pasadenacac.org

## Summary of Tuesday, May 24, 2016 Meeting

### HOW CHEMTREC ASSISTS EMERGENCY RESPONDERS



Pasadena Citizens' Advisory Council members looked at emergency response relating to transportation at its May meeting. They learned about the work of CHEMTREC®, a nationwide resource for emergency responders when there are accidents involving hazardous materials or dangerous goods. CHEMTREC® is a division of the American Chemistry Council. CHEMTREC® operates 24/7/365 to assist emergency responders and others by providing emergency information on both regulated and nonregulated products. It has 32,000 registered shippers who support the organization with dues, and it has a data base with more than 80,000 contacts it can activate to help shippers, manufacturers, and responders during any kind of transportation emergency. CHEMTREC® can activate one of the various national mutual assistance networks, such as one organized by chlorine manufacturers.

CHEMTREC® can assist callers with identifying an unknown product, determining appropriate response to an incident, obtaining expertise on mixed products, quick access to medical personnel, and notifying shippers and carriers. In general, it has access to specific information and can help those who need it to communicate with those who have it.

The attached slides provided more detail on the services on which CHEMTREC focuses, its network of resources, its role in emergency response, what happens when someone calls CHEMTREC, and the custom services a specific company may obtain from the organization.

The CHEMTREC® 800-424-9200 number is prominently displayed on trucks and rail cars and used by first responders to help them identify the cargo in an emergency call. Others who call include carriers, terminals, warehouses, plant sites, medical personnel, consumers, regulators, shippers—and ordinary members of the public.

### USING THE DOT EMERGENCY RESPONSE GUIDEBOOK



Members looked through copies of the US Department of Transportation (DOT) Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG) to see the kind of information available, which includes diagrams of

trucks and rail cars designed to safely carry different kinds of cargo. The Department of Transportation (DOT) Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration produces an *Emergency Response Guidebook* (ERG) every 4 years. The 2016 edition has just been published. Like CHEMTREC®, the ERG is designed for emergency responders. But it may be used by the public to understand the coded placards used on trucks and trains as well as generally how to identify cargo by the shape of the vehicle.

The ERG is intended to help responders during the initial (first 5-10 minutes) of an incident to start the response on the right path when there is a transportation incident involving dangerous goods or hazardous materials. A call to CHEMTREC® provides access to more information and experts who, for example, can help a firefighter in command of the response to know whether or not to evacuate nearby residents.

Members learned what each color-coded section of the book contains and, through exercises, used it to track a specific code through each section of the book.

Basic contents of ERG:

- White section –how to use the guide, pictures of placards, how to identify rail cars and truck trailers by shape/design, emergency phone numbers
- Yellow section – list of materials by identification (ID) number. ID numbers are established by the United Nations and used globally.
- Blue section – same information but in order alphabetically by name of material
- Orange section – guide to emergency response (potential hazards of a specific type of material, potential health effects, public safety steps to take, protective clothing to wear, when to evacuate, response to a fire or spill or leak, and first aid)
- Green section –specifics about isolation and protection, including how far to keep people away from small vs. large incidents
- White section at the end – glossary and more

#### **Where to Obtain an Emergency Response Guidebook**

The DOT 2016 [Emergency Response Guide](http://www.phmsa.dot.gov/staticfiles/PHMSA/DownloadableFiles/Files/Hazmat/ERG2016.pdf) is available from the agency's website for free. If the link does not work, you may find the guide at <http://www.phmsa.dot.gov/staticfiles/PHMSA/DownloadableFiles/Files/Hazmat/ERG2016.pdf>

The guide is also available for your smart phone through your App Store. The DOT version is free.

## **TRUCKING SAFEGUARDS**

In small groups, attendees used diagrams in the Emergency Response Guide to see the variety of designs of truck trailers and talked with plant representatives about the safeguards those designs provide. Items mentioned include high flow shutoffs, armored valves, pressure relief valves/devices, and labeling of hazardous cargo.