Community Action for a Renewed Environment
A Community-Based Toxics Reduction Initiative

Clean Air Act Advisory Committee

Economic Incentives and Regulatory Innovation Subcommittee

June 23, 2004

What is CARE?

- CARE is a community based, multimedia approach to reducing toxics.

- CARE uses collaborative processes to address cumulative risk comprehensively.

- CARE educates communities about the pollution risks they face and offers EPA voluntary programs to address the problems <u>they</u> select.

- CARE empowers communities, local and state governments to develop neighborhood based solutions that will reduce toxic risks.

Background

- Linda Fisher requested that a proposal for a community-based toxic reduction budget initiative be prepared for the May, 2003 Annual Planning Meeting
- OAR and OCFO established a workgroup to develop 2005 budget initiative
- Workgroup continued development of the concept and prepared budget initiative
- Initiative was send to Congress as part of President's Budget
- We are working on program development to be ready for '05

Why This is the Right Time

- EPA is increasingly moving toward community based programs. For example:
  - Brownfields: OSWER
  - National Estuary Program: OW
  - Design for Environment: OPPTS
  - Environmental Justice Revitalization Projects: OEJ
  - Diesel Retrofits, Tools for Schools: OAR
  - Safe Communities Multiyear Plan: ORD
- We need to go beyond pilots and act in a coordinated and organized fashion.
  - We have long history of doing a great job on pilots and not as good a job on scale-up

Why This is the Right Time

- **Community based work can produce meaningful results without raising high-profile, controversial national environmental issues that too often lead to "policy paralysis".**

- **Working in a multi-media fashion in communities helps break down stove pipes in EPA and across Federal Agencies**
  - **Joint work across program boundaries can lead to more efficient integrated solutions**

- **It is becoming clear that national programs by themselves, are simply not sufficient to solve the problem of toxic hot spots.**

Benefits of Community-Based Programs: External

- **Provide risk reduction to those who need it most**
  - Achieve local reductions not otherwise feasible through national regulations
  - Reductions make a real difference to public health
- **Empower Communities and build capacity for environmental stewardship**
  - Organized communities can continue to build on progress using other funding sources: foundations, etc.
  - People feel listened to and empowered
  - They can see the risk reduction activity

Benefits of Community-Based Programs: Internal

- EPA gains by being seen in a different light
  - An organization that listens and cares
  - An organization that works with others and focuses on real risks, results you can see
  - An organization that you want to see in your neighborhood

Program Goals

- **Produce Results!**
  - **Significantly reduce exposure to toxics in communities through voluntary, local action in partnership with EPA**
  - **Focus on getting quick reductions and use assessments to refine targeting and build community consensus**
- **Build community capacity and empower community decision-making**
  - **Priorities based on community choices**
- **Focus on all sources of toxics (air, water, waste, indoor, outdoor)**
- **Supplement regulatory programs**
- **Track, transfer and use results to improve public health**

Current Design: Organization

- **Program organized around a hub and spokes system**
  - **A central EPA team supporting regional "centers".   Regional centers support individual projects**
  - **Expect at least one community in each Region**
- **Central Team drawn from headquarters Offices and Regions to provide support for projects**
  - **Team centralizes overhead expenses and support which increases efficiency**
    - **Databases, facilitator training, tools, conferences, etc.**
    - **Tracks progress and evaluates program**
    - **Works with program offices, OPEI and ORD to fund the development of new tools or the adaptation of existing ones**

Current Design: Cooperative Agreements

- Two categories of competitive cooperative agreements (CA).

- Intended grant recipients include state, tribal and local governments, community organizations and NGO's.

- First category is the Level 1 CA ($50-$100k)
  - create environmental toxic reduction partnerships,
  - assess the sources of exposure to toxic pollutants
  - estimate the most significant sources of human health and ecological risks in the community.

- After implementing the initial CA (or similar process) the community would be ready to select and carry out activities to reduce risks.

Current Design: Cooperative Agreements

- The second category is the Level 2 CA ($300-$500k)
  - These grants provide seed money to leverage and implement community-based projects that show actual risk reductions.
  - Eligibility based on ability to select and implement risk reduction activities.
- At first, many of these communities will be ones that we are already working with
- Over time, we expect that many of the communities that get the smaller CA will move on to these larger CA

Goals and Measures

- **Central team would track results**
  - Track specific actions taken
    - By project, nationally and over time
  - Work with programs to develop metrics to convert actions to environmental results, wherever possible
    - E.g. 1 diesel retrofit = x tons of NOx, particulates
    - Develop and maintain tables with environmental results, quantitatively where possible, qualitatively elsewhere
  - Track collateral benefits, such as:
    - Capacity building and other social benefits
    - Economic benefits

What are We Doing Now

- Get ready for start of program
  - Goal is to hit the ground running as soon as we get funding
  - We want organization, spending plan, grant RFP, results tracking system plus other program needs all ready to go at the start of the 05FY
- Current Organization
  - CARE being developed by 6 teams
  - Team report to the Executive Committee of senior executives which reports to the IAC
- Work with Regions to have 10 FY'04 CARE communities

The Six Teams And Their Tasks

- **Management Plan Team**
  - Draft the management plan for implementing CARE program and prepare '05 budget and work plan
- **'04 CARE Communities Support Team**
  - Provide support to the selected '04 communities
- **Resource Guide Team**
  - Develop resource guide and get it up on the web
- **Communication**
  - Develop communication and outreach plan
- **RFP Development Team**
  - Write the RFPs for grants and design system for selecting winning grantees
- **Tracking System Team**
  - Develop system for tracking results