How to Engage the Community in Long Term Control Planning

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Nine Elements of an LTCP

- Characterization, monitoring and modeling
- Public participation
- Consideration of sensitive areas
- Evaluation of CSO control alternatives
- Cost/performance considerations
- Operational plan
- Maximization of treatment at the POTW
- Implementation schedule
- Post-construction compliance monitoring
Final Selection of CSO Control Alternatives

Should be based on:

Control priorities
Site specific conditions
Protection of WQS and designated uses
Public input
Cost-effectiveness of controls
Financial capability
Other considerations
Public Participation Requirements in Long term Control Planning

- document how the public was informed about alternatives for CSO control;
- document how the public is engaged in the decision process;
- document public participation events, including the number of people attending and a record or summary of participant comment, and
- document decisions or changes made in response to public comments.
Importance of Public Involvement

Input from the community can help you meet your permit requirements and goals. Stakeholders can provide:

- knowledge of sewershed;
- location of problems;
- ideas for solutions;
- assistance with implementation under your guidance;
- understanding of alternatives and why an approach is selected, and
- acceptance of project outcome.
Components of a Successful Communication Effort

- Establish a project team/advisory group
- Assign a project coordinator
- Assign a communication coordinator
- Set project and outreach goals
- Identify key stakeholders
- Identify a local liaison and local networks
- Organize a project meeting
- Explain process, role of the public, role of permit holders, outline tasks, timeline, etc.
- Acceptance of the LTCP solution
Role of the Project Coordinator

- To establish a project team
- To understand the complexity of the permit process and its requirements and be able to share this information with the project team
- To assign an outreach coordinator
- To determine roles and contributions of each team member
- To determine who and what agencies/NGOs need to be involved
Tasks of the Outreach Coordinator

- Develop and track the communication strategy
- Coordinate information gathering
- Assist in identifying stakeholders
- Establish roles and responsibilities of participants
- Manage expectations for involvement and decision making
- Suggest communication methods to project team
- Provide access to information
- Help translate technical information to nontechnical audiences
- Incorporate stakeholder concerns into the process
- Implement and evaluate the agreed upon strategy
- Document strategy
But how???
Outreach Planning Process

1. Identify Issue
2. Set Goals
3. Profile Issues, Audiences and Constraints
4. Assess Audiences
5. Identify Messages and Methods
6. Implement Strategy
7. Evaluate, Debrief and Follow-up

Review and Evaluate
Step One: Identify the Issue

- Long term Control Plan Outreach
Step 2: Establish a SMART Goal

- State or define the task(s)
- State how you will achieve it
- Determine how you will measure it
- Determine when it will be accomplished
- Don’t make it too complicated
- If necessary break down goals into specific objectives with measurable results-think short-term, mid-term and long-term intervals
Step 3: Case Record of Issue, Audiences and Sewershed

- What do you need to learn?
- What do you need to share?
- What are the likely concerns of stakeholders?
- Who is impacted?
- What do we already know about fulfilling the requirements of the LTCP?
- How can the public help us?
- What are the resource constraints, e.g., time, capacity, etc.
Step 3, cont: Identify Your Stakeholders

- Who is likely to be affected directly by your action?
- Who was previously involved in this issue?
- Who might have important ideas, information, or opinions?
- Who are important community leaders?
Suggested Key Stakeholders

- rate payers
- industrial users of the CSS
- persons near impacted waters
- persons who use the impacted waters
- municipal officials
- municipal stormwater coordinators
- residents who will be impacted by construction projects
Step 4: Audience Assessment

- How do the stakeholders perceive the issue?
- What information do they want?
- What information do you need to provide? - process, timelines, constraints, available resources, etc.
- What local communication systems can be used for a continuing dialogue?
Step 5: Identify Your Messages

- What information must be conveyed?
- What information do you need?
- Does it include stakeholder suggestions?
- Are roles and responsibilities clearly explained?
- Do messages reflect the goals of the LTCP?
Step 5: Identifying Methods

- Public meetings
- Focus groups
- Media
- Displays
- Conferences
- Workshops
- Availability sessions
- Surveys
- Phone interviews
Step 6: Implement Strategy

Develop a timeline with needed tasks

- How long will tasks take to complete?
- What information must be collected and how will it be documented?
- Who is responsible for each task?
- What constraints may emerge in completing tasks?
- How will the effort be coordinated?
- How will outcomes be evaluated?
Step 7: Evaluation

- Did the public participation process involve rate payers and users of receiving waters?
- Were they briefed on characterization, CSO impacts, control alternatives and costs?
- Were their needs and concerns incorporated into the plan?
- How were they involved?
- Was the public participation process documented?
- Are there questions which require a follow up?