

208 bulletin

NUMBER 9

WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT

April 30, 1976

Training Courses Set

EPA has finalized a contract with Synergy Consulting Services to conduct public participation training courses.

Synergy plans the courses to give participants an understanding of the basic purposes and intent of public participation. Participants will also learn specific, pragmatic skills for the implementation of public participation as an integral part of the planning process. Special emphasis will be placed on the political nature of water quality management and skills necessary to deal with public confrontation.

The entire two-day course will be built around stages in the water quality management process. The courses are set up to train two people from each designated Agency, two people from each State, and two people from each EPA Regional office. As the schedule is undergoing some revisions, contact the Regional EPA office for more information.

Getting The Word Out

State and areawide planning agencies in Region VIII have begun some innovative public participation programs designed to build enthusiasm and broaden interest in water quality management.

The Pueblo Regional Planning Commission (RPC) which operates in Pueblo County, Colorado, uses billboards and flyers enclosed with water bills to tell the area residents, "208 means clean water... and a whole lot more."

The flyer, which was a cooperative effort of the Pueblo RPC and the Pueblo Board of Water Works, contains a brief explanation of the areawide water quality management program. It invites people to fill in their names and addresses for the Agency's mailing list and return the flyer with their water payment. The front of the flyer features a photograph of an area reservoir.

Elsewhere in Region VIII, as in the State of Utah and the Flathead Drainage area of Montana, planning agencies have used television, radio, and newspapers to reach the public and drum up interest in water quality management.

Train On Water
Cleanup

The massive cleanup of America's waterways must be accompanied by prompt planning to ensure that the recreational benefits of clean waters are available to working people and their families. EPA Administrator Russell E. Train made this point in Boston at a recent Conference on Water Cleanup and the Land.

The conference launched a joint effort by EPA and the Department of the Interior to assist State and local governments and private citizens in obtaining a good return from the nearly \$18 billion being invested by the Federal Government in wastewater treatment plants.

Mr. Train told the conference that this massive Federal program "will raise property values along those shorelines downstream from treatment plants. When a polluted river becomes clean enough for fishing and boating and swimming, it attracts people and land development." He predicted that, unless sound planning precedes the development of cleaned-up shorelines, the result will be a zoning disaster. The conference also learned that there are several sections of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 which can be used to help secure full value on funds invested in water cleanup.

Section 208 areawide plans should identify specific recreation use opportunities and coordinate access and shoreland protection needed to support proposed water uses, he said.

A Public
Participation
Idea

Be visible. Consider making pollution-monitoring results available to the public along with other information related to water quality problems, needs, goals, and progress, on a continuing basis.

You could do it with a widely distributed and well publicized report along the lines of "How Well Are We Cleaning Up Our Water?" This could be done on an area or statewide basis.

Region I Agencies
Plan Program
Integration

Officials of EPA, HUD, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation in Region I and the New England River Basins Commission are meeting in an attempt to approach the intricate question of interprogram planning and funding. They have held extended discussions with each other and with State officials to examine coordination. All agree that to achieve desired levels of inter-program planning and funding an essential ingredient is integration of guidelines and practices of the various programs at the Federal level. They must also evaluate practices and detailed work plans developed by receiving agencies at the State and sub-State levels.

Public
Participation
In Texas

On March 24 the Dallas/Fort Worth Council of Governments (COG) held its first major area-wide public participation meeting. Approximately 100 people attended, including concerned citizens and local officials, as well as EPA, State and COG staff.

In the morning session James Agee, 208 coordinator for the Western States, and Georgie Putnicki, Deputy Regional Administrator of Region VI, discussed the Federal perspective on 208. Also of particular interest was the afternoon workshop including group discussion on local issues. Participants reached a strong consensus that local elected officials must be involved in the 208 planning process if plans are to be implemented.

Feedback On
208

Recently an EPA staff-member interviewed a member of the policy advisory committee of a 208 Agency in New York State. The woman with whom the staffer spoke held some definite opinions about the 208 process.

She was very pessimistic about producing implementable results from the 208 process. Also, she doubted that municipal officials understand 208 or have any interest on it. The advisory committee member felt that EPA publications should not be used to explain the process to municipal officials. In her opinion, the current copiousness of Agency publications is a national disgrace.

Instead, she proposed training sessions for private citizens to explain 208 in terms that laymen can understand. Such sessions would enable citizens to cope with the documents issued by EPA, the State and designated area agencies. This together with identification of--and support from--key leaders in a community, will be necessary for the success of the 208 process, in her opinion.

In response to this and other similar comments the EPA-sponsored workshops with the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, and the National Association of Regional Councils which are set for late April and May are designed to bring local and State officials into the 208 process in a vital way.

208 Cooperation
With County And
State

A case study on the 208 program was sent to EPA Headquarters by A. H. Hessling, Executive Director of the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana (OKI) Regional Council of Governments. It reflects real accomplishment.

Hessling reports that one area for which OKI was designated to prepare a sewerage facilities plan includes three villages; Waynesville, Harveysburg, and Corwin, as well as unincorporated parts of a county; all in Ohio.

This same area includes an 11,000 acre recreational site on which the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers is constructing a reservoir. In 1978, after the reservoir waters are impounded, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources will take over the site as a State park.

Harveysburg, with a population of about 500, has been trying for years to eliminate the problems which stemmed from its use of septic tanks in poor soils. The problems were so severe that, in one township within the planning area, tests by the county Health Department revealed that 28 percent of the well-water samples were unsafe. Yet improvements to solve the problems would have been prohibitively expensive in view of the small population and sluggish economy of the area

Waynesville, the largest village, with a population of 1,800, operates a wastewater treatment plant with some excess capacity. Hessling said a perceived solution would be construction of three separate package plants at a cost of \$3 million to discharge directly into the reservoir. A regional solution would be to lay a conduit under the unfilled reservoir and pipe wastewater from Harveysburg and Corwin to the plant at Waynesville. The cost of this solution: \$2 million. The regional solution, made possible by areawide planning, was agreed upon after many meetings with the Corps of Engineers, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the affected villages and the county.

This is a unique occasion when the Corps, acting under revised regulations, will be able to share costs in a solution which involves allowing an adjacent area to tie into its interceptor sewer.

In addition to saving over a million dollars, the enactment of a regional solution will forestall the potential pollution of the reservoir from direct discharges. The cost savings, the institutional cooperation, the environmental benefit are what 208 is all about. OKI anticipates many more successes like this as the 208 plan proceeds to its conclusion. Without a regional entity and a comprehensive planning approach these accomplishments would be out of reach.

Public Participation
Clearinghouse

EPA Headquarters is considering the formation of a clearinghouse for information on Public Participation. If you have any material that might be of interest to other 208 agencies (i.e., brochures, pamphlets, films, slide presentations, etc.), please forward it to:

Public Participation Information
EPA (WH-554)
401 M Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Coordination
Document
Signed

The U.S. Forest Service (FS) and EPA recently signed a joint policy guidance document. Its purpose is to establish a framework for cooperation between the FS, EPA, and the State and areawide 208 planning agencies.

The document will be sent to FS Regional and field offices, EPA Regional and field offices, and State and areawide 208 agency offices so that everyone concerned with the 208 planning process will be aware of their capabilities and responsibilities.

The document has three objectives:

- to encourage coordination between State and areawide water quality management agencies and the FS when National Forest lands and/or State and private forested lands are significantly involved.
- to aid the exchange of information between State and areawide water quality management agencies and the FS, as well as providing FS technical assistance to these agencies.
- to help FS comply with the substantive requirements of State and areawide water quality management plans.