



## **The Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)**

The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to Know Act (EPCRA), passed by Congress in 1986, also known as Title III of the Superfund Amendments and reauthorization Act (SARA III), requires:

- Public and private facilities that use, produce or store extremely hazardous substances or hazardous chemicals to report their inventories on an annual basis
- Each state to maintain a State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) to facilitate hazardous materials emergency response and compliance with hazardous materials reporting laws
- Preparation of local emergency response plans, which, in Florida, have been developed utilizing the 11 Regional Planning Councils (RPCs) and state-appointed Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs)

The staffing and planning support provided by the RPCs to the States 11 LEPCs has enabled those committees to function in accordance with federal and state regulations pursuant to Chapter 252, F.S. Implementation of this program by LEPCs, in close coordination with the Florida Department of Community Affairs Division of Emergency Management, helps ensure public safety, as well as the safety of emergency responders. The program also ensures the following:

- Federally-required emergency planning and training activities take place at the local level
- Ongoing facility-specific hazard analyses to identify and incorporate information regarding new facilities in hazardous materials emergency response plans
- Existence of a local mechanism to compile and analyze information regarding chemicals stored at facilities, thereby helping to prevent injury or death to local first responders
- Continuation of the public information component of the program which provides communities the opportunity to obtain information about the presence of toxic and hazardous substances in their vicinity

LEPCs also serve as public access repository for the reports filed under EPCRA. This information is used to compile the local hazardous materials emergency response plans mentioned above, which are reviewed and approved by the SERC, and put into action in the event of a chemical emergency.