A [Local Emergency Response Committee (LEPC)](https://www.epa.gov/epcra/local-emergency-planning-committees) is a hazardous materials planning committee established by [State WAC 118-40-150](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=118-40-150), as required by [Emergency Planning Right to Know Act of 1986 (EPCRA](https://www.epa.gov/epcra/what-epcra)). **In 1986 Congress passed the** Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act **(EPCRA). EPCRA (also known as SARA Title III) established requirements for all levels of government and facilities with** [reportable chemicals](https://www.epa.gov/epcra/epcra-sections-311-312) **to work with local communities to collect data, share information, and develop plans for chemicals and hazardous materials.** The Local Emergency Planning Committee provides a platform where industry, government, first responders, media, medical and community members can come together to build a safer community.

**The LEPC must develop a community hazardous material emergency response plan, conduct an annual plan review, collect, and maintain chemical inventory forms, chemical release reports, and provide chemical inventory information to the public as requested. This whole process should improve chemical safety, protect public health and the environment. This plan is developed by the LEPC with stakeholder participation.**

**This Emergency Response Plan must:**

**• Identify facilities and transportation routes of extremely hazardous substances.**

**• Describe emergency response procedures, on and off site.**

**• Designate a community coordinator and facility coordinator(s) to implement the plan.**

**• Outline emergency notification procedures.**

**• Describe how to determine the probable affected area and population by releases.**

**• Describe local emergency equipment and facilities and the persons responsible for them.**

**• Outline evacuation plans.**

**• Provide a training program for emergency responders (including schedules); and,**

**• Provide methods and schedules for exercising emergency response plan.**

The King County LEPC includes all geographic King County except for the City of Seattle and the City of Kent and areas covered by a Tribal Emergency Response Committee. At minimum, in the State of Washington, all counties are designated as LEPC jurisdictions.

[LEPC committee members (WAC 118-40-160)](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=118-40-160) **must include in their membership, at a minimum, local officials including police, fire, public health, transportation, medical providers, and environmental professionals, as well as representatives of facilities subject to the emergency planning requirements, community groups, and the media.**

**One important mission of an LEPC is to provide information to the public related to hazardous materials in the community. Facilities with** [reportable quantities](https://www.epa.gov/epcra/epcra-sections-311-312) **of hazardous materials are required to annually complete a** [Tier II](https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Reporting-requirements/Emergency-Planning-Community-Right-to-Know-Act/Tier-Two-reporting-requirements) **form and submit them to** [Washington State Emergency Response Commission](https://mil.wa.gov/state-emergency-response-commission-serc) **(SERC), the local LEPC, and the local Fire Department. Fire Departments will use this information to build their response plans and train staff. These Tier II reports form the basis of knowing what chemicals are in communities.** [Washington State Department of Ecology](https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Reporting-requirements/Emergency-Planning-Community-Right-to-Know-Act) **provides an online reporting tool for facilities.**

King County LEPC History

The King County Local Emergency Planning Committee (KC LEPC) was formed in 1988 when emergency management obligations were covered by the King County Sheriff’s Office, Special Operations Unit. When Emergency Management became a civilian unit within the Sheriff’s Office in 1991, LEPC efforts became part of the new unit’s responsibilities. Efforts to maintain compliance were increased, plans maintained, regular meetings conducted, and training and exercise opportunities were made available. A significant portion of a staff member’s time is devoted to LEPC requirements, interaction with other jurisdictions, the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), and first responders. For some years, a King County LEPC representative held a seat on the State Emergency Response Commission. From 1988 until 2002 there were three LEPC’s in geographic King County: Auburn, Kent, and King County. In December of 2002, the City of Seattle Fire Department petitioned the SERC to become its own LEPC jurisdiction. In March 2005, the City of Auburn requested the SERC to merge with the King County LEPC for reporting and compliance management. Since 2005 the King County LEPC has routinely held meetings.

How to participate in the King County LEPC

King County Emergency Management plans to hold four LEPC meetings per year. Immediate objectives are to schedule regular meetings, build awareness of LEPC duties and responsibilities, and fill the membership positions. If you are interested in being part of the King County LEPC please send an email to kc.lepc@kingcounty.gov or contact Tom Sharp at tsharp@kingcounty.gov or 206-205-4069.

Ultimately the goal is to save lives, reduce losses and protect the environment. The document [Energize your local Emergency Planning Committee](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-07/documents/energize_your_lepc.pdf) shares ideas on how to keep LEPC’s motivated and focused. Some of the ideas include:

Leadership and Team Building

* Encourage involvement
* Create Opportunities for the Team
* Define a Purpose
* Build performance-oriented tasks and goals

Community Building

* Involve Community Members and Facility Owners
* Support Community Events
* Support First Responder Open Houses
* School Involvement

Training and Education

* Promote regular training activities
* Discuss recent incidents
* Educational Activities with Facilities