

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Community Action for a Renewed Environment

CARE Program

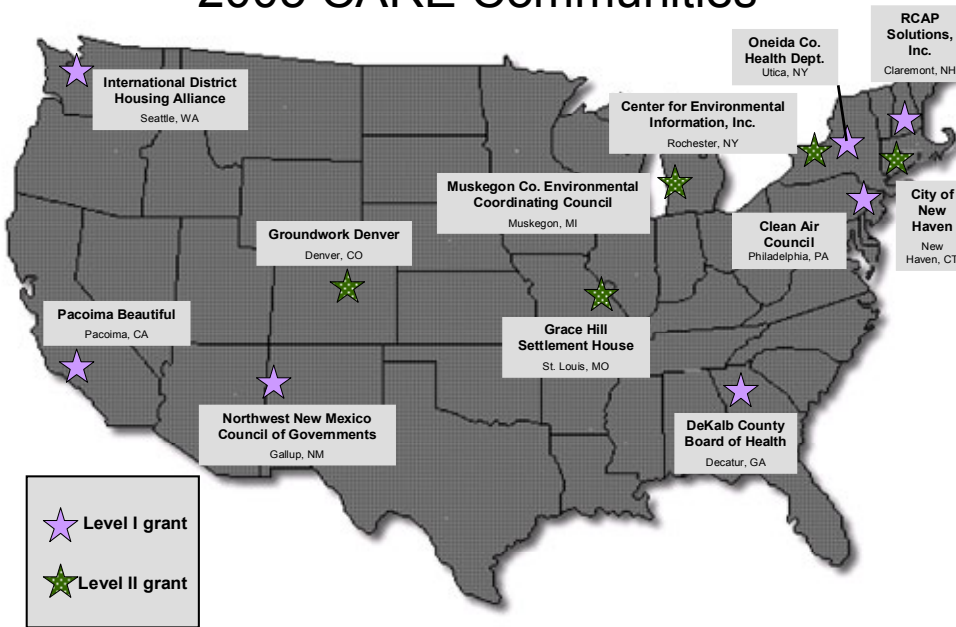


Quarterly Highlights — May 2006

Early Success for CARE:

The Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program was designed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help communities address risks from various sources of toxic pollutants in their local environment. CARE promotes local action by providing technical support and federal funding directly to community-based collaborative partnerships. There are four steps in the CARE process: joining together, identifying problems & solutions, implementing solutions & reducing risks, and becoming self-sustaining. CARE has already seen success with the 12 current CARE communities reporting first-quarter achievements in each of these four stages. Nine of the 12 communities have strengthened their capacity to address environmental concerns by holding partnership meetings and adding at least one new partner to their project. Seven communities have effectively leveraged in-kind or financial support, and five have already identified problems and early opportunities for risk reduction activities. More detailed information about each of the 12 communities' efforts can be found inside under "CARE Communities in Action".

2005 CARE Communities



CARE was launched in 2005 with 12 cooperative agreements awarded across the nation. CARE will add several more communities to the program in 2006.

Support Building for CARE:

EPA's Brownfields Program
The Brownfields program will provide \$50,000 for every region to complete a Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) on each project. The money is used to provide Phase I and Phase II assessments (about \$5,000-\$8,000 and \$50,000, respectively).

American Bar Association
The ABA is inviting public-service minded attorneys to consider volunteering their services to help meet the various needs of existing CARE communities.

CARE Links to the Public Health Community:

CARE is helping to link the public health and environmental fields through various efforts, including presentations at conferences for the National Association of County and City Health Officials, Society of Public Health Educators, American Public Health Association, and CDC's National Healthy Communities.

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<http://www.epa.gov/care>

CARE Communities in Action:

Joining Together

Working with Governmental Partners

In addition to the cooperative agreement with each Regional EPA office, all of the CARE communities have developed strong county, state or federal partnerships. These additional agencies working along with stakeholder groups are as varied as the communities they support: from the U.S. Department of Agriculture partnering with the *Muskegon County Environmental Coordinating Council* (MI), to the New Mexico Environment Department working on the *Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments* CARE project. Furthermore, the *Clean Air Council* (Philadelphia, PA) is broadening its partnership to include the U.S. Coast Guard, as this project is seeking to identify strategies to reduce pollution in Philadelphia ports.

"The CARE team has been wonderful with their assistance. I didn't realize what this partnership would mean to this project. Communities are very impressed with the level of commitment from EPA."
—RCAP Solutions, quarterly report.

Involving Local Governments

The *Pacoima Beautiful Community Partnership* (CA) stressed that it was most important to keep the local elected officials knowledgeable about CARE activities. Both the president of the city council and the local city council representative are supportive of the project because they are kept informed on the scope of the work involving their community. All CARE projects have their local government as a partner and several of the CARE grantees are local city governments.

Regional Coordination

EPA's regional offices are aligning themselves to better target programmatic resources, including CARE, the Indoor Air Program, and the Brownfields Program, to name a few. For example, Region 5 has recently established the Western Michigan Children's Environmental Health Initiative, which will coordinate ongoing efforts in Muskegon, Battle Creek, Grand Rapids, and Kalamazoo. The *Muskegon County Environmental Coordinating Council* CARE project will be a member of this initiative.

Identifying Problems & Solutions



Community members gather for a training session with Seattle's International District Housing Alliance.

Addressing Cultural Diversity

Tagalog, Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Spanish are just a few of the many languages that are needed for effective community outreach in the current CARE communities. The *International District Housing Alliance* (Seattle, WA) held a Cultural Competency training session to strengthen the overall coalition. In Colorado, *Groundwork Denver* is using the *Promotora* model to provide toxic reduction tips to homeowners. The *Promotora* model is an informal leadership model of creative ways people can meet their needs when access to services is limited. *Promotoras* are trained minority health care professionals who speak the same language, live in similar communities, understand culture perceptions, and have the trust of the diverse populations they deal with.

Effectively Using Developed Tools

National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) encourages community-based environmental health initiatives similar to CARE through local public health departments. Recognizing a strategic connection between the two programs, CARE has worked closely with NACCHO over the past three years to promote CARE and to develop mutually beneficial tools and resources. NACCHO's tool, the Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health (PACE-EH), assists communities in creating partnerships and assessing their environmental health risks. Over 100 communities have successfully implemented PACE-EH since 1995, including three current CARE communities: *Oneida County CARE* (NY), the *Muskegon County Environmental Coordinating Council* (MI), and the *DeKalb County CARE Program* (GA).



Over 90 attendees were present at Oneida County CARE's Showcase Event held November 10, 2005.

Implementing Solutions & Reducing Risks

Assisting Locally-Owned Small Businesses

Nine CARE communities have indicated that they are providing pollution prevention assistance to local businesses. *Groundwork Denver* (CO) is providing bi-lingual assistance to auto repair shops. Over 100 small business owners in the *International District* in Seattle indicated that they would like to learn more about waste prevention and vermin management, as well as air quality issues related to transportation, from their local CARE Alliance.



A potential "before and after" scenario included in New Haven's River Street Municipal Development Plans.

Working with Water

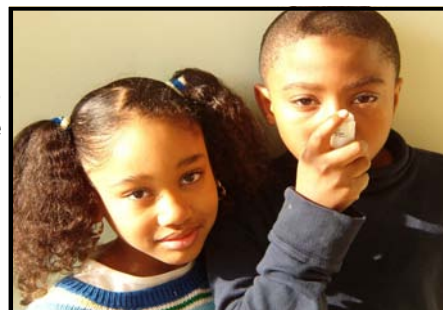
Ten CARE communities are working on a range of water issues, from protecting Lake Michigan to protecting drinking water in Oneida County, NY. The *Green New Haven* (CT) project developed a coastal benefits initiative that integrates toxic reduction efforts as part of its draft Coastal Program Plan. The Coastal Program Plan aims to protect portions of Long Island Sound, while providing opportunities for public access as well as conservation.

Reducing Toxic Emissions

Emissions from trucks, buses, cars and other mobile sources have been identified by seven out of twelve CARE projects as a community problem. The *Rochester CARE Collaborative to Reduce Health & Environmental Risks of Toxic Substances* (NY) worked to improve the air quality and health of students by targeting diesel retrofits for the seven refrigerator trucks delivering food to school cafeterias. Resident awareness of mobile source air pollution was increased through the inclusion of air quality messages on the trucks.

Increasing Awareness of Air Quality Issues

The *Clean Air Partnership* (St. Louis, MO) held an open house to increase awareness about community efforts to improve air quality. Examples include local efforts to improve indoor air quality, reduce diesel emissions at area schools, establish and maintain a local clean air hotline, and implement an environmentally friendly cleaning supplies campaign.



St. Louis' Clean Air Partnership Hotline increases awareness of childhood asthma.

Becoming Self-Sustaining

Additional Assistance for Brownfields

CARE communities are taking advantage of the additional technical assistance provided to them for Brownfields assessment. The *Clean Air Partnership* (St. Louis, MO) is working to conduct a Brownfields assessment on the proposed site of the Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing, a nationally recognized Underground Railroad site. The National Park Service may consider developing this site into a national tourist destination, benefitting nearby low-income communities.

Alliances with Academic Partners

One example of the benefits of leveraging partner resources is the Sullivan County (NH) collaborative formed between *RCAP (Resources for Communities and People) Solutions* and Antioch New England Institute. Both entities—RCAP, funded by CARE, and Antioch, funded by US Department of Agriculture—formed a joint steering committee and advisory group of 40 members to work in four areas: use of toxic and hazardous materials, recycling and composting, education and outreach, and residual management. Another successful university partnership is the *Seattle International District* project that is partnering with the University of Washington. Several University Departments, such as Architecture and Urban Planning, Public Health, and Engineering are working to collect community data, including documenting air toxics within the neighborhood air-shed and community illnesses.

2006 Request for Proposals Webcast Seminars:

The 2006 CARE request for proposals was announced February 9, and applications were due April 10. This year, CARE conducted two national webcast sessions for potential applicants. These webcasts allowed potential applicants to ask questions about the CARE program and application process. Turnout was strong, with over 200 people registering for the training. In addition, participant feedback was highly positive, with 78% of participants that provided feedback reporting that they had learned a great deal from the seminar, and 88% saying they would recommend the seminar to others.

Select comments from Webcast participants:

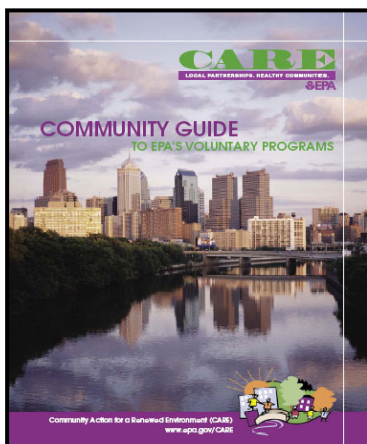
"This is a convenient and easy way to communicate without having to travel. The seminar was well organized and implemented."

"It was very helpful—you answered my questions clearly, and fielded other questions I hadn't anticipated."

Tools and Resources for CARE Communities:

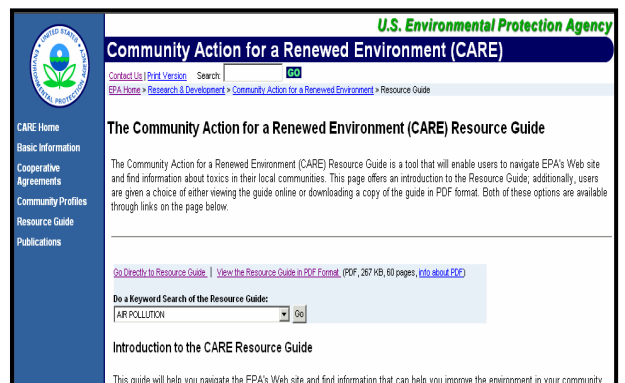
"Since the Clean Air Council's project addresses port pollution, it was helpful to see a section of this document dedicated to EPA's 'Clean Ports USA' program. This section was very useful in offering an overview of the program and highlighting accomplishments at other ports." -- Sean Jacobs, Clean Air Council on CARE's Community Guide to EPA's Voluntary Programs

The Community Guide to EPA's Voluntary Programs:



This is the first guide of EPA voluntary programs targeted specifically at communities, such as those in the CARE program. The Community Guide to EPA's Voluntary Programs is available online at: http://www.epa.gov/osp/care/library/CARE_guidance2_WEB.pdf

The CARE Resource Guide:



The Resource Guide enables users to navigate EPA's Web site to find on-line resources related to toxics that may be found in local communities. While designed to help communities in the CARE program, it can be used by anyone interested in working with communities. Available online at: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/care/index.cfm?fuseaction=Guide.showIntro>

Stay tuned for details on planning for the 2nd Annual CARE National Training Workshop to be held in October 2006...



<http://www.epa.gov/care>

