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A Convergence-Building Model of Superfund Site Communication: Building on Lessons from the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant

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Roadmap

- Background and Rationale
- Why Paducah?
- Methodology
- Results
- Implications

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Background and Rationale: The Need

- Risk communication
 - Best Practices/“Cardinal Rules”
 - Long-term impacts on stakeholder relationships
- Superfund sites
 - Chronic risks
 - Stakeholder heterogeneity
 - Statutory complexity

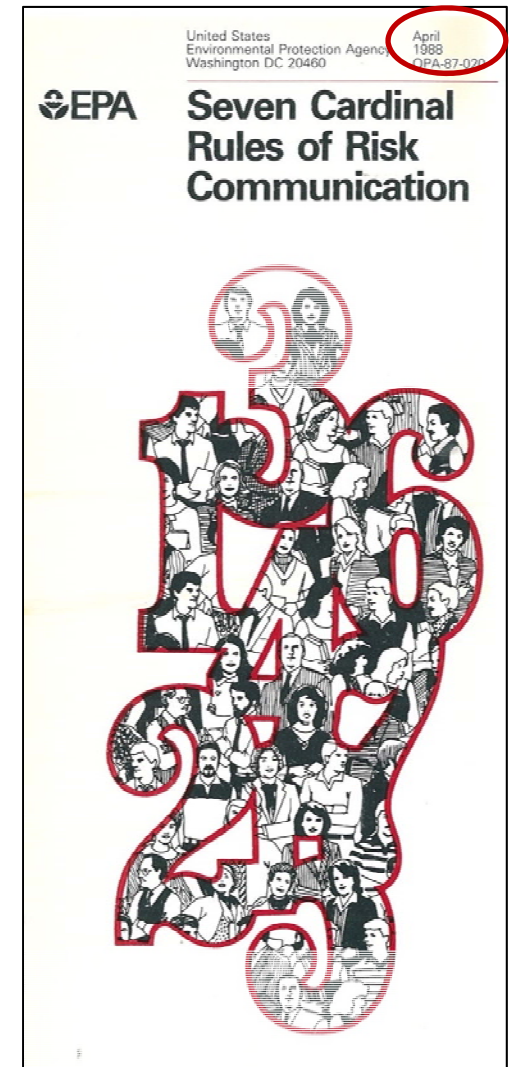


Image courtesy:
www.epa.gov/care/library/7_cardinal_rules.pdf



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Background and Rationale: Theoretical Underpinnings

- Symbolic Interactionism
- Sensemaking
 - Enactment
 - Capacity
 - Commitment
 - Expectations



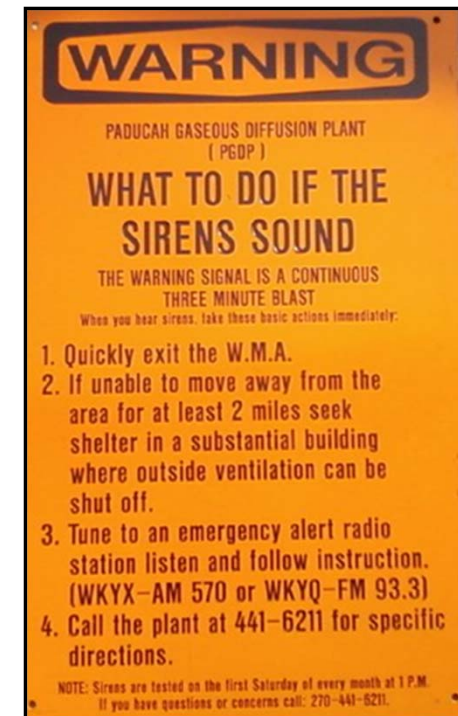


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Background and Rationale: The Research Questions

- RQ1: How does the enactment of accepted agency risk communication practices affect relationships among stakeholders?
- RQ2: What are the related implications for improving agency risk communication approaches?



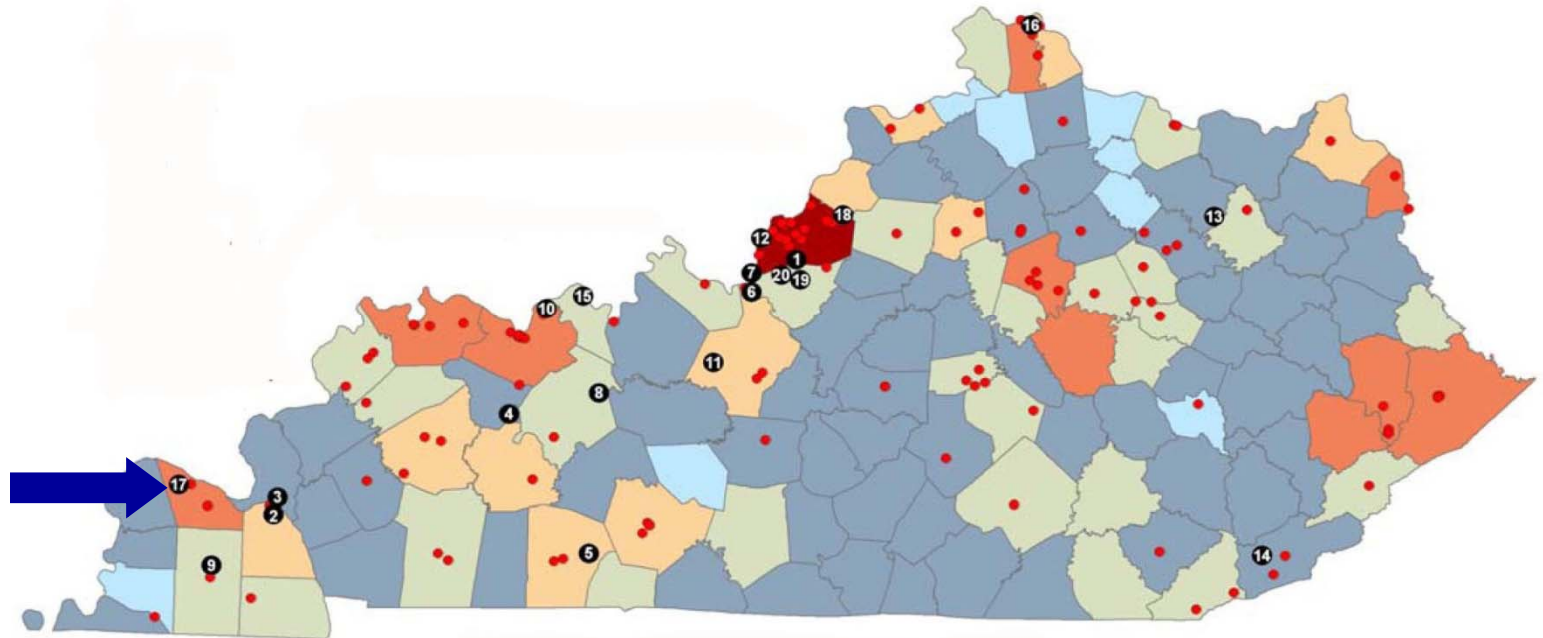


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Why Paducah?



- Kentucky's largest Superfund site
- Competing risks
- Access

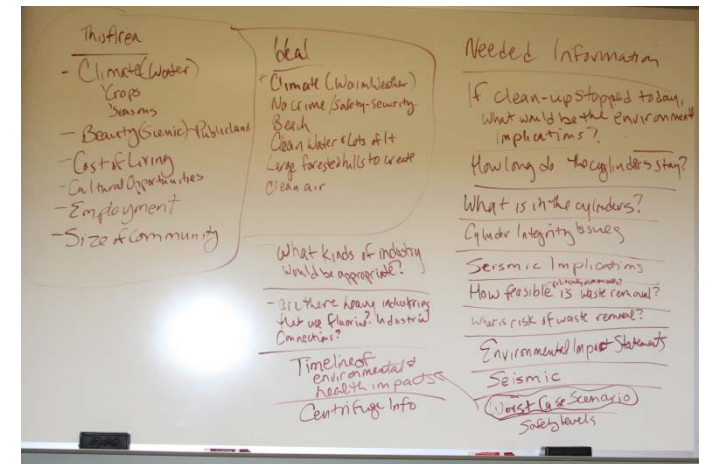


Map Courtesy: University of Kentucky Superfund Research Program



Methodology: Datasets

- *Paducah Sun* Articles (2005)
- Property Acquisition Study
- Public Comments
- Stakeholder Future Vision Study Focus Group Transcripts
- Local Blogs



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DOE plant site gets new cleanup firm

■ **Shaw Environmental and Infrastructure and Portage Environmental will replace Bechtel Jacobs at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant.**

By Joe Walker

Sun Business Editor
 jwalker@paducahsun.com

After two years of procurement delays, the Department of Energy has awarded a \$191.6 million contract

to a firm founded by Shaw Environmental and Infrastructure and Portage Environmental to do cleanup work at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant.

The contract, to Paducah Remediation Services LLC, will run through Sept. 30, 2009. Following a transition period, the company will replace longtime cleanup contractor Bechtel Jacobs, whose contract expires April 23, DOE said Tuesday.

Bechtel Jacobs employs 157 people out of its Kevil offices and oversees another 400 subcontract workers with

various cleanup firms. It was not immediately clear if all the Bechtel Jacobs workers will move to Paducah Remediation Services, although that largely was the case when Bechtel Jacobs took over for Lockheed Martin Energy Systems in 1998.

Repeated attempts to reach senior executives of Shaw, based in Baton Rouge, La., and Portage, based in Espanola, N.M., were unsuccessful Tuesday.

Portage's Web site says Michael Spry, majority owner and president,

is a Mississippi Band member of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. He grew up on the White Earth Indian Reservation in northern Minnesota.

Portage, classified as a small, disadvantaged business, is the managing partner of the joint venture with Shaw, according to DOE.

Both Portage and Shaw list extensive cleanup experience, notably with closed DOE plants such as in Hanford, Wash., and Fernald, Ohio. Shaw, a subsidiary of Shaw Group, has more than \$1 billion in annual business.

DOE announced two years ago that Bechtel Jacobs would be replaced with a smaller firm to try to be more cost efficient. After repeated delays, North Wind Paducah Cleanup Co. was named the successor last January, and a separate firm was named to head cleanup work at the closed uranium enrichment plant in Piketon, Ohio.

But protests came from other bidders, including Portage and Shaw, forcing DOE to rebid. Bechtel Ja-

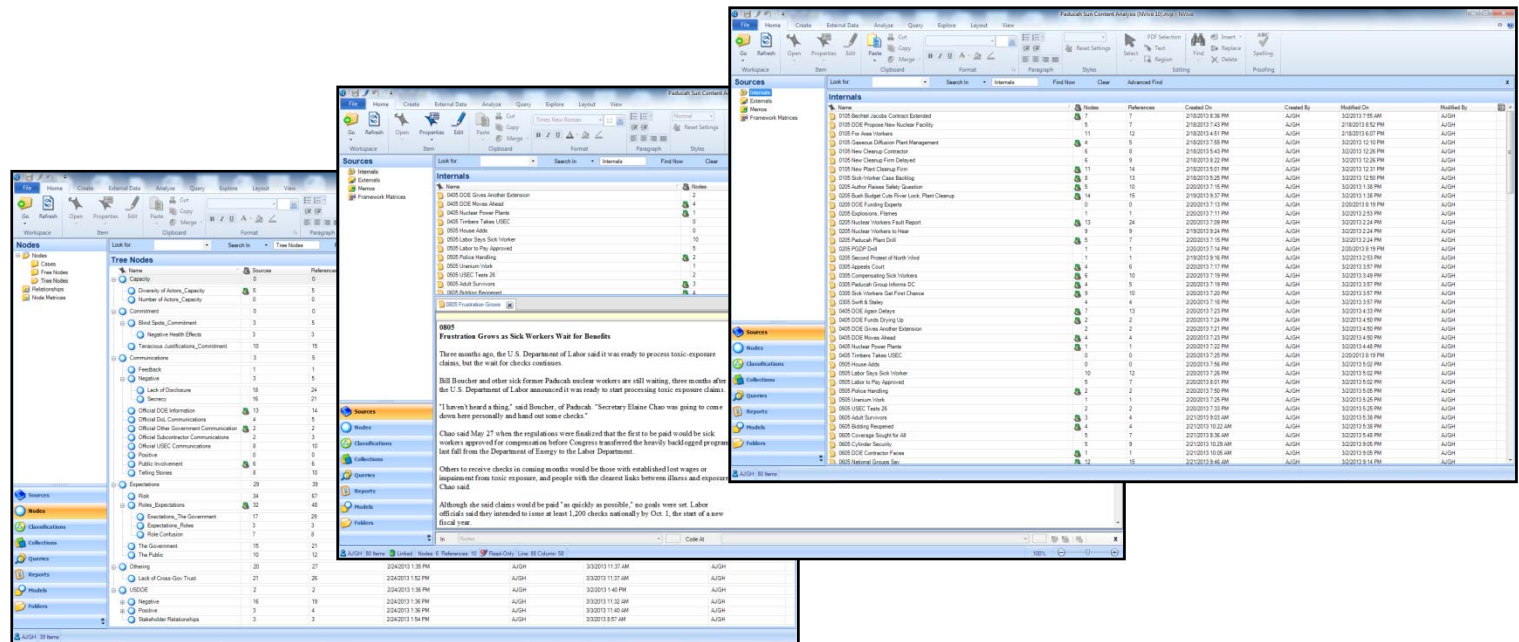
Please see **DOE** 12A



Methodology: Analyses

- Textual
- Constant Comparative
- Narrative Inquiry
- Crystallization

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Results

	The Government	The Public	Delays	Secrecy Manipulation Deception	Risk Perceptions
Capacity	Reduction in Perceived # of Actors/ Viewpoints	Contested Member-ship	Late Info Limits # & Diversity of Informed Stakeholders	Absent Info Limits # & Diversity of Informed Stakeholders	Creation and Perpetuation of Echo Chambers, Polarization
Commitment	Us/Them Rhetorical Binaries	Us/Them Rhetorical Binaries	Confusion Promotes Criticism of Agency	Public Anger about Inadequate Info	Tenacious Justifications of Positions, Blind Spots
Expectations	Agency B's Actions Tied to Agency A's Prior Actions	Discourse of Deficiency	Stakeholder Frustration	Stakeholder Assumptions of Agency Duplicity	Confrontation, Lack of Trust



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Implications:

Guidelines for Superfund Site Communication

- Accept and involve other site stakeholders as legitimate partners in both the operationalization of these guidelines and the creation and evaluation of subsequent communication-related activities.
- Jointly plan and evaluate specific risk communication efforts with other stakeholders.
- Listen, respond, and incorporate stakeholder-specific concerns into messages and engagement protocols.
- Engage diverse stakeholders to develop and implement open, transparent processes that affirm honesty and multiperspectivity as central tenets for communication activities.
- Coordinate and collaborate communication and engagement activities with relevant groups, including community-based, governmental, and media stakeholders.
- Work with stakeholder groups, including the media, to meet information needs in appropriate, targeted ways.
- Engage in clear, compassionate, respectful dialogue with diverse stakeholders.



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Implications: Toward a New Model





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* Detailed findings from this study, *Communication at Superfund Sites and the Reification of Division: Toward a Convergence-Building Model of Risk Communication*, are available online at http://works.bepress.com/anna_hoover/

**Detailed findings from the PGDP Stakeholder Future Vision Project are available at www.paducahvision.com.



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