

ASARCO

TELECOPIER COVER LETTER

Please deliver the following pages to:

NAME Kathryn Kelly

LOCATION ETI

FROM Tom Aldrich

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DATE 11/19/90

If you do not receive all of the pages, please call back as soon as possible. Phone: (206) 756-0201.

TRANSMITTING FROM (206) 756-0250

I roughed out a quick draft for the proposed paper you requested. Would like a little guidance. Is this pretty much along the lines you expected? If so, I will get it finalized and to you as soon as possible.

Tom A.

PROJECT NUMBER 123

Development of An Effective
Communications Program With
The Public Concerning The
Cleanup of ASTARCO Incorporated's
Former Copper Smelting
Tasmanian Wastewater

I would like to thank you for the
information you provided. It is
very helpful. I will be in touch
with you again. Thank you very
much.

ABSTRACT

ASARCO Incorporated owns a smelter located in Ruston and Tacoma, Washington. The smelter began operation in the 1850's as a lead smelter and was converted to a copper smelter in 1905. An arsenic refinery was added in 1922-23 - The smelter processed high arsenic copper ores and was the primary producer of arsenic tri-oxide in the United States at its closure in 1985.

A great deal of public attention has been focused on the smelter over the last 20 years due to SO₂ and arsenic emissions. Numerous public hearings have been held and a number of studies have been performed concerning arsenic levels in the surrounding soils and possible ill-health effects due to elevated urinary arsenic levels found in children living nearby the smelter. After 20 years of study, no ill-health effects have ever been traced to the smelter.

In 1985, the ASARCO smelter site and surrounding area became part of the Commencement Bay Superfund Site. Over the last five years, studies have been ongoing developing data to formulate clean-up alternatives for the smelter site, Commencement Bay and the residential areas.

This paper will focus on the efforts ASARCO has put forth in regard to implementing an effective communications program with the public concerning the issues.

The situation is complicated in that the cleanup is divided into three areas and these areas are further divided as follows:

- I. Off-shore - Commencement Bay
- II. On-site - Smelter Investigation
 - A. Demolition of Buildings
 - B. Remediation
- III. Off-site - Residential
 - A. Expedited Response Actions
 - B. Residential Study

The Superfund process is a very slow moving process. Although there are provisions for public participation, this generally is not until the end of the study. As a result, the public often feels frustrated and left out and without adequate information about what is going on. This leads to mistaken assumptions.

Since May, 1990 ASARCO has actively pursued a program of educating the public and answering any questions that the public might have. A monthly newsletter is being distributed, a community meeting was held, and numerous meetings with the media, area residents, public officials and civic organizations have been held to provide information to the public.

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