

For more information, contact ATSDR at:  
1-888-422-8737 or e-mail: [atsdric@cdc.gov](mailto:atsdric@cdc.gov) (public inquiries)  
(404) 498-0070 or e-mail: [atsdrmediainquiries@cdc.gov](mailto:atsdrmediainquiries@cdc.gov) (media inquiries)

## Note to Correspondents: January 11, 2002

### ATSDR HOSTS COMMUNITY MEETINGS ABOUT ITS 2002 DIOXIN STUDY FOR THE EXPOSURE INVESTIGATION IN CALCASIEU AND LAFAYETTE PARISHES

**What:** The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), a public health agency of the U.S. Department Health and Human Services, will conduct two community meetings in Calcasieu and Lafayette Parishes in Louisiana.

**When & Where:** The meetings will take place on the following dates:

**Tuesday, January 15, 2002**  
7:00pm - 9:00pm

**Thursday, January 17, 2002**  
7:00pm - 9:00pm

**Lake Charles Civic Center**  
900 Lakeshore Drive  
Lake Charles, LA 70669

**Holiday Inn Holidome**  
Conference Center  
2032 NE Evangeline Thruway  
Lafayette, LA

**A media availability session will be held on January 15 from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Lake Charles Civic Center Contraband room.**

**Why:** ATSDR is sponsoring a follow-up exposure investigation in the Calcasieu and Lafayette parishes. The Agency's first dioxin exposure investigation was completed in 1998. Some local residents were found to have higher-than-expected levels of chemicals called dioxins in their blood. To follow-up on that finding, ATSDR is planning an investigation to determine the amount of dioxins and other chemicals, called volatile organic compounds (VOCs), present in people who live in the parishes.

**Background:** An exposure investigation is one approach ATSDR uses to develop a better characterization of past, current and possible future human exposures to hazardous substances in the environment. There are three main ways ATSDR gathers information in an exposure investigation: bio-medical testing (for example, blood or urine sampling); environmental testing (for contaminated soil, air or water); and exposure-dose reconstruction (using environmental data and computer models to estimate past exposures). The results of exposure investigations are used to make public health decisions and to recommend appropriate public health actions.

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## **ATSDR Hosts 2002 Dioxin Exposure Investigation community meetings, 2-2-2**

**Contact:** Community members seeking information on the procedures of this exposure investigation should contact ATSDR Community Involvement Specialist, La Freta Dalton or Epidemiologist, Deborah Millette toll free, at 1-888-42-ATSDR (1-888-422-8737). Callers should refer to the "Dioxin Exposure Investigation." ATSDR Senior Regional Representative George Pettigrew in Dallas also may be called for information at (214) 665-8361.

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**Editors:** Members of the news media should make an appointment to interview ATSDR staff. Please contact John Florence or Kathy Skipper, ATSDR Office of Policy and External Affairs, at (404) 498-0070.