

Responsible Care[®] in the Community: Been There. Done That. What's Next?

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The chemical industry has spent a fair amount of time, effort, and money on community consultation/outreach/dialogue/involvement under the aegis of Responsible Care. And it has worked hard to reduce pollution. Yet the public doesn't seem especially impressed, or grateful, or even reassured. It's time to take stock.

Five possible interpretations:

1. Baloney.

The industry never really did what it said it was doing. Consultation programs have been somewhere between fraudulent and half-hearted.

2. Halfway there.

The industry has made significant progress, but there is a lot more to be done. Time for the advanced course.

3. Other tasks.

Doing less damage and communicating more honestly -- that agenda is pretty much completed. Time to turn to a new task: proactive social responsibility.

4. Stay the course.

It's working. Just keep on doing what you're doing ... and maybe rethink how much public support you can ever expect.

5. Forget it.

It's time to quit wasting all that time, effort, and money. The industry has gone much too far in an unproductive direction.

For more about my take on this issue, see:

- Addressing Skepticism about Responsible Care (Nov 1990) -- www.psandman.com/articles/cma-care.htm
- Responsible Care.® Been There. Done That. What's Next? (Jun 2002) -- www.psandman.com/articles/ccpa.htm

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