



# THE MEMPHIS DEPOT TENNESSEE

---

## ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD COVER SHEET

AR File Number 302

## NACCHO Seeks to Facilitate Community Collaboration

By Karen Roof

Some of the communities surrounding the Memphis Defense Depot in Memphis County, Tennessee, have health concerns regarding the cleanup/closure of the depot. These communities' health concerns center around the many chemicals that were used and disposed of at the Depot. Residents have questioned officials if the chemicals have contaminated their drinking water or caused elevated levels of cancer in the community. To date, many residents have not been satisfied with the studies and remedies proposed. In response to these concerns, the Memphis/Shelby County Department of Health applied for and received a grant from NACCHO through a cooperative agreement with ATSDR to conduct an environmental education needs assessment to survey residents about their health concerns and how the Department might improve environmental health education in the Memphis community.

Dr. Chris Wiant, Executive Director, Tri-County Health Department, Denver,

Colorado, has had many years of experience working with communities on a variety of environmental issues and is one of NACCHO's Superfund peer advisors assisting the LHD with their educational needs assessment. As a peer advisor, Dr. Wiant visited the Memphis/Shelby County Department of Health in February 1998; he discussed with representatives from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) the idea of holding a meeting to bring all of the stakeholders together. A day-long meeting on Friday, February 27, 1998, was held to discuss the environmental cleanup and health concerns to improve community collaboration at the Depot. Dr. Wiant served as the facilitator for the meeting. Approximately 40 participants, including community members along with representatives from Memphis/Shelby County Department of Health, Memphis Health Center, NACCHO, Tennessee Department of Health, ATSDR, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Defense, and Depot contractors attended the meeting.

Many of the attendees were originally apprehensive about the outcome of the meeting due to the level of community concerns, but Dr. Wiant kept the group focused on the agenda while allowing for open dialogue. After Dr. Wiant consolidated the list of community concerns into five subgroups, participants joined and will meet in the future with one of the following subgroups: health studies; other environmental issues; health promotion and education; health care; and the rationale (why some studies and cleanup remedies were chosen). Participants were very pleased with the outcome of this meeting and look forward to addressing the communities' health concerns. After assessing the needs of the community, the LHD is considering implementing a plan to meet those needs with additional grant money from NACCHO, under its cooperative agreement with ATSDR. If you have any questions about the hazardous waste needs assessment, please contact Karen Roof, Superfund Project Manager at NACCHO, (202) 783-5550 ext. 245.

**FINAL PAGE**

**ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD**

**FINAL PAGE**

**FINAL PAGE**

**ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD**

**FINAL PAGE**