

## **Risk Communication in the Execution of an Environmental Recovery Project in a Residential Area with Historical Conflicts of Interest**

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**Background/Objectives.** Risk communication is part of the management of a contaminated area and is prescribed in the Brazilian legislation. It is a process involving representatives of all social groups and requires the stakeholders to actively participate in a constructive way. However, the existing abovementioned directives do not describe the strategies and procedures about how the risk communication should be held. In this context, this article presents a case study where there were conflicts of interest and where the dialogue among all stakeholders is considered a fundamental component of the project. The subject site is a residential condominium occupying a total area of 168,000 m<sup>2</sup> where there are 53 inhabited buildings, with 8 floors each, totalizing 1,696 apartments.

**Approach/Activities.** A large environmental database generated during the investigation of the area was the foundation for the assessment of potential health and environmental risks and for the delineation of the presence of methane and other chemicals of concern, providing subsidies for the Engineering Design of the Environmental Recovery, which was approved by the environmental authorities. A Communication Strategy was conceived, mapping all the stakeholders - public attorney, Environmental Authority, municipality, the responsible party for the environmental liabilities, residents, consultants, a NGO and subcontractors – and establishing information channels and a risk communication matrix. The risk communication was performed using several communication channels and languages: a) meetings with small and large groups, with the participation of governmental and non-governmental bodies; b) preparation and distribution of printed brochures and informative notes; c) provision of a website with constantly updated information; d) daily, representatives of NGOs is available to clear doubts in the condominium, to hear the opinions of the residents and to answer their questions; and e) the technical team in the field clarifies the technical questions of residents with accessible language.

**Results/Lessons Learned.** The intense and continuous communication work in this very sensitive project showed the necessity and the importance of communication, which is indispensable during the implementation of the remediation project. During the implementation time of almost 2 years, which occurred intensively in many parts of the condominium, no severe complaints were registered and no stops of the works were necessary. Additionally the reliability and acceptance of the remediation project was increased which facilitated directly the daily work of the implementation. The remediation project as a whole won a better reputation. Thus, the management of the implementation of the Environmental Recovery Project, associated with the risk communication strategies promotes the cooperation between the actors during the implementation.