

FEEDBACK

Feedback is a general term used to describe learning about the impact of a community involvement tool. It's important to understand if the public meeting, fact sheet, or newsletter was helpful to the targeted audience.

EPA has noted that getting the right information to the right place at the right time is the key to community engagement.

Right Information: Delivering information that is clear, understandable, and relevant.

Right Place: Engaging people where they are in their community and using existing spaces residents use to stay informed.

Right Time: Providing information that is timely for engaging community members in the decision-making process.

Incorporating opportunities for feedback into each community engagement activity and then incorporating the feedback into future community engagement activities helps to build positive relationships.

Required Activity?

No, gathering feedback is not required. However, at times it is the only way to know if a chosen community involvement tool is being effective. More detailed information on the use of feedback to promote communication with and participation within a community can be found in Chapter 2 of the [2016 Edition of the RCRA Public Participation Manual](#).

Making it Work

When to Use

When any public involvement tool is used, there is an opportunity to consult with the public and incorporate feedback. The feedback can be in a formal or informal setting. Survey instruments may violate the Federal “Paperwork Reduction Act” rules, so, instead, use innovative informal tools that can provide opportunities for public feedback.

How to Use

The following are several different ways of gathering feedback:

- At a public meeting in a crowd, ask “By a show of hands if they felt the event was useful?” or “Would they participate in future events?”
- Set aside time for a discussion at the end of an event by asking open-ended questions the public can respond to through an open microphone or at small round tables with someone recording the responses.
- Request attendees post their feedback on a large bulletin board with 3x5 cards or in a comment box.
- Set up a forum online for stakeholders to express their feedback.
- Provide a generic contact email or telephone/hotline, or voicemail and request stakeholders provide feedback voluntarily.
- Create a Twitter feed just for the event.