

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Find out more about what our regional offices are doing for environmental justice in your community!

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Quarterly EJ Teleconference

These calls provide information to participants about EPA's EJ activities and maintain an open dialogue with EJ advocates. To find out more, visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/events/ej-outreach-calls

Tools for EJ Action

O EJ programs have established the following **tools to promote agency action on critical environmental justice issues**. These cross-cutting efforts aim to create consistency and clarity around how EPA identifies and addresses EJ concerns.

EJ View

EJ View is a mapping tool that allows users to create maps and generate detailed reports based on geographic areas and data such as demographics, health and environmental information. The tool helps users identify areas in the US overburdened with pollution at the state, county, city and census tract level. To find out more information about EJ View or to use the application, visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/mapping

Science

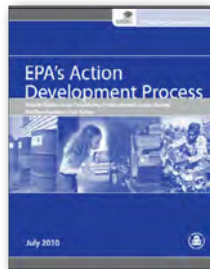
O EJ is leading the effort to understand how populations of EJ concern disproportionately experience environmental health impacts and develop guidance on considering environmental justice concerns in rulemaking. The office hosted the [Symposium on the Science of Disproportionate Environmental Health Impacts](#), to examine the reasons low income and minority communities may experience disparities in environmental health. OEJ is also working to strengthen consideration of EJ during the National Environmental Policy Act review process. To read about these scientific developments, visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/policy



Legal

O EJ promotes the use of existing statutory and regulatory authorities to advance environmental justice and community health. For example, the memorandum, "[Improving EPA Review of Appalachian Surface Coal Mining Operations Under the Clean Water Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and the Environmental Justice Executive Order](#)", explains how EPA can apply these authorities to address EJ concerns in Appalachia. To learn more about OEJ's work on legal issues, visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/policy

Policy



To advance the consideration of EJ in policy making, EPA develops [guidance documents](#) that ensure that the needs of overburdened communities are factored into regulatory and policy decision-making. EPA released an [interim guide](#) on incorporating environmental justice into the agency's process for developing rules and regulations. EPA also released voluntary [school siting guidelines](#) to help local school districts and community members evaluate environmental and public health risks, (e.g. onsite contamination like chemicals in soil or offsite risks like industrial facilities) and benefits of potential school locations (e.g. location that's close to where students live so they can walk or bike to school) during the school siting process. To access these guidance documents, visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/policy

Training and Workshops

O EJ and the regional offices provide training courses and other workshops to educate environmental stakeholders about the public health and environmental issues which impact communities overburdened by pollution. To date more than 4,000 environmental stakeholders have been trained on the fundamentals of environmental justice. OEJ has also developed an online EJ course, which explores the origins of the environmental justice movement, and provides an overview of analytical tools to help understand, integrate, and address environmental justice issues. To find out more, visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/resources

For More Information

To find out more about the Office of Environmental Justice, call 202-564-2515, or visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice

For a direct way to provide feedback and find answers to questions related to environmental justice, call the EJ Hotline at 800-962-6215.



www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice

Office of Environmental Justice in Action



I n January 2010, Administrator Lisa P. Jackson announced the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) top priorities: reducing greenhouse gas emissions; improving air quality; managing chemical risks; cleaning up hazardous waste disposal sites; protecting America's water; **expanding the conversation on environmentalism and working for environmental justice**, and building strong state and tribal partnerships.



During a speech about environmental justice, Administrator Jackson emphasized, "In the years ahead, I want to see a full-scale revitalization of what we do and how we think about environmental justice. This is not an issue we can afford to relegate to the margins. It has to be part of our thinking in every decision we make."

To revitalize the agency's environmental justice efforts, the Administrator directed the EPA's national programs and regional offices to address the needs of overburdened communities by decreasing environmental burdens, increasing environmental benefits, and working collaboratively to build healthy, sustainable, and green communities.

Plan EJ 2014

Plan EJ 2014 has been developed to support Administrator Jackson's priority to advance environmental justice. Plan EJ 2014 is not a rule or regulation. It is a strategy to integrate environmental justice into EPA's day-to-day activities.



Implementation of Plan EJ 2014 is the responsibility of the entire agency. Each national program and region has taken a leadership role in Plan EJ 2014 and has developed an implementation plan to manage their commitments. The Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) supports the management and communication of the plan, and in some areas directly participates in the execution of implementation plans.

About the Office of Environmental Justice

The Office of Environmental Justice, formerly known as the Office of Environmental Equity, was created in 1992 and has the primary responsibility for coordinating agency efforts to integrate environmental justice consideration into all of EPA's policies, programs, and activities. OEJ works to empower stakeholders to constructively and collaboratively address environmental justice issues. The office also establishes partnerships with local, state, tribal, and federal governments and organizations to achieve healthy and sustainable communities.



For the past 20 years OEJ has worked to foster public health and sustainability in overburdened communities and to enable all EPA Headquarters and regional offices to address environmental justice as a part of their day-to-day activities. Under Administrator Jackson's leadership, the EPA has expanded this concept to not only address disproportionately adverse human health problems in overburdened communities, but also to focus on providing access to the environmental, public health, and economic benefits of all federal agency programs.

To accomplish this mission, OEJ has created programs, policies, and activities outlined in this document, to **engage federal agencies to help them understand environmental justice issues; build capacity for community-based action programs; incorporate the voice of communities into agency decisions; and provide tools for EJ actions**.

Did You Know?

November 2, 2012 marks the 20th anniversary of the creation of EPA's Office of Environmental Equity, which would eventually become the Office of Environmental Justice.



Agency Milestones



Engaging Other Agencies to Understand and Address EJ Issues

In order to support the achievement of public health and sustainability in overburdened communities, the federal government can use a variety of authorities and resources. To leverage these resources, EPA **engages federal agencies** to help them participate in a coordinated approach.

The Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (EJ IWG)

The EJ IWG was established in 1994 under Executive Order 12898. The EJ IWG guides, supports, and enhances federal environmental justice and community-based activities. It is comprised of 15 federal agencies and several White House offices. The Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Justice is an agreement between EJ IWG agencies to recommit to environmental justice through a collaborative effort. Each agency released an EJ strategy in February, 2012.

The **Partnership for Sustainable Communities** is an excellent illustration of how this type of inter-agency collaboration can work. By working together, the departments of Housing and Urban Development and Transportation, and EPA are helping to improve access to affordable housing, provide more transportation options at lower costs, and protect the environment in communities nationwide. For more information about current EJ IWG activities, visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/interagency



Building Capacity for Community-Based Action Programs

The EPA has learned that communities must be the driver for local solutions. To **build capacity** in these communities, OEJ provides grants to organizations, works with regional offices to provide technical assistance to communities, and engages overburdened populations to build partnerships that promote healthy communities.

Small Grants Programs

The Environmental Justice Small Grants Program provides financial assistance to community-based organizations and local and tribal governments working on community projects aimed at addressing environmental and public health issues. Since 1994, the program has awarded \$24 million to 1,466 grant recipients. The goal of the EJ Small Grants Program is to help affected communities create self-sustaining, community-based partnerships that will continue to improve local

environments in the future. To find out more about the EJ Small Grants Program, visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-smgrants

Environmental Justice Showcase Communities

The EPA provided \$1 million to help alleviate environmental and human health challenges in ten communities across the nation. The effort brings together the collective resources and expertise of governmental and non-governmental organizations to achieve real results in communities. The lessons learned from the projects increase EPA's ability to address local environmental challenges and support community development in more effective, efficient, and sustainable ways. To learn more about EJ Showcase Community projects, visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-showcase

Youth Workshops

Young people experience the world through a different lens, allowing them to bring innovative ideas to the table. To harness this energy, OEJ hosts workshops to promote youth participation in the environmental decision-making process. Local youths range between the ages of 14 and 25 years of age.

Environmental Justice Eco-Ambassadors

The EJ Eco-Ambassador program provides student career development opportunities for graduate students. The program aims to expand opportunities for graduate students to work collaboratively with EPA offices to support community based programs and increase local



community's capacity to address environmental concerns; and facilitate career development opportunities for graduate level students who have been involved in or have a strong interest in environmental justice. To learn more, visit: www.epa.gov/ecoambassadors/environmentaljustice

Incorporating the Voice of Communities in Agency Decisions

OEJ is working to integrate consideration of environmental justice concerns and **incorporate EJ communities' voices** into the planning and implementation of the agencies' program strategies.

National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC)

The mission of NEJAC is to provide independent advice and recommendations to the Administrator about broad, crosscutting issues related to environmental justice. NEJAC also holds public meetings to receive comments, questions, and recommendations regarding environmental justice issues. Since 1993, the NEJAC has developed 27 recommendation reports to better address the needs of disadvantaged and underserved communities. To read the NEJAC's reports, visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/nejac

EJ Listserv

The listserv notifies individuals about EPA's programs, projects, grants, public input opportunities and EJ activities at other agencies. To join the EJ Listserv, visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/resources

Tribal and Indigenous Stakeholder Consultation

To work more effectively with federally-recognized tribes and other indigenous peoples on EJ issues, EPA is developing new processes to coordinate & collaborate with tribes and indigenous stakeholders. The NEJAC/Indigenous Peoples Work Group is providing advice and recommendations to EPA on how to work more effectively with tribes, indigenous stakeholders, and other federal agencies to address EJ issues. EPA will use the input from the tribes, the NEJAC, and other indigenous stakeholders, to develop its tribal and indigenous peoples EJ guiding principles/policy. To learn more about OEJ's efforts on tribal policy, visit: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/indigenous



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