

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Asian American and Pacific Islander American Seafood Consumption Studies in Washington State

Roseanne M. Lorenzana

Office of Environmental Assessment, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Seattle, WA

Background and Objectives: As characterized on the 2000 U.S. census, there are 28 Asian and 19 Pacific Islander groups that could be included in the American & Pacific Islander American (AAPI) category. Because of cultural and language differences, seafood consumption risk assessments involving AAPI groups require culturally appropriate methods to collect exposure data. Purposes of this study are to: (1) demonstrate the effectiveness of a community-centered approach in which the community plays a major role in determining study design, developing and administering the survey instrument, and producing a final product; and (2) obtain documentation of AAPI rates of seafood consumption, types of species, and preparation methods that can be used in risk assessment.

Methods: Under the leadership of an AAPI social services organization, a community group was formed to develop a questionnaire and study approach that would elicit accurate results. The community worked with an advisory committee for technical assistance and in partnership with scientists at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the University of Washington who provided oversight for the scientific design, data analyses, and development of the final report.

Results: This community-centered approach was successful with respect to including 10 AAPI ethnicities in the survey. Consumption rates for a wide variety of fish, shellfish, and seaweed were documented. The consumption of internal organs and cooking water also was documented.

Conclusion: Results suggest there are some AAPIs who have very high rates of consumption, and the community-centered approach is a successful method for obtaining this type of data.