

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

March 11, 2010, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m., Eastern Time
Environmental Justice, Program Implementation, and Decision Making at the U.S.
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Purpose: The upcoming symposium, “Strengthening Environmental Justice Research and Decision Making: A Symposium on the Science of Disproportionate Environmental Health Impacts,” will focus on the science to support consideration of different factors that may contribute to disproportionate impacts as EPA and other governmental agencies address environmental justice (EJ) in their programs, policies, and activities. EPA works to achieve its mission to protect human health and the environment through a variety of actions and decisions, including regulatory decisions (setting standards, permitting, enforcement, information/data collecting, site cleanup, etc.), programming, policy making, scientific research, outreach, and education. EPA also reviews environmental impact assessments conducted by other federal agencies to ensure compliance with existing national environmental policies and regulations. Environmental justice concerns can include issues of disparities in exposure to environmental contaminants, inequities in distribution of environmental health risks and/or impacts, quality of the physical and built environment, access to information, and inclusion in the decision-making process. To facilitate common understanding among symposium participants who come from diverse backgrounds, we are hosting this pre-symposium Webinar to provide examples of when and how EJ concerns arise in the myriad decision-making and program-implementation contexts at EPA.

The specific objectives are to:

- Describe potential circumstances in which minority and/or low-income communities may be exposed disproportionately to environmental harms and risks (seven thematic factors of the symposium) and opportunities to address these circumstances in EPA decision-making contexts.
- Learn about core regulatory functions at EPA—standard setting, permitting, site cleanup, and enforcement—and how EJ concerns arise in carrying out those functions.
- Provide symposium participants with illustrative examples of decision contexts in which EPA program and regional offices address EJ concerns.

Speakers

Reggie Harris, Environmental Justice Coordinator and Senior Toxicologist, Region 3, EPA: Moderator

Charles Lee, Director, Office of Environmental Justice, EPA
“Concepts of Environmental Justice in Regulatory Decision Making”

Kent Benjamin, Associate Director, Office of Environmental Justice, EPA
“Environmental Justice Program Reviews”

LaShonia Richardson, Office of Pesticide Programs Environmental Justice Coordinator, EPA
“Addressing Environmental Justice in Pesticides Regulatory Decisions”

Reggie Harris, Environmental Justice Coordinator and Senior Toxicologist, Region 3, EPA
“U.S. EPA Region 3 Environmental Justice Case Study: What We Do To Address Concerns”

Terry Wesley, Environmental Justice Coordinator, Region 2, EPA
“Region 2 Case Study”

Arthur Totten, Office of Federal Activities, EPA
“The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice: In the Scheme of Things”