

# **Office of Environmental Justice**

## **Fact Sheet**



### **EPA's Commitment to Environmental Justice**

"We must take special pains to connect with those who have been historically underrepresented in EPA decision making, including the disenfranchised in our cities and rural areas, communities of color, native Americans, people disproportionately impacted by pollution, and small businesses, cities and towns working to meet their environmental responsibilities. Like all Americans, they deserve an EPA with an open mind, a big heart and a willingness to listen . . . As we meet these challenges, we must be sensitive to the burdens pollution has placed on vulnerable subpopulations, including children, the elderly, the poor and all others who are at particular risk to threats to health and the environment. We must seek their full partnership in the greater aim of identifying and eliminating the sources of pollution in their neighborhoods, schools and homes."

EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson.

Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

The Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) coordinates the Agency's efforts to integrate environmental justice into all policies, programs, and activities. EPA's environmental justice mandate extends to all of the Agency's work, including setting standards, permitting facilities, awarding grants, issuing licenses and regulations and reviewing proposed actions by the federal agencies. OEJ works with all stakeholders to constructively and collaboratively address environmental and public health issues and concerns. The Office also provides information, technical and financial resources to assist and enable the Agency to meet its environmental justice goals and objectives.

EPA's goal is to provide an environment where all people enjoy the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to maintain a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work. Listed below are general environmental justice integration activities in EPA. In addition, each Region conducts several geographic-based activities. For more information on

EPA's Environmental Justice Program, visit <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice> or call (800) 962-6215.

**Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (IWG)**

The IWG was established under Executive Order 12898 in 1994. The IWG, comprised of twelve federal agencies and several White House offices, is working to integrate environmental justice into its individual agency programs. The IWG meets quarterly, and focuses on sharing lessons learned and progress made towards integrating EJ in the Federal government. In addition, the IWG takes an active role in helping plan and deliver an annual national EJ conference. The IWG is working to identify opportunities for greater interagency coordination and collaboration to address the range of issues raised by communities with EJ concerns. For more information contact Danny Gogal at 202-564-2576 or additional information can be obtained at:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/interagency/index.html>.

**Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) Cooperative**

**Agreement Program** - In 2003, OEJ launched the EJ CPS program. Since its' inception, OEJ has provided \$4 million in assistance awards of \$100,000 to 40 non-profit, local community-based organizations engaging in projects utilizing the collaborative problem-solving framework to find viable solutions for their community's environmental and/or public health issues. The purpose of the EJ CPS Framework is to assist affected communities as they develop proactive, strategic, and visionary approaches to address their environmental justice issues and to achieve community health and sustainability. For more information about the CPS Program please contact Shelia Lewis at 202-564-0152 or visit:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-cps-grants.html>

**Environmental Justice Small Grants Program** - Since 1994, the Environmental Justice Small Grants (EJSG) program has provided financial assistance to community-based organizations, and local and tribal governments working on community projects aimed at addressing environmental and public health issues. From a pilot program with a \$500,000 budget and a \$10,000 limit per award, the program has grown and awarded more than \$20 million to 1,130 grant recipients. Small grants projects continue to address an array of environmental and human health issues such as childhood asthma, farmworker pesticide protection, indoor air quality, drinking water contamination, and lead poisoning prevention. For more information about the EJSG Program please call Sheila Lewis at 202-564-0152 or visit:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-smgrants.html>

**State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreements (SEJCA)** - In 2009 OEJ launched the SEJCA program that will provide five, one-time awards of up to \$160,000 to eligible State agencies, U.S. territories and commonwealths, the District of Columbia, and state universities and colleges who submit successful applications. This program will provide funding to State governments to support their efforts to understand, promote and integrate approaches and activities that result in meaningful and measurable environmental and/or public health improvements in communities disproportionately exposed to environmental harms and risks. For more information about the SEJCA Program please call Kent Benjamin at 202-564-9095 or visit:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/grants>

**The Environmental Justice Geographic Assessment Tool (EJGAT)** - provides users with interactive Geographic Information System (GIS) functionality using Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) spatial data. The on-line application allows you to view spatial data, create a detailed map, and review various assessment variables for any state, county, city, zip code, watershed, EPA region, latitude and longitude, facility and USA. Assessment variables include CENSUS demographics, EPA compliance and enforcement data and other sources from other federal agencies such as HHS, and USGS. Users can review these assessment variables with respect to several types of regulated facilities. The tool provides the user with information used for the preliminary analysis of Environmental Justice areas of concern. During this preliminary analysis, users can access information and make inferences relevant to assessing adverse health or environmental impacts, aggregate or cumulative impacts, unique exposure pathways, vulnerable or susceptible populations, or lack of capacity to participate in decision making process among other conditions. As data becomes available, it will be incorporated into the Environmental Justice Geographic Assessment Tool and when fully developed, the tool will provide the information necessary to conduct a comprehensive preliminary analysis of any area in the Continental United States. This GIS tool is available at: <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/assessment.html>

**Environmental Justice Fundamentals Training** – To date over 4,000 environmental stakeholders have been trained on the fundamentals of environmental justice. The Fundamentals of Environmental Justice Workshop continues to explore the origins of the Environmental Justice Movement, perceptions and definitions of environmental justice, laws pertaining to environmental justice, and provides an overview of the Environmental Justice Geographic Assessment Tool, and other analytical tools to help understand, integrate and address environmental justice issues. The goals of the workshop are to identify and address environmental justice issues. Participants learn to effectively engage in productive dialogue around the issues of environmental justice and promote constructive and collaborative problem-solving techniques. Equally important is the goal to integrate aspects of environmental justice into the participants work on a daily basis. These training sessions are a means to consistently integrate environmental justice into environmental programs. For more information about the EJ Training Program please call Mustafa S. Ali at 202-564-2606 or visit: <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/training/neti/index.html>

**National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC)** - The mission of the NEJAC is to provide independent advice and recommendations to the Administrator about broad, crosscutting issues related to environmental justice. The committee's efforts include evaluation of a broad range of environment-related strategic, scientific, technological, regulatory, and economic issues related to environmental justice. As a federal advisory committee consisting of representatives of academia, community-based organizations, business and industry, state and local government, non-governmental and environmental organizations, and tribal governments and indigenous groups, the NEJAC has developed consensus proposals to the Agency for creative and collaborative strategies to better address the human health and environmental protection needs of disadvantaged and underserved communities and to ensure that the goal of environmental justice is being integrated in Agency policies, programs, and priorities. The NEJAC meets approximately twice a year. For more information about the NEJAC Program please call Victoria Robinson at 202-564-6349 or visit: <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/nejac>

**Environmental Justice Achievement Awards** - The 2009 Environmental Justice Achievement Awards will recognize multi-stakeholder partnerships for their success in addressing environmental justice issues or by adopting the goals of environmental justice to positively impact their community. The goals of the Environmental Justice Awards Program include, but are not limited to: promoting positive behavior on environmental justice issues by all stakeholder groups; documenting models of success for others to emulate; encouraging achievement of environmental results in communities having environmental justice issues; and fostering collaborative problem solving by all stakeholder organizations to address significant environmental justice concerns. Multi-stakeholder partnerships will be evaluated based on the strengths in: partnerships and collaboration; innovation; community, equity, and public involvement; environmental justice integration; leveraged resources/capacity building/sustainability; and demonstrated results/effectiveness. For more information about the EJ Achievement Awards Program please call Lisa Hammond at 202-564-0736 or visit:  
<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/awards/index.html>

**EPA's environmental justice publications are available online at:**  
<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/resources/ej.html>

**Hard copies can be ordered from the  
National Service Center for Environmental Publications at:  
(800) 490-9198  
<http://www.epa.gov/ncepihom>**