



EPA New England's Urban Environmental Program

U.S. EPA | ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AT EPA NEW ENGLAND

EPA NEW ENGLAND'S ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRAM

works to protect all people, regardless of race, color, national origin or income, from environmental harms and risks, and to involve all citizens in making decisions that affect their environment. The program is designed to achieve environmental and public health improvements for communities disproportionately burdened by the impacts of pollution.



INTRO:

The Urban Environmental Program became a formal program of EPA New England in 2002, following on the heels of a successful pilot program that had worked since 1995 to improve the quality of life for urban residents in Boston, Mass., Providence, RI, and Hartford, Conn. The Urban Environmental Program has expanded its efforts since then to address environmental and public health concerns in many other urban areas throughout Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island.

OVERVIEW:

Environmental conditions in cities throughout New England and across the country expose residents to significant public health hazards every day, from toxics and heavy metals to poor indoor and outdoor air quality and a lack of open, green space. These conditions create cumulative and unfair health risks to urban residents, especially to high risk populations such as children and the elderly. The mission of the Urban Environmental Program is to improve the environment and thus the quality of life for urban residents throughout New England. The program achieves this by building community capacity to identify and resolve environmental problems, achieve measurable and sustainable improvements, and restore and revitalize neighborhoods.



Condor Street Urban Wild
in Chelsea, Mass.

The Urban Environmental Program is dedicated to addressing large and complex problems associated with cities in a way that includes the community. The program staff listens to the concerns of residents, identifying projects and providing resources to implement projects that will make measurable improvements in public health and the urban environment. The program's managers work with other organizations and government agencies to identify the most critical issues for a particular community or state. The

program has focused its work on the following issues: environmental health; urban toxics in air, water and soil; and urban redevelopment of open space, vacant lots and transportation.

These environmental and public health issues and topics are cross-checked with internal and external partners to ensure that the Urban Environmental Program's work reflects the concerns, priorities, and needs of the target communities. The Urban Environmental Program often works with other EPA New England programs with related concerns. For instance, the Urban Environmental Program coordinates closely with EPA New England's Environmental Justice Program. The Urban Environmental Program managers work with the Lead, Pesticides, Indoor Air Quality/Asthma, Brownfields, Smart Growth or Children's Health programs to develop common goals, put in place strategies, or offer expertise in support of projects for the target communities.

For additional information, please access the key contacts provided, as well as: Sandra Brownell, *EPA New England Rhode Island Program Manager*, 617 918-1552, brownell.sandra@epa.gov.

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