



FY 2011-2015 EPA Strategic Plan

Cross-Cutting Fundamental Strategy: Working for Environmental Justice and Children's Health

Work to reduce and prevent harmful exposures and health risks to children and underserved, disproportionately impacted low-income, minority, and tribal communities, and support community efforts to build healthy, sustainable green neighborhoods.

Advancing environmental justice and protecting children's health must be driving forces in our decisions across all EPA programs. The underlying principles for this commitment are reducing exposures for those at greatest risk and ensuring that environmental justice and children's health protection are integral to all Agency activities. Minority, low-income, and tribal/indigenous populations that are vulnerable to environmental pollution are at risk of having poor health outcomes. These vulnerabilities may arise because of higher exposures to pollution in places where they work, live, and play, and/or diminished abilities to withstand, cope with, or recover from exposure to environmental pollution.ⁱ Children are often most sensitive to environmental stressors. Research has demonstrated that prenatal and early life exposures to environmental hazards can cause lifelong diseases, medical conditions, and disabilities.ⁱⁱ

Environmental justice and children's health protection will be achieved when all Americans, regardless of age, race, economic status, or ethnicity, have access to clean water, clean air, and healthy communities. To accomplish this, EPA will use a variety of approaches, including regulation, enforcement, research, outreach, community-based programs, and partnerships to protect children and disproportionately impacted, overburdened populations from environmental and human health hazards. Our success in advancing environmental justice and children's health protection will result from fully incorporating these priorities into all of our activities across each of the strategic goals of the Agency. We anticipate that our leadership in advancing environmental justice and children's health protection will inspire and engage a broad spectrum of partners in the public and private sector to do the same.

To achieve this goal, EPA will:

1. In our regulatory capacity, implement the nation's environmental laws using the best science and environmental monitoring data to address the potential for adverse health effects from environmental factors in disproportionately impacted, overburdened populations, and vulnerable age groups. EPA programs will incorporate environmental justice and children's health considerations at each stage of the Agency's regulation development process and in implementation and enforcement of environmental regulations.
2. Develop and use environmental and public health indicators to measure improvements in environmental conditions and health in disproportionately impacted communities and among vulnerable age groups.
3. In our work on safe management of pesticides and industrial chemicals, take into account disproportionately impacted, overburdened populations and vulnerable age groups and encourage the use of "green chemistry" to spur the development of safer chemicals and production processes.
4. Apply best appropriate scientific methods to assess the potential for disproportionate exposures and health impacts resulting from environmental hazards on minority, low income and tribal

populations, women of child-bearing age, infants, children, and adolescents to support EPA decision-making, and develop the tools to assess the risk from multiple stressors.

5. Fully engage communities in our work to protect human health and the environment. EPA will align multiple community-based programs to provide funding and technical assistance to communities to build capacity to address critical issues affecting children's health and disproportionately impacted, overburdened populations.
6. Work with other federal agencies to engage communities and coordinate funding and technical support for efforts to build healthy, sustainable, and green neighborhoods, and work with residents to promote equitable development.

FY 2012 Action Plan: Working for Environmental Justice and Children's Health

This Action Plan lists the specific actions that the EPA will carry out in FY 2012 to achieve the principles of the Strategy for Working for Environmental Justice and Children's Health described in the FY 2011-2015 EPA Strategic Plan. Annual action plans will be developed for each year of the Plan.

For Environmental Justice (EJ) and Children's Health (CH)

1. The Office of Air and Radiation (OAR), Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSP), Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA), Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER), and Office of Water (OW) will establish and maintain annual performance expectations for EJ and CH and report annual progress through the following (*Supports Principle 2*):
 - FY 2013 NPM Guidance Process: Each of the five National Program Managers (NPMs) will work with the Regions and Strategy Champions to include, in their Draft FY 2013 NPM Guidance, qualitative expectations for both HQ and Regions for incorporating EJ and CH into program initiatives/program activities, and/or annual commitments* (i.e., Annual Commitment System [ACS] measures) with numeric targets. Quantitative annual commitments will address actions that promote EJ/CH or would address environmental/health conditions of overburdened communities/children (February 2012).
 - FY 2014 Annual Planning and Budget Process: Each of the five offices will work with the Regions and EJ/CH Strategy Champions to develop EJ and CH annual performance measures* (with targets) for inclusion in the FY 2014 budget submission. These measures will characterize EJ/CH actions to be taken, or characterize environmental or health conditions of overburdened communities/children (September 2012).

[*Annual commitments and annual performance measures are to capture progress on both EJ and CH. Generally, two separate measures are envisioned, each one addressing either EJ or CH; however, a single measure could be used to capture progress on both EJ and CH.]
2. Incorporating Environmental Justice and Children's Health into Rulemaking: Develop and implement guidance to support continuing consideration of EJ and CH in rulemakings (*Supports Principle 1*).
 - EPA will develop the first draft of EJ in Rulemaking Technical Guidance (August 30, 2012).
 - EPA will consult with the Children's Health Protection Advisory Committee on opportunities and methods to consistently incorporate children's health in rulemaking actions regarding specified Priority Chemical Hazards for children's health (by September 30, 2012).
 - The Office of Children's Health Protection (OCHP) will create a plan to implement cross-Agency coordination on established list of Priority Chemical Hazards for children's health. This plan will identify chemicals that would benefit from enhanced coordination, outline coordination needs, and establish workgroups as necessary (by June 30, 2012).

For Environmental Justice

3. Replicate and expand use of best practices from EPA's multi-media community-based programs to improve their efficiency and effectiveness for reducing environmental risks and promoting healthy, sustainable, and livable communities, especially among underserved and overburdened populations. This will improve EPA's collective understanding of how to harmonize EPA's programs to strengthen the way EPA supports communities through its grant and technical assistance programs. (OSWER and the Office of Policy (OP) will co-lead with assistance from Region 1, Region 5, and OECA) (*Supports Principles 5 and 6*).
 - By June 2012, conduct an Agency-wide assessment of best practices and lessons learned from Regional implementation of community-based programs (e.g., CARE, EJ Showcase Communities, Partnership for Sustainable Communities, Brownfields and Area-Wide Planning Projects, Urban Waters). Senior Agency managers will then review the assessment and produce recommendations for future community program development by August 2012.
 - By September 2012, identify one underserved and overburdened community in each Region, where EPA and other federal agency efforts and resources exist, to apply the senior management recommendations. Using the Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program infrastructure and other tools, align Agency resources and leverage partnerships with public and private sector entities to encourage greater investments and strengthen our ability to produce environmental and public health benefits.
4. Information Development: Develop a common mapping platform and tools to enhance EJ analysis and decision making by releasing a working prototype of EJSCREEN tool by April 2012 (*Supports Principle 4*).
5. Each NPM will identify at least one program or activity as part of Plan EJ 2014, where it will focus existing activities to maximize environmental and human health benefits for disproportionately burdened communities (*Supports Principle 2*).
 - By December 2011, NPMs will identify at least one program activity based on populations served, EJ goals advanced, and other criteria.
 - By February 2012, NPMs will provide guidance in FY 2013 NPM Guidance regarding EJ program activities.
 - By June 2012, NPMs will develop plans for tailoring program activities to maximize environmental and/or public health benefits for overburdened communities and report on these benefits in a qualitative and quantitative manner.

For Children's Health

6. Work with states, tribes, and territories, using the Children's Healthy Communities: Clean, Green, and Healthy Schools Initiative approach to improve children's environmental health in school settings by providing outreach and technical assistance to states, tribes, and school districts (*Supports Principle 5*).
 - Headquarters offices (OCHP, OAR, OSCPP, and OSWER) will coordinate with Regions in the development and implementation of Agency efforts to create healthier school facilities and learning environments (by January 31, 2012).
 - EPA will establish implementation plans for OCHP and lead Regional Schools Coordinators to provide focused outreach and technical assistance to states, tribes, and territories to increase adoption of EPA's guidelines and programmatic school environmental health tools (by February 29, 2012).

ⁱ WHO (2006). Principles for Evaluating Health Risks in Children. Environmental Health Criteria 237.
EPA (2003). Framework for Cumulative Risk Assessment. Risk Assessment Forum, US Environmental Protection Agency. EPA/630/P-02/001F

NEJAC (2004). Ensuring Risk Reduction in Communities with Multiple Stressors: Environmental Justice and Cumulative Risks/Impacts. National Environmental Justice Advisory Council.

ⁱⁱ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2008). Linking Early Environmental Exposures to Adult Diseases. National Institute of Health. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. Research Triangle Park, NC. <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/docs/linking-exposures.pdf>.