



Environmental Justice Small Grants 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 EJ Small Grants Program has supported a diverse group of community-based groups working to create healthy, sustainable communities through dozens of local projects. Generally, projects that are considered for funding must include a plan with strategies for addressing local environmental issues, educating and empowering the community about the issues, building consensus, and setting community priorities. In addition, the proposed plans must show how the applicant will work with other stakeholders including: community-based organizations, environmental groups, businesses, industry, federal, tribal, state and local governments and schools.

BACKGROUND:

To be eligible for the Environmental Justice Small Grants Program, an applicant must be a legally incorporated non-profit organization. Applicants must be able to show they have worked with the "affected" community, which means a community that is disproportionately impacted by environmental harms and risks, and has a local or public health issue that is identified in the proposal. Grant applicants must also outline how their projects will address the core mission of the Environmental Justice Program, including: addressing fair treatment of all people regardless of race, color, nation of origin or income; and ensuring the meaningful involvement of residents in decisions about activities that will affect their environment or health.



Groundwork Springfield accepting EJ Small Grant check.

more than 200 years in some cases. Lead paint must be removed and residents must be educated about the risks associated with lead paint exposure. New England has a complex network of rivers, streams, watersheds and tributaries. During the early part of this nation's history, industry harnessed the power of our waterways. Industry also has left our region facing the cleanup of soil contamination in many communities. As a result, many New England communities have been plagued with environmental degradation. The EJ Small Grants Program has been a useful way for communities to address these unique environmental issues.

Past projects have addressed a variety of issues, including: education about recycling in Hartford, Conn.; performing basic home energy evaluations and home weatheriza-

tion tasks in Providence, RI; conducting a 20-week, door-to-door energy efficiency campaign in Somerville, Mass.; and helping resettled immigrant families understand their rights to quality housing that is free of lead, pests, mold, and harmful pesticides in Lewiston, Maine.

NEW ENGLAND:

The EJ Small Grants Program is being used by communities throughout the New England region to address its unique environmental concerns. The program has awarded grants to fund a wide variety of projects throughout the six-state region. Our communities are faced with an old housing stock dating back

KEY CONTACTS:

HEATHER ROSS

EPA New England
EJ Specialist, Office of
Civil Rights & Urban Affairs
(617) 918-1073
ross.heather@epa.gov

AMY BRAZ

EPA New England
EJ Coordinator, Office of
Civil Rights & Urban Affairs
(617) 918-1346
braz.amy@epa.gov

GENERAL INFO:

EPA NEW ENGLAND

5 Post Office Square
Suite 100
Boston, MA 02109-3912
(617) 918-1111
www.epa.gov/region1/

TOLL-FREE CUSTOMER SERVICE

1-888-EPA 7341

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