



Environmental Justice In Action

Get informed

For questions, comments or more information about Region 5 and Environmental Justice, contact:

Lara Lasky

EJ Program Coordinator
EPA Region 5
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
312-353-5614
lasky.lara@epa.gov

Small Grants Program

Have an Environmental Justice-related project idea for your community? Apply for money to make it a reality.

Collaborative Problem Solving

A program dedicated to addressing local environmental and/or public health issues with multiple stakeholders.

Everybody deserves to be treated fairly and equally, regardless of race, color, national origin or income. However, people of color and low-income people often face greater risks, as well as barriers to making their voices heard. We will achieve environmental justice when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process.

Environmental Justice at EPA Region 5

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 works to achieve environmental justice in its enforcement, permitting and community-based work, as part of a comprehensive national commitment to consider environmental justice in all aspects of EPA's decision-making process.



Enforcement programs assure compliance with federal laws that protect public health and the environment, holding all facilities to an equal standard wherever they are located and focusing our attention on areas where there are potentially disproportionate impacts.

Permitting programs evaluate all new permits to ensure surrounding communities are equally protected, and promote effective public participation. We provide training and oversight for permits under state control.

Region 5 serves Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin and 35 federally recognized tribes.

Community-based work brings a full range of program resources to communities living with environmental justice concerns. Working with community residents and organizations, we partner with other federal, state and local agencies to address these concerns and make a visible difference.

The Region 5 Environmental Justice Program works with community organizations in a variety of ways, including hosting and attending community meetings. Region 5 has a strong relationship with co-regulators at the state and local level, collaborating on geographic initiatives and providing the states with technical support, including training.



The Environmental Protection Agency is driven by a fundamental belief that everyone has a right to clean air to breathe, safe water to drink and healthy land to call our home. At the heart of that conviction is our unwavering pursuit of equality and environmental justice for all.

-EPA Administrator
Gina McCarthy



Making a Visible Difference in Communities

EPA is dedicated to making a difference in communities. We are increasing our focus on communities where the need for assistance is the greatest. We are addressing environmental justice concerns, strengthening the livability of these communities, increasing community engagement and protecting fundamental rights.

Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit, Duluth, Gary and Milwaukee — these communities in Region 5 were chosen for Make a Visible Difference in Communities projects based on environmental challenges, the need for federal assistance and our ability to make a meaningful difference within two years.

Make a Visible Difference in Communities projects also encourage the construction and development of green infrastructure. For more information visit <http://go.usa.gov/cGfYw>.



Environmental Justice Small Grants

EPA's Office of Environmental Justice established the Environmental Justice Small Grants Program in 1994. This grant program supports and empowers communities that are working on solutions to local environmental health issues. Here are a few projects these grants have supported.

Earth Day Coalition CLEVELAND: Educated 42 teachers, 845 students and 408 community members. The coalition also restored native plants to four vacant lots, totaling 20,000 square feet, along with initiating two school-based nursery plot sites and an additional garden site.

Midwest Pesticide Action CHICAGO: Helped Illinois child care providers understand the health risks of pesticide exposure for vulnerable infants and children. During 2014, Illinois child care providers serving approximately 7,500 children came into compliance with Illinois Integrated Pest Management laws. These laws ensure that pest management is conducted in a way that takes into account the environment as well as humans.

Social Development Foundation MILWAUKEE: Provided home assessments for lead dangers to low-income families. Partnered with the City of Milwaukee Health Department, Sixteenth Street Community Health Center and the Wisconsin Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.

Community Resources

- ▶ **Community health:** Do you have questions about how your community can be involved in environmental justice and bettering the health of your community? Get answers from our Web page at www.epa.gov/communities.
- ▶ **EJScreen:** EJScreen is a mapping tool that allows users to create maps based on combined demographic and environmental factors. Find it at www2.epa.gov/ejscreen.



Who to know in Region 5's Environmental Justice program:

Lara Lasky
R5 EJ Coordinator
312-353-5614
Lasky.Lara@epa.gov

Mark Messersmith
EJ Mapping
312-353-2154
Messersmith.Mark@epa.gov