

Community-Focused Exposure and Risk Screening Tool EPA Fact Sheet

Issue

Community engagement is crucial in helping citizens define and prioritize environmental and public health issues where they live, work and play. The Community-Focused Exposure and Risk Screening Tool (C-FERST) provides information to help users identify environmental issues in their communities, learn about these issues, and explore exposure and risk reduction options. Communities and decision makers can use C-FERST along with local information to advance community environmental health and wellbeing.

What is C-FERST?

C-FERST is an online tool which provides access to resources that can help communities learn more about their environmental issues and risks, compare conditions in their community with their county and state averages, and explore exposure and risk reduction options. The tool includes local maps, reports, fact sheets, links to other environmental and public health tools, information about other community projects, and structured guides to help communities plan their projects to assess local environmental conditions.

Who Should Use C-FERST?

C-FERST is intended to serve the needs of a broad range of users, including the general public, environmental and public health professionals, state and local risk assessors, EPA community involvement coordinators and environmental justice coordinators, and academic institutions serving local communities. It may be mutually beneficial for community members and groups to work with

regional, state or local environmental experts, and local academic institutions to learn more about the community, identify and explore local issues, and interpret C-FERST data and results.

How Do I Learn to Use C-FERST?

A number of training resources are included in C-FERST to help users become familiar with the tool, including a Quick Start guide, a Maps User guide, a Community Data Table (CDT) Quick Start guide, and use case examples for each of the major components of C-FERST.



What Can I Do with C-FERST?

- **View maps of your community**
C-FERST maps contain information on pollution sources, estimated concentrations, exposures and risks for select pollutants, demographic data, and other key community characteristics. Users can also supplement C-FERST maps with local information and add their own maps.

- **Compare local, county and state estimates**
C-FERST’s “Community Data Table” provides a summary of environmental conditions for a community, including estimated concentrations, exposures and risks for select pollutants, as well as demographic information.
- **Explore and learn about issues in your environment**
C-FERST’s “Environmental Issue Profiles” contain links and information from various EPA and non-EPA sources for issues and concerns commonly identified by communities. C-FERST contains hotlinks to exposure and risk reduction options in addition to projects implemented by other communities.
- **Find additional resources**
C-FERST’s “Additional Tools” link contains a searchable list of tools available for conducting community exposure assessments. The “Environmental Measurement Methods” section in C-FERST provides links to key EPA resources related to citizen science air monitoring and other available measurement methods.

- **Plan your project with guides for conducting community assessments:**
Community guides in C-FERST can provide information to help community groups systematically conduct an environmental health assessment in their locality. Guides in C-FERST include: EPA’s former Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Roadmap; and the National Association of County and City Health Officials’ Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health (PACE-EH).
- **Interact with other C-FERST users**
C-FERST contains a forum for users to ask questions, provide comments, and share stories about their experiences using C-FERST.

Find C-FERST Online at:

<https://www.epa.gov/c-ferst>

Username: epa-reviewer

Password: 2015-Shield*02

Contact:

CFERSTMail@epa.gov

September 2016

C-FERST in Practice

C-FERST can enhance EPA-community partnerships through information sharing and technical assistance. EPA programs can use the tool as an information, education and project planning resource. During beta-testing, C-FERST was used by:

- Organizations engaged in mapping children’s environmental health concerns, including air quality near schools
- Stakeholders developing comments for public notices and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits
- Communities identifying potential redevelopment opportunities related to Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) sites
- Coalitions developing environmental justice assessments
- Academic institutions developing environmental education curricula

. . . and the EPA programs who work with them.

C-FERST in Practice—EPA Region 10