

# EJ

# Update



An Environmental Justice Update for Region 7 Stakeholders

EPA Region 7

Summer / Fall 2000

Iowa Kansas Missouri Nebraska

[www.epa.gov/region7](http://www.epa.gov/region7)

## Front Page Headlines

## [The EJ Forum Attracts Over 200 Attendees August 10, 2000](#)

## [A Message from Region 7's EJ Coordinator](#)

- ◆ EJ Forum
- ◆ A message from Althea Moses, Region 7 EJ Program Coordinator

Over 200 participants attended the EJ Forum held on August 10, 2000, at the Jack Reardon Civic Center in Kansas City, Kansas. The EJ Forum was presented by the Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7. Co-sponsors of the event included: The Department of Housing and Urban Development, Mid-America Regional Council, and Bridging The Gap.



Among the stakeholders in attendance at the forum were: federal, state, and local governments; non-profit organizations; environmental grassroots organizations; academia; tribal groups; transportation associations; engineering firms; and others.

The purpose of the Environmental Justice (EJ) Forum was to allow the EPA an opportunity to reinforce its belief that partnerships between stakeholder groups are vital to the pursuit of environmental justice. The goal of the EJ Forum was to provide a place for people to interact, and to encourage dialogue among all regional stakeholder groups. This setting fostered partnerships and provided an opportunity to exchange viewpoints, information, and ideas.

As the summer ends and fall begins we find ourselves at a point of reflection. In this period of transition we look back and take account of our actions and look forward to the result of our efforts. The EPA Region 7 environmental justice program has focused this past year on improving communication and building partnerships.

The EJ Update serves as a communication tool for you our partners in the journey towards recognizing environmental justice.

This summer's activities included an EJ Forum at which stakeholders engaged in dialogue to discuss priorities and ways to partner in addressing environmental justice.

Partnerships and working together has led to the national recognition of communities in New Madrid County, MO as a demonstration project for the Integrated Inter-Agency Work Group on Environmental Justice.

The Region 7 EJ program would like to thank all those who supported our efforts as we crossed into the new millennium, and to congratulate all those who joined the partnership efforts to ensure environmental justice to all populations regardless of race, ethnicity, or income.

Sincerely,  
--- Althea Moses

Region 7 Environmental Justice Program Manager

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## Community Updates & Opportunities

### New Madrid Demonstration Project



The New Madrid County Tri-Community Health Campaign has begun to attract nation-wide attention as a national pilot project for children's health. The EPA Region 7 and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Midwest Region have created a partnership to focus efforts on portions of the population that are disproportionately impacted.

The three towns involved, Howardville, Lilbourn, and North Lilbourn, MO, have joined to work with EPA, NRCS, the Great Rivers Alliance of Natural Resource District (GRAND), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to educate, inform, and prioritize health issues in the area. The three main health concerns include asthma, lead-based paint, and drinking water quality. A county-wide health fair was held to help educate and reach out to the community.

### Kansas City Urban Core Youth Gain "Environmental Literacy"

submitted by Bridging The Gap, Kansas City, MO

The Metropolitan Environmental Youth Academy (MEYA) is a pilot project designed to provide inner-city youth with an understanding of the natural and built environment, and to instill in them a sense of responsibility for the broader community, as they design and implement related service projects in their neighborhood.

The project began with a weekend wilderness retreat, June 9-11, 2000 in Garden City, Missouri. Ten urban core youth were selected to participate in the pilot project and attend the retreat. During their retreat, youth participated in activities like "sensory hikes," fishing, walking in the wetlands, and a hayride in the country.

They learned about issues of pollution, waste reduction, energy consumption, and how to understand their own neighborhoods in the context of these problems. They developed leadership skills and designed projects to improve the environment in their community. The Summer Youth Academy graduation was held September and this summer's youth were presented certificates of achievement.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### October 2000

20

#### Latino Civil Rights Summit

Penn Valley Community College, 3201 Southwest Trafficway, KCMO. For more details, contact the Coalition of Hispanic Organizations @ 816.756.1850 or Monica Espinosa (EPA) @ 913.551.7058.

### November 2000

6

2nd

#### Healthy Homes Meeting

LeadBusters is facilitating a second Safe and Healthy Homes meeting on November 6th, from 11:30 -1:00 at the Linwood Multi-Purpose Center, 3200 Wayne, KCMO. It is an open meeting for all of metro KC! Call 913-438-LEAD for more information.

### December 2000

12-14

#### 16th Bi-Annual NEJAC Meeting

The 16th Bi-Annual NEJAC Meeting will be held December 12 - 14, 2000 in Washington, D.C. The policy issues up for discussion is: Has there been success in the integration of environmental justice in the Federal Government's programs, policies, and operation and guidance consistent with existing environmental laws and Executive Order 12898? For more information visit NEJAC's

web site located at:  
<http://es.epa.gov/oeca/main/ej/nejac/index.html>



Send your organization or community events to: The EJ Update, Attn: Althea Moses, 901 N. 5th Street, Kansas City, KS 66101 or email to Bishop.Debbie@epa.gov or King.Daphne@epa.gov or fax to the EJ Program @ 913.551.7941. EPA reserves the right to edit submissions.

### Metropolitan Energy Center Works with Westside Neighbors to Improve Public Transportation

submitted by Jeff Umreit, Metropolitan Energy Center, Kansas City, MO

This project stood out because it was one of the first times the KCATA looked towards a community or community-based project to provide neighborhood input on the design and development of a neighborhood bus route. The Westside Circulator Route was implemented October 5, 1998.

The Metropolitan Energy Center began organizing its Westside Sustainable Community Partnership in 1997 with significant funding support from the EPA's EJ Program. The Metropolitan Energy Center, working with Kansas City, Missouri's Westside community, began the process to enhance the neighborhood's public transportation in the fall of 1997. Discussions with the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority developed into a working partnership that would address the community's needs and help the KCATA reach its long-term goal of better connecting downtown Kansas City with its surrounding neighborhoods.

Westside community participation has continued to provide valuable input on the bus route and schedule, specifically

through the involvement of a group of neighbors called Working Together / Trabajando Juntos.

### Team Sweep Environmental Education (TSEE) Program Receives EPA Grant

submitted by the Team Sweep Program, St. Louis, MO

The Team Sweep program is very proud to announce the start-up of "TSEE." TSEE stands for Team Sweep Environmental Education program. Thanks to support and funding from the EPA the TSEE program has started its activities with two pilot Team Sweep teams.

The TSEE pilot project will build on its current success for addressing issues of litter and trash, public safety, youth development, intergenerational activities, and volunteerism. Expanding on these activities we will include tackling other "low tech" environmental issues like recycling, household hazardous waste disposal, reporting of illegal dumping, vacant and abandoned buildings. A somewhat unique benefit of the Team

*The TSEE pilot project provides a unique opportunity for environmental agencies to work on a sustained basis directly with youth in their neighborhoods.*

Sweep program model is that most activities occur in the neighborhoods and on the blocks where participants live.

TSEE will continue these efforts by offering a majority of

the instruction and training as part of the regular clean-up activities, through engaging the support and assistance of other community-based programs.

### EPA Programs Attend the 9th Annual Missouri Black Expo

The 9th annual Missouri Black Expo was held August 19-20, in St. Louis, MO, and included over 500 booth participants and attracted more than 30,000 attendees. The EPA participated again this year to provide education and outreach to the St. Louis community and beyond. EPA's theme this year was, "Hazardous Chemicals in Your Community." Debbie Bishop and Kimberly Hill of the ECO/EJ Program partnered with Christine Hoard from the Chemical Risk Information Branch, Community Right-To-Know, and Ken Rapplean from the Enforcement / Fund-Lead Removal Branch.



Some highlights of EPA's participation included the showcase of Superfund emergency response equipment such as the GEO PROBE, dive tank equipment, and protective gear. Also featured was an explanation of the hazard diamond, chemical risk information, and environmental justice program material.

### EJ Forum

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The overall goal of the Forum was to bring together various regional stakeholders, policy and decision-makers, and community members to learn



about environmental justice. Pictured above is a panel discussing community empowerment.

During the seven-hour day we were able to see that it was central that partnerships arise. Partnerships are necessary in community planning, decision-making, holding public meetings, enacting laws, zoning, permitting, evoking meaningful involvement, and many other aspects as well. We were also able to see where the gaps were. Corporate representation was lacking, and there are barriers that still tend to exist.

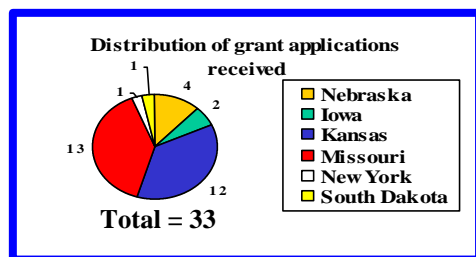
## Funding & Technical Assistance



### EJ Small Grants Program Update

A record number of 33 grant applications were received from across the region this fiscal year. Due in part to the efforts of the EPA Region 7 EJ Program staff, "We did a better job of getting the word out and a better job of communicating with the public..." reported Cecil Bailey, EJ Small Grants Program Manager.

The grant money available this Fiscal Year (FY) totals \$110,000, broken down into non-superfund dollars, \$50,000 and superfund dollars, \$60,000. The budgeted money this year is down by \$90,000 impacting the number of grants the Region 7 EJ Program was able to fund. The EPA National Announcement of this year's EJ Small Grants will be September 30, 2000.



#### **Superfund ?**

Superfund grant money requires special grant application review and must meet the guidance requirements set forth by Small Grants Program in Washington, D.C. Superfund in comparison to non-superfund grant requirements in short must demonstrate the need to address the detection, assessment, and evaluation of the effects on and risks to human health from hazardous substances and the detection of hazardous substances in the environment.

The EJ Small Grants Program is built upon a set of requirements and criteria set forth by the EPA and implemented by regional offices.

Grant selections are based a number of factors that include: community involvement; a work plan and budget that provides a good link relative to the environmental/health issues being addressed; and includes a discussion of how the applicant will evaluate the success of the project and a clear description of quantitative "measures of success." These are just a few aspects that are reviewed by the selection committee.

For a more detailed description of the requirements and criteria of the EJ Small Grants Program, please see the EPA EJ Small Grants Program publication entitled Application Guidance FY2000 or visit the EPA EJ Small Grants Program web site. You may also contact the EJ Program through the phone numbers listed on page 5.

## Fair Treatment & Meaningful Involvement

### NEJAC Records Highest Attendance this May, Focusing on Health Issues

More than 500 environmental justice stakeholders attended the 15th meeting of the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council Meeting (NEJAC), May 23-26 in Atlanta, Georgia. Health was the guiding theme that drove the discussions of the council, public comment, and subcommittees. The meeting began with a series of panels comprised of various stakeholders that were designed to provide insight into the issues and concerns raised about environmental justice and community-based health models.

Althea Moses, EPA Region 7 EJ Program Coordinator, attended the meeting and participated in special meetings with Assistant Regional Administrators and EJ Coordinators to discuss the EJ Grants Program, lead regional responsibilities, and the EJ Training Collaborative. The next NEJAC meeting will be held in Washington, D.C., December 12th - 14th, 2000, discussing Interagency Integration of Environmental Justice into Federal Government's programs, policies, and operations.

#### **What's NEJAC?**

The National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) is a federal advisory committee that was established by charter on September 30, 1993, to provide independent advice, consultation, and recommendations to the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on matters related to environmental justice.

NEJAC council members represent 7 different stakeholder groups including state/local government, community groups, non-governmental organizations, academia, tribal governments, business & industry and environmental groups.

## Priority Issues : Health & Environment

Health has become an increasingly hot topic in the environmental justice arena. Your health and your family's health along with the health of the environment are the top issues that the EPA program offices address on a daily basis.

Issues of health and the environment map a disproportionate impact zone among disadvantaged communities. The EPA Region 7 EJ Program has health on its priority list and has begun initiating children's health programs and environmental health awareness projects aimed at informing and assisting members of our regional community stakeholders. Human and environmental health concerns facing our regional community include: children's health, lead health effects, asthma, and drinking water quality.

### **Health Effect**

- Lead effects
- Drinking water quality
- Asthma

### **Source of potential problems**

- Lead-based paint, contaminated soil, dust, and drinking water.
- Surface water & groundwater
- Indoor & outdoor air pollution (i.e. synthetic building materials, smog, & CO)



• Inadequate drinking water quantity and quality are problems the EPA has continued to address. The EPA has developed water quality standards designed to protect children and adults.

• Asthma-related hospitalizations have risen disproportionately for inner-city children and in particular, for minority populations.

Pictured above is evidence of the importance of health education and awareness. A young girl participates in getting her lead blood level tested as part of the Tri-Community Child Health Campaign held in New Madrid, MO.

## EJ Q & A



### What is Environmental Justice ?

Environmental Justice (EJ) means the fair treatment of people regardless of race, income, and cultures, in the developing, carrying-out, and enforcing of environmental laws, regulations and policies. Fair treatment means that no person or group of people should bear a greater share of negative environmental impacts resulting from environmental programs.

### How do I file a Title VI Civil Rights Complaint?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance from discriminating on the basis of race, color, or national origin in their programs or activities. The EPA is prohibited from taking acts, including issuing permits, that are intentionally discriminatory or have a discriminatory effect based on race, color, or national origin. Please contact EPA's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) for more information: [www.epa.gov/civilrights](http://www.epa.gov/civilrights) or call 202.260.4575 in Washington, D.C.

### EJ Staff Contacts

#### **EJ Program Manager:**

Althea Moses 913.551.7649

#### **Publications:**

Daphne King 913.551.7815  
Debbie Bishop 913.551.7529

#### **Outreach / Training:**

Kimberly Hill  
(St. Louis Field Office)  
314.821.2630

#### **Grants / Tribal Contact:**

March Runner 913.551.7898

For more information on the topics listed in this issue of the EJ Update and regarding the EPA EJ Program, please contact the EJ Program at EPA Region 7.

### How do I recognize and report environmental injustices?

An environmental injustice is any type of undue environmental burden usually carried by low-income or minority communities. Examples include: toxic dumping, poor water quality, and inadequate access to environmental information. To report an EJ issue to the EPA Region 7, contact Althea Moses, EPA Environmental Justice Program Coordinator.

### What is EPA's strategy for addressing EJ issues?

The EPA, under Executive Order 12898, ensures the integration of environmental justice into the Agency's programs, policies, and activities. The strategy contains 5 major areas including: 1) Public participation, outreach, partnerships, and communication with stakeholders; 2) Health and environmental research; 3) Data collection, analysis, and stakeholder access to public information; 4) American Indian and Indigenous environmental protection; 5) Enforcement, compliance assurance, and regulatory review.

**Useful Environmental Justice publications**  
**available upon request:**

*To request publications, please contact Daphne King @ 1-800-223-0425, ext. 7815*

- EJ Fact Sheet in English and Spanish
- EPA Journal: Environmental Protection - Has It Been Fair?
- Environmental Enforcement: A Citizen's Guide
- Environmental Equity: Reducing Risk for All Communities; Volume 1: Workgroup Report to the Administrator
- Environmental Equity: Reducing Risk for All Communities; Volume 2: Supporting Document
- Environmental Justice 1996 Annual Report: Working Toward Solutions
- Environmental Justice Community Handbook
- Environmental Justice Strategy: Executive Order 12898
- Executive Order 12898: Federal Registrar; Volume 59, Number 32
- Guide to Sustainable Community Indicators
- La Linea de Emergencia Para Justicia Ambiental
- Public's Role in Environmental Enforcement
- Serving a Diverse Society: EPA's Role in Environmental Justice
- Sirviendo A Una Sociedad Que Es Diversa: Funcion De EPA En Justicia Ambiental
- Region 7 Environmental Justice Quarterly Update: Winter 1998
- Region 7 Environmental Justice Quarterly Update: Summer 1999

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