
Environmental Justice

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Leadership NC Class 30
April 13, 2023



EJ defined

EJ movement

EJ Science

EJ Policy

How would you define environmental justice?

To begin, text `cgwoods` to 22333



North Carolina Environmental Justice Network (NCEJN)

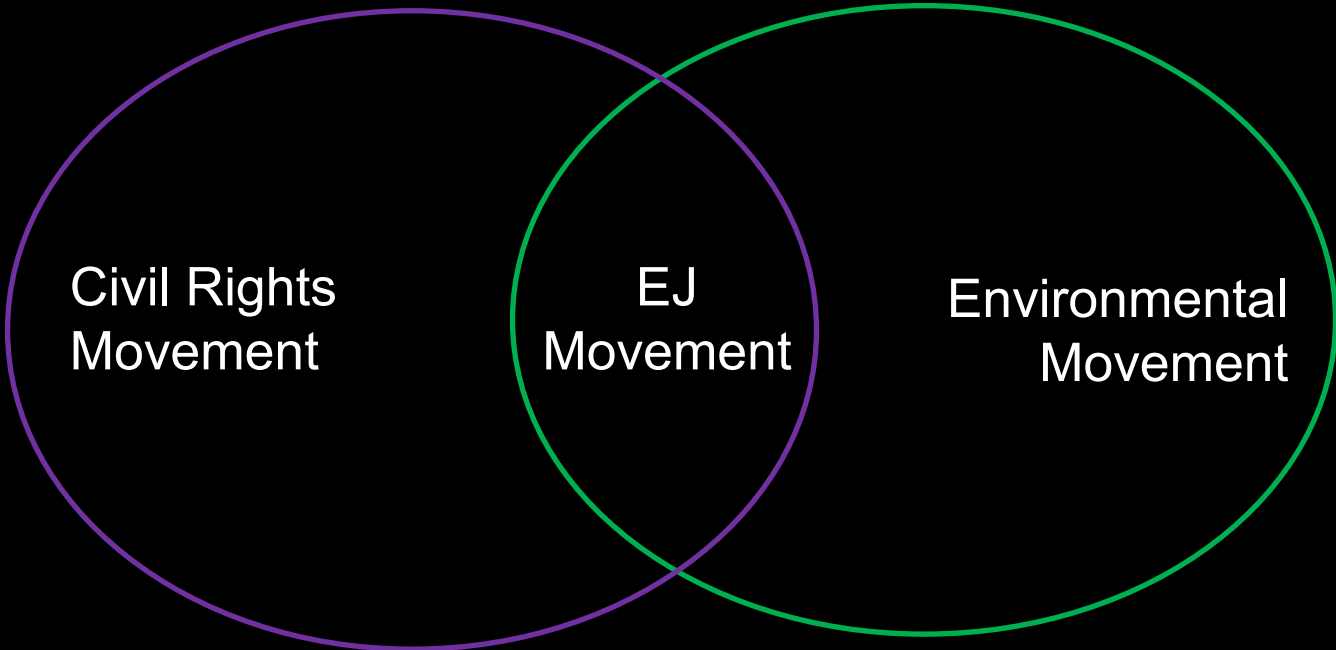
US Institute of Medicine

US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)

The **right to a safe, healthy, productive, and sustainable environment** for all, where “environment” is considered in its totality to include the ecological (biological), physical (natural and built), social, political, aesthetic, and economic environments. Environmental justice refers to the **conditions in which such a right can be freely exercised**, whereby individual and group identities, needs, and dignities are preserved, fulfilled, and respected in a way that provides for **self-actualization** and personal and **community empowerment**.

A concept that addresses in a cross-cutting and integrative manner the **physical** and **social health** issues related to the **distribution of environmental benefits and burdens among populations**, particularly in degraded and hazardous physical environments occupied by minority or disadvantaged populations

Fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income **with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies**. EPA's goal is to provide an environment where all people enjoy the **same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards** and **equal access to the decision-making process** to maintain a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.



Civil Rights
Movement

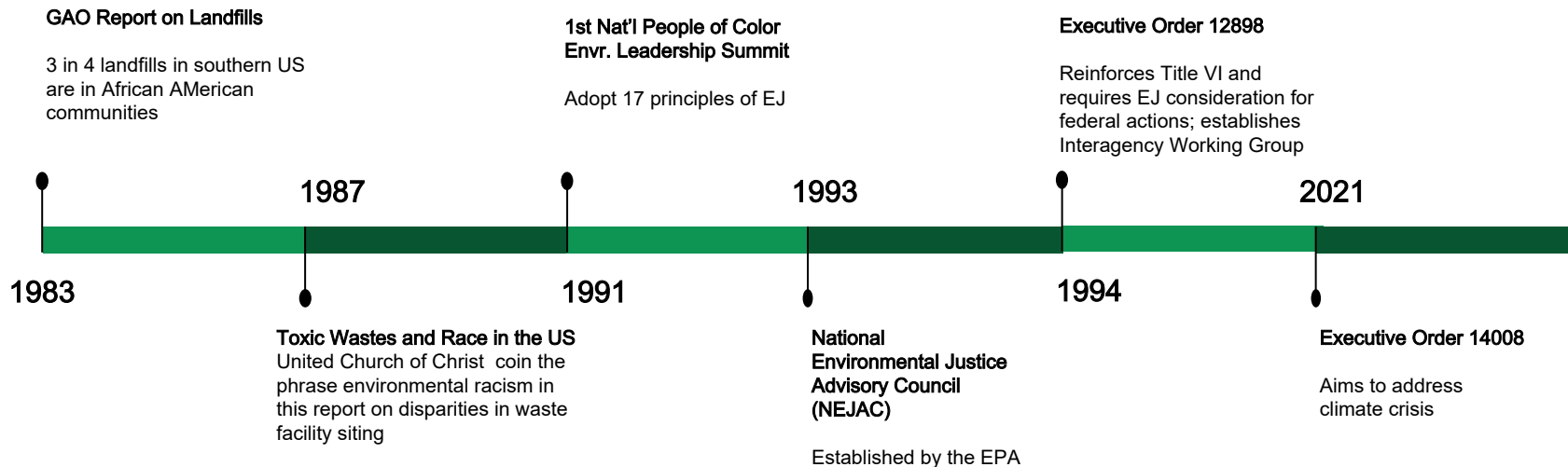
EJ
Movement

Environmental
Movement

40 years of struggle towards environmental justice



Other key events



General Accounting Office

Siting Of Hazardous Waste Landfills And Their Correlation With Racial And Economic Status Of Surrounding Communities

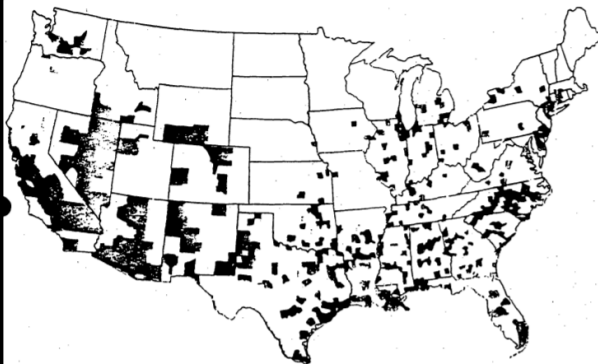
This report provides information on the racial and economic characteristics of communities surrounding four hazardous waste landfills in three southeastern States. It also describes Federal criteria for siting landfills and provides data on public participation and how the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) proposed hazardous waste facility permit changes will affect it.



GAO/RCED-83-168

TOXIC WASTES AND RACE In The United States

A National Report on the Racial and Socio-Economic
Characteristics of Communities
with Hazardous Waste Sites



COMMISSION FOR RACIAL JUSTICE
United Church of Christ
©1987

THIRD EDITION

DUMPING



IN DIXIE

Race, Class, and
Environmental Quality

Robert D. Bullard

17 Principles of Environmental Justice

1) **Environmental Justice** affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction.

2) **Environmental Justice** demands that public policy be based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination or bias.

3) **Environmental Justice** mandates the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for humans and other living things.

4) **Environmental Justice** calls for universal protection from nuclear testing, extraction, production and disposal of toxic/hazardous wastes and poisons and nuclear testing that threaten the fundamental right to clean air, land, water, and food.

5) **Environmental Justice** affirms the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples.

6) **Environmental Justice** demands the cessation of the production of all toxins, hazardous wastes, and radioactive materials, and that all past and current producers be held strictly accountable to the people for detoxification and the containment at the point of production.

7) **Environmental Justice** demands the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision-making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.

8) **Environmental Justice** affirms the right of all workers to a safe and healthy work environment without being forced to choose between an unsafe livelihood and

10) **Environmental Justice** considers governmental acts of environmental injustice a violation of international law, the Universal Declaration On Human Rights, and the United Nations Convention on Genocide.

11) **Environmental Justice** must recognize a special legal and natural relationship of Native Peoples to the U.S. government through treaties, agreements, compacts, and covenants affirming sovereignty and self-determination.

12) **Environmental Justice** affirms the need for urban and rural ecological policies to clean up and rebuild our cities and rural areas in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of all our communities, and provided fair access for all to the full range of resources.

13) **Environmental Justice** calls for the strict enforcement of principles of informed consent, and a halt to the testing of experimental reproductive and medical procedures and vaccinations on people of color.

14) **Environmental Justice** opposes the destructive operations of multi-national corporations.

15) **Environmental Justice** opposes military occupation, repression and exploitation of lands, peoples and cultures, and other life forms.

16) **Environmental Justice** calls for the education of present and future generations which emphasizes social and environmental issues, based on our experience and an appreciation of our diverse cultural perspectives.

17) **Environmental Justice** requires that we, as individuals, make personal and consumer choices to consume as little of Mother Earth's resources and to produce as little waste as possible; and make the conscious decision to challenge and reprioritize our



— LETTER

— Which came first, people or pollution? Assessing the disparate siting and post-siting demographic change hypotheses of environmental injustice

Paul Mohai and Robin Saha 2015 *Environ. Res. Lett.* **10** 115008

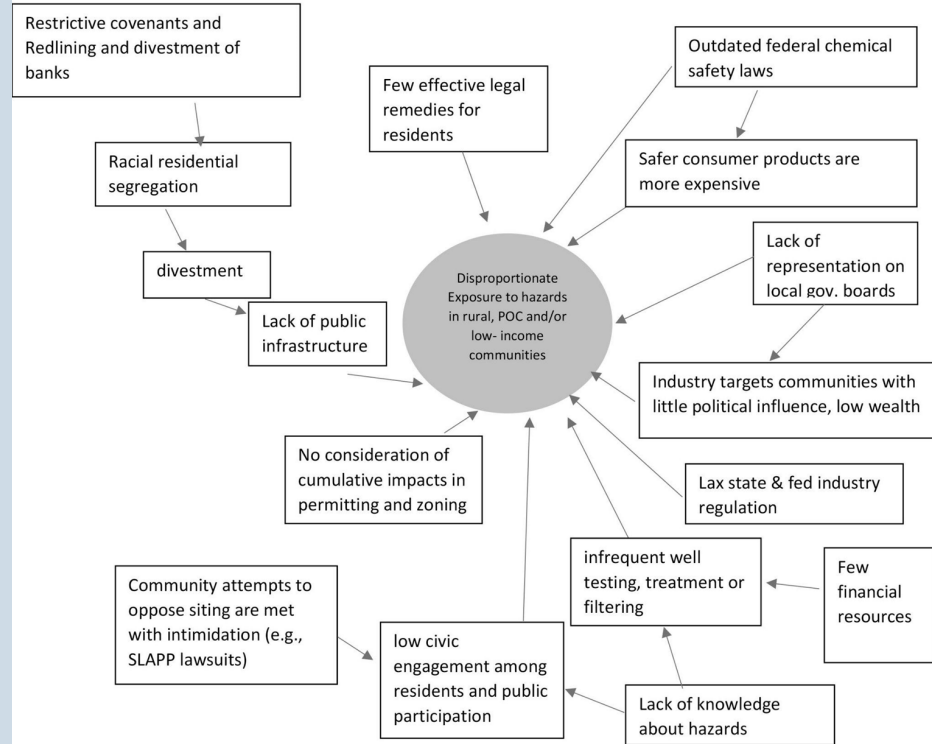
Treatment, storage or disposal facilities sited between 1966 to 1995

Neighborhood composition around the time of siting and demographic changes after siting

Strong evidence of disparate siting for facilities sited in all time periods

Unwanted land uses and nuisance facilities siting is a result of neighborhood transition; facilities are not attracting people of color and low income resident populations.

Factors contributing to disproportionate hazards exposure by race and class



NC EJ ISSUES

● Energy

- Coal Ash
- Biogas
- Wood Pellet

● Waste

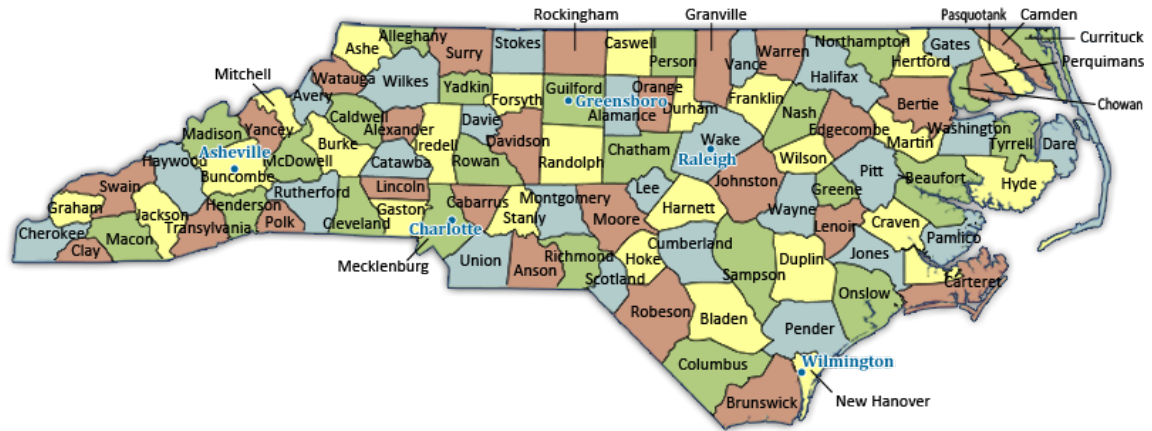
- Hazardous waste
- Municipal solid waste
- Agricultural Waste

● Extreme Weather

- Flooding
- Heat stress

● Access to Basic Amenities

- Sewerage
- Municipal/ county water



Race, Wealth, and Solid Waste Facilities in North Carolina

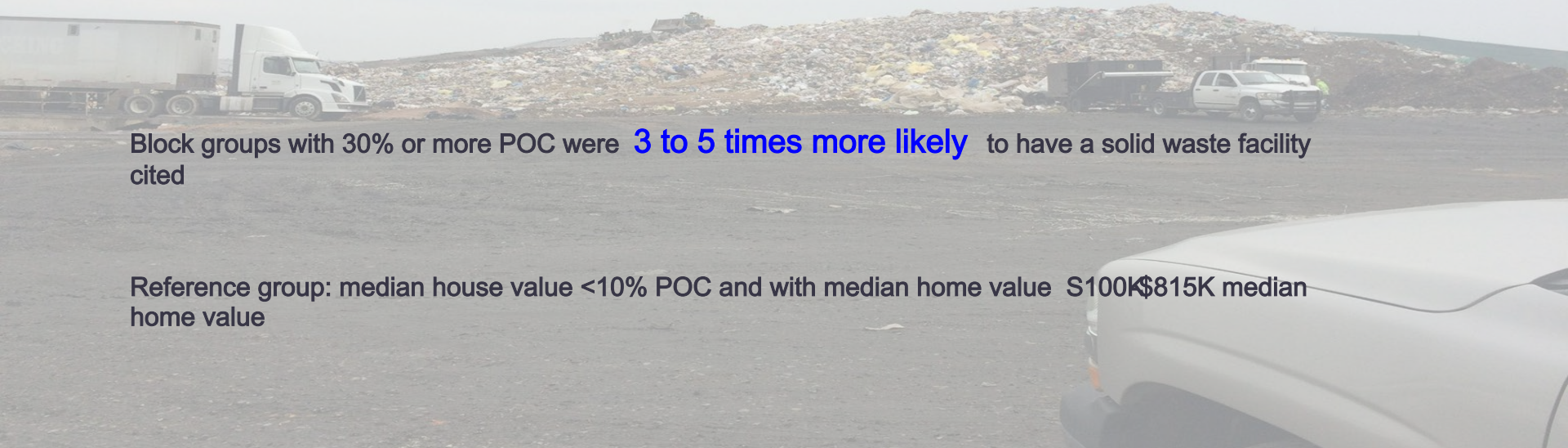
Jennifer M. Norton,¹ Steve Wing,¹ Hester J. Lipscomb,² Jay S. Kaufman,¹ Stephen W. Marshall,¹ and Altha J. Cravey³

¹Department of Epidemiology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA; ²Division of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Department of Community and Family Medicine, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, North Carolina, USA; ³Department of Geography, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA

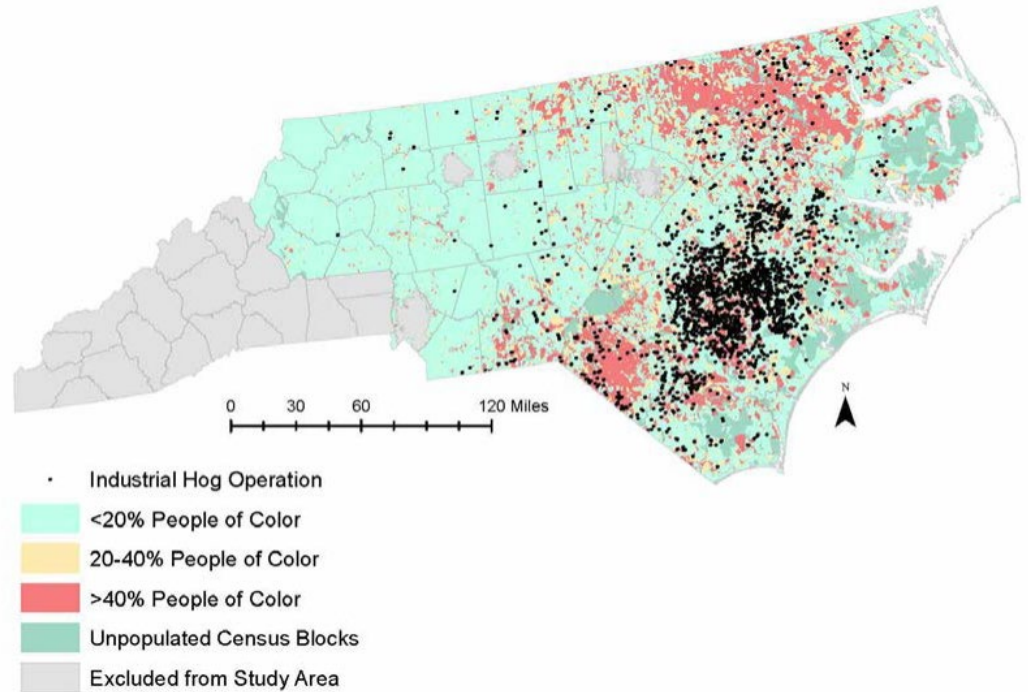
Block groups with a median house value <\$60K were **3 to 4 times more likely** to have a waste facility present

Block groups with 30% or more POC were **3 to 5 times more likely** to have a solid waste facility cited

Reference group: median house value <10% POC and with median home value \$100K-\$150K median home value



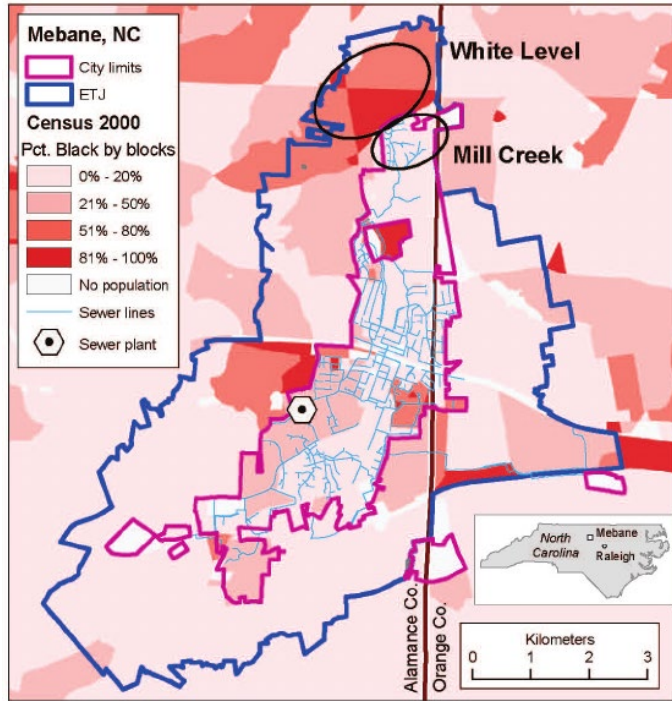
Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)



Wing and Johnston, 2014

<https://ncnewsline.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/UNC-Report.pdf>

Exclusion from public infrastructure access



Marsh, 2010



Lockhart, 2020

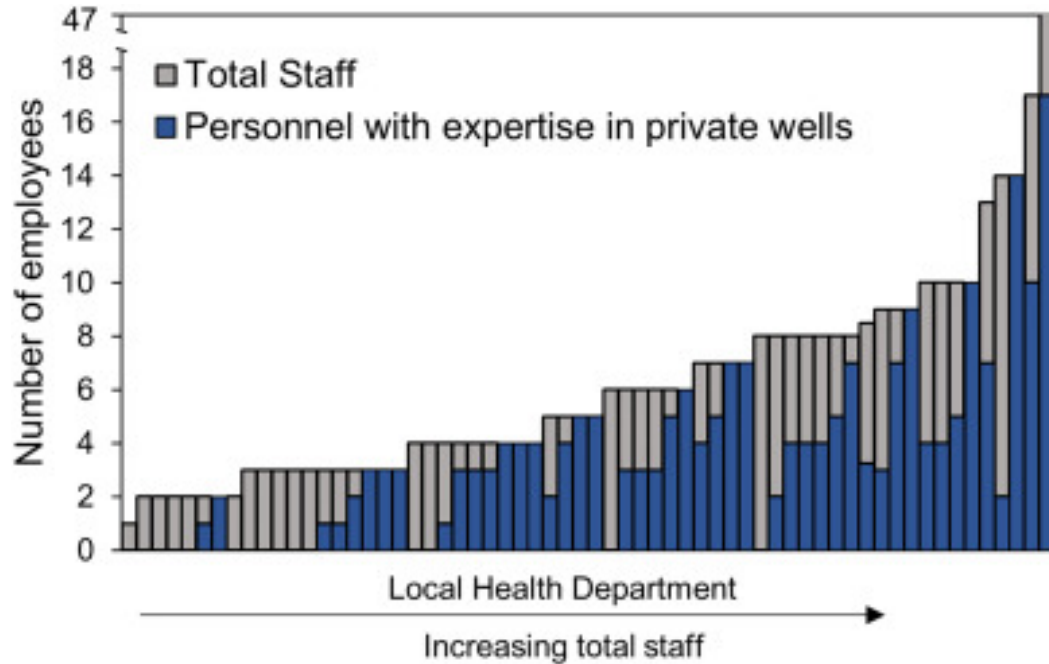
Private wells in NC

“NC residents relying on private well water are provided limited support and face many barriers to mitigating their potential exposure to metals via well water. The median cost of a well water test for inorganic analytes in NC is \$90 and this cost barrier has been identified as a significant impediment to regular testing (Stillo et al., 2019; Gibson et al., 2020; Wait et al., 2020).”

“Cost to treat a contaminated well are even higher: even a basic kitchen tap filter may cost up to \$200, under-sink filters may be \$300–400, and require replacement cartridges of \$50 twice a year (Gibson et al., 2020).”



Rural disparities in EHS Staff and well water knowledge



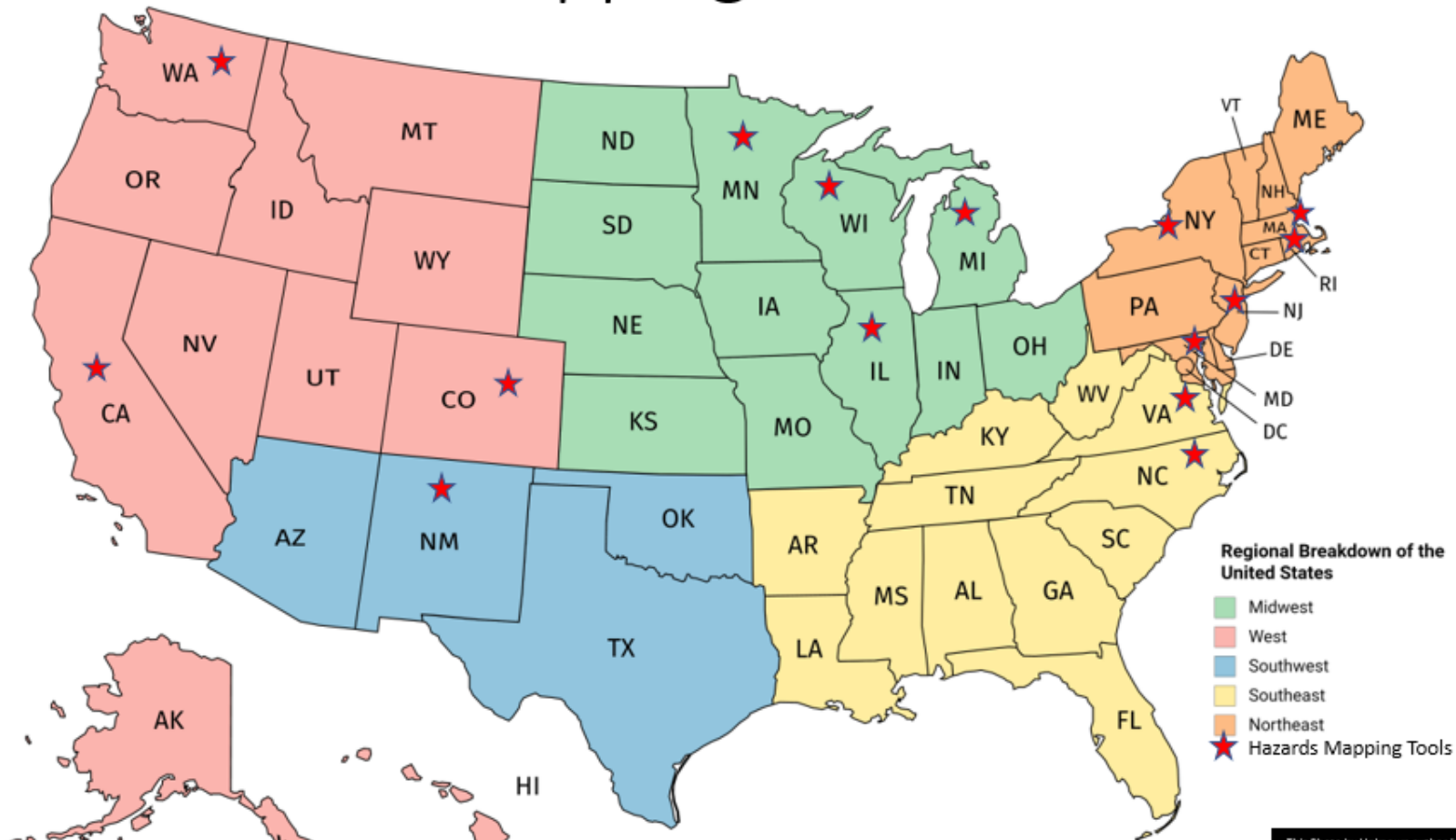
Community Leadership In Environmental Justice Research

- Research that aims to understand structural factors that contribute to racial disparities in environmental health outcomes
- Research that is driven by concerns of impacted community members and meaningfully engages them at various steps of the research
- More researcher training and institutional support and funding for community based participatory researcher (CBPR)

EJ Policy

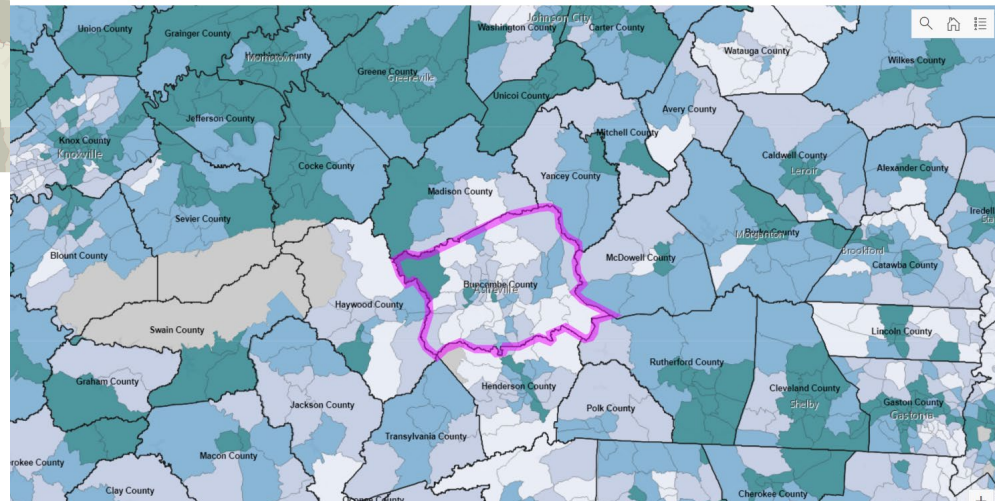
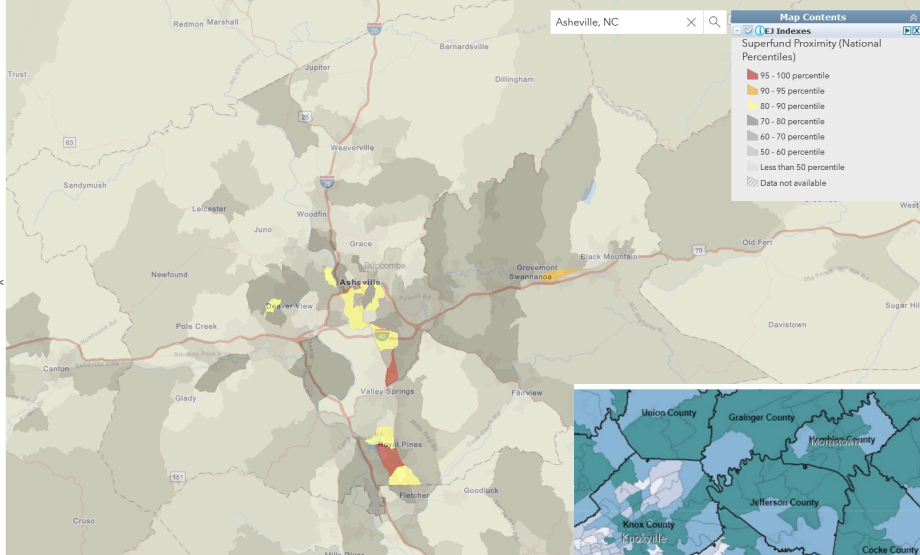
- 1992: The EPA establishes the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC)
- 2007: NC Solid Waste Management Act
- 2013 Title VI complaint to the US EPA for Racial discrimination of confined animal feeding operations is investigated
- 2018 Sec. Michael Regan establishes the Environmental Justice and Equity Advisory Board to the NC Dept. of Environmental Quality
- 2021: President Biden issues Executive Order 14008, establishing the (1) White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), (2) White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council (WHEJAC), (3) Justice40 Initiative, (4) plans to develop the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, (5) Environmental Justice Scorecard to track efforts, and (6) plan to conserve 30% of land by 2030.
- 2022: NC Governor Roy Cooper signs Executive Order 246 prioritizing environmental justice in climate action

Hazards Mapping Tools Across the US



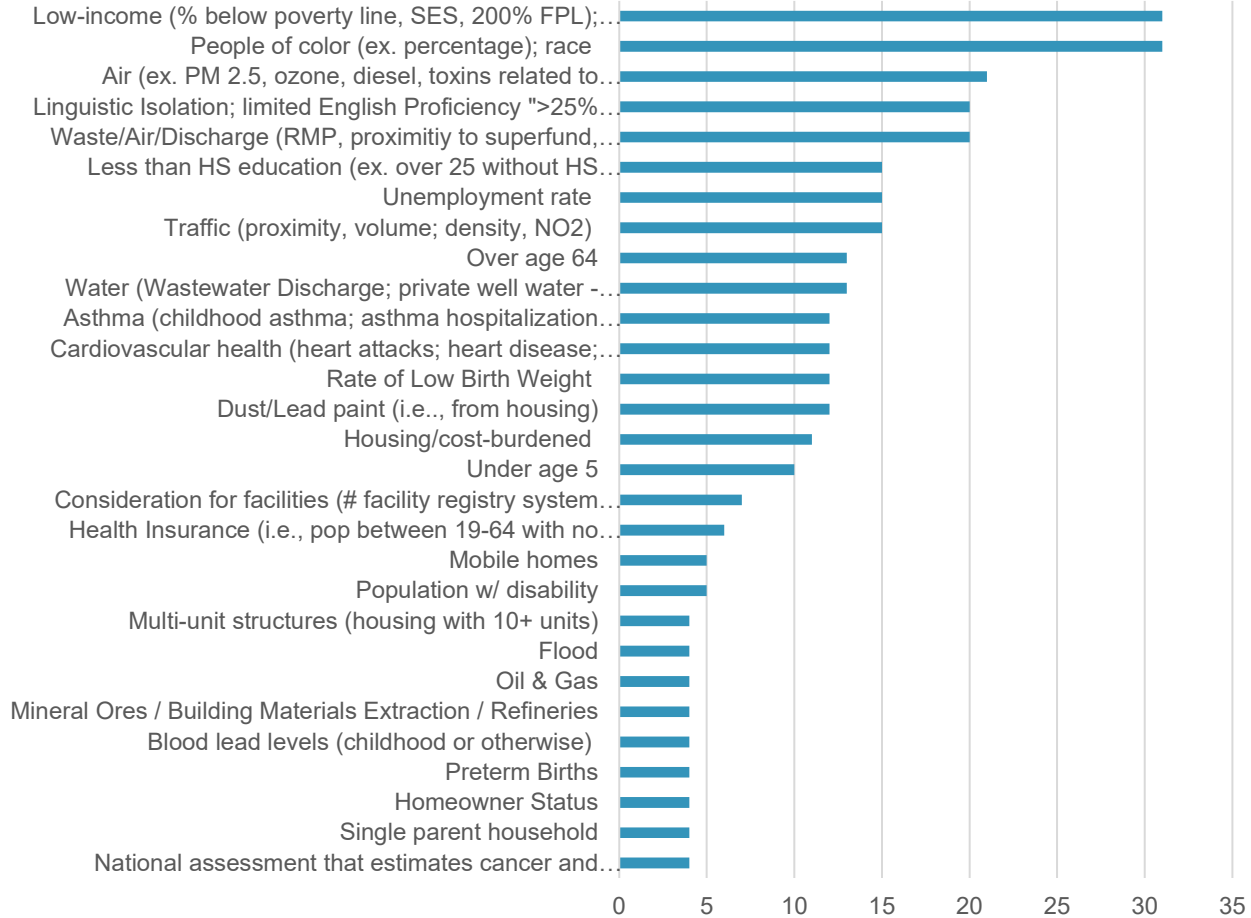
Please note: Territory data (except Puerto Rico) is not available as comparable to the US. It is only comparable to the territory itself by using the 'Compare to State' functionality. Likewise, some of the indicators may not be available for territories.

Compare to US Compare to State
Environmental Justice Indexes
 Particulate Matter 2.5
 Ozone
 Diesel Particulate Matter
 Air Toxics Cancer Risk
 Air Toxics Respiratory HI
 Traffic Proximity
 Lead Paint
 Superfund Proximity
 RMP Facility Proximity
 Hazardous Waste Proximity
 Underground Storage Tanks
 Wastewater Discharge
Supplemental Indexes
 Pollution and Sources
 Socioeconomic Indicators
 Health Disparities
 Climate Change Data
 Critical Service Gaps
 Additional Demographics
 Threshold Map



Hazards presence
Sociodemographics
Health data

Most Common Indicators Across 41 Screening Tools



Let's Review the Tools (10 min)

- I will assign your table a tool to explore
- At your table, choose a county to review
- Each person choose an Indicator to review for the county
- Talk with your table mates to see if you can observe an patterns in co-location of certain environmental hazards or patterns in environmental indicators and sociodemographic indicators
- What indicators are missing that you think should be present?

- If time permits, take time to explore your county

Incorporating Cumulative Impacts into State Policy

NJ (S.232) – Considerations for cumulative impacts on overburdened communities (census blocks)

- Permits for projects/facilities that will adversely impact overburdened communities are mandatorily denied

CO (HB21-2166) - Defines and protects disproportionately impacted communities (DICs) with specific focus on air quality

- Lays framework to enhance community input and transparency
- Creation of EJ task force
- Additional permit requirements for DICs

CA – California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines

- Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) should be completed when there are "cumulatively considerable" impacts
"... incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.' (14 C.C.R. 15065.)"
- Report should include strategies to mitigate or avoid impacts, but only for the individual project's contribution

NY (S.8830 and A.2103C) - Considers cumulative impacts on overburdened communities in the permitting process

- Both S.8830 and A.2103C have passed the State Senate and Assembly, but have not been signed into law by the governor
- If signed into law, NY would be second state to consider CI (after NJ)

NC Solid Waste Management Act of 2007

- If future landfill would impact communities of color / low SES communities, permit would be denied
- Loophole – existing landfills were expanded instead

Take Action

- Think about environmental impacts of your work and the impacts on marginalized communities
- Use EJ tools to identify impacted communities in your county/region
- Partner with communities impacted by social issues your organization is working to address
- Advocate for executive action on EJ and for local and state policies that would better protect marginalized communities

Thank you

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<http://ejclinic.unc.edu>



GILLINGS SCHOOL OF
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ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
ACTION RESEARCH CLINIC