

Environmental Justice and Environmental Public Health Tracking

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Berkeley Center for Excellence

- Epidemiologic study associations between criteria air pollutants and asthma exacerbation.
- Information from two ongoing UCB projects will be used to assist health departments in the design of environmental health tracking systems for asthma.
- Methods developed to link environmental concentrations and body burdens of environmental contaminants.
- Methods will be developed for environmental health tracking using California and national data sets
- Communication and training for health departments, policy makers, community organizations, and other stakeholders.

California Environmental Health Surveillance System

California Environmental Health Surveillance System,
SB702

- The project:
 - Identifies and uses state data resources
 - Outreaches and education to EJ communities about EPHT
 - Involves EJ communities in the pilot projects
- Funds for two pilot projects to:
 - Demonstrate linkage capacities to assess environmental health concerns
 - Solidify partnerships for interagency and interdepartmental cooperation

EJ & EPHT Initiative Training for EJ Community Groups

- Conducted a statewide needs assessment with EJ grassroots community based organizations.
- Convened EJ grassroots community advisory committee.
- Conducted an EJ & EPHT Training with grassroots community based EJ organizations.

Groups Participating

- Asian Pacific Environmental Network
- California Safe Schools
- Center for Environmental Health
- Chinese Progressive Association
- Communities for Better Environment
- Community Residents Institution
- Contra Costa Health Services
- East Yard Communities for EJ
- Green Action
- Haskell Indian Nation
- Healthy Homes
- Just Transition Alliance
- Latino Issues Forum
- Lideres Campesinas
- Maat Youth
- Pacific Institute
- Partnership for Health
- PODER
- Physicians for Social Responsibility
- Urban Habitat
- Youth United for Community Action

Training Goals & Objectives

- Provide information about EPHT
- Provide skills that community can use
- Engage in critical thinking
- Discuss how EPHT can benefit the work of EJ grassroots community organizations

EJ EPHT Initiative Workshop Day 1

Opening & introductions

EJ ice breaker (small groups & report back)

Presentation on EPHT

How to evaluate and use data



EJ EPHT Initiative Workshop 2 Day

Presentation of California
Demonstration Projects

- Asthma
- Birth outcomes

Practice using data

Practice delivering message
using data

Group discussion EJ & EPHT



Group Input



Discussion Themes

- Data as a tool for the community, not a goal
- Data supports precautionary actions
- EJ improves conditions for all people



Value and Benefits of EPHT

- EPHT can provide better data
- Can help point to relationships between exposure and health
- Pilot projects modeled after California EPHT Project provide concrete examples of how tracking can be used, include meaningful community participation, address real issues.

Initiative can support efforts to document EJ health disparities if

- It is not used to “blame the victim”
- It helps gain a better understanding of:
 - Multiple exposures
 - Long-term exposures
 - Synergistic effects of multiple exposures

- Data is collected at local level
- Data is not diluted
- Multiple exposures, “Hot” spots
- Acknowledges differences between rural and urban

- Impact of racism, class, gender, education, displacement, employment and unemployment factors are factored in.
- Data collection is where low-income communities of color are found: health care, school, live, work, cultural practices, incarcerated....

- Tribal concerns are incorporated
- Impact of contamination on tribal land
- Risks related to cultural and subsistence life styles in Native American communities

- The data is not used against efforts to relieve toxic burden on low-income people of color.

Burden of proof is not placed on the community.

Does not allow gentrification and other forms of displacement resulting from EJ efforts to improve the environment.

- Data is accessible and understandable to EJ community.
- Fund pilot projects modeled after the California EPHT Project.

- Does not nullify grassroots community based data collection efforts.
- Community is involved in data collection efforts.

Action Recommendations

- Design and develop specific EJ EPHT Initiative Workshop for Native People and Tribal Representatives.
- Sponsor future EJ EPHT Workshops for EJ community based organizations.



- The Center for Disease Control and other relevant agencies assign a point person to focus on EJ involvement.
- Community participants present their perspectives to researchers and government agencies currently involved in development of EPHT initiative.

- Involve the EJ Inter-agency Working Group
Discuss ways to integrate EJ into development of EPHT, not wait until it is all complete.
Take up discussion of inter-agency data collection and sharing to support EJ efforts.
Seek resources to support on-going stable EJ community-based participation in the process.

Concerns

- How sustainable is focus on EPHT?
- Will our perspectives and voices be considered?
- How can we become a part of the EPHT “loop”?

The End

