Brownfields & Environmental Justice Areas of Concern in Minnesota

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Our mission and vision

**Mission:** to protect and improve the environment and human health

**Vision:** MPCA is a national leader in developing services that support healthy people and ecosystems, and a thriving economy
We do this by:

• Measuring pollution in the air, water, and land
• Cleaning up polluted land and water
• Regulating pollution sources
• Encouraging individuals and businesses to prevent or minimize pollution
Minnesota leads the country in many metrics of good living

- Livability #1-3
- Home Ownership #1
- Health Care #3
- Education #1-5
- Economy #15
- Infrastructure #9
- Opportunity #2
- Fiscal Stability #21
- Natural Environment #10
“Minnesota ranks near the bottom for racial equity”
MPR news June 2, 2020

- Median income for black families in the Twin Cities is LESS THAN HALF of median income for white families
- Black unemployment rate has been 2-3X that of white unemployment
- Black poverty rate in Twin Cities is FOUR TIMES the white poverty rate
- Minnesota as a state has the second biggest income inequality
- Twin Cities has second worst income inequality for urban areas
- 25% of black families own homes while 75% of white families own homes
- Incarceration rate of blacks in Twin Cities is 11 TIMES that of whites
Environmental Justice - our role as government

- Understanding who is impacted by pollution and appreciating that certain communities are impacted more, and are more vulnerable
- Centering those overly impacted, most vulnerable, and historically under-represented/invested
- Using our authority, influence and creativity to repair past harm, reduce pollution and improve living conditions
- Protecting and improving the environment and human health for all Minnesotans

MPCA’s EJ Page | https://www.pca.state.mn.us/about-mpca/mpca-and-environmental-justice
“Environmental justice means the right of communities of color, Indigenous communities, and low-income communities, to the enjoyment of a healthy environment and to **fair treatment** with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”

**Policy statement:** The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) expects the **fair treatment** and **meaningful involvement** of communities of color, Indigenous communities, and low-income communities in agency actions and decisions that affect them. It is the policy of the MPCA that an outcome of its work, in addition to protecting and improving the environment and public health, must address environmental justice concerns.
• All people benefit from equal levels of environmental protection and service
• Pollution does not harm one group of people more than another
• Protecting Minnesotans most at risk
Identifying those with greatest risk for air pollution

**Air quality risk**

These communities are more likely to be near higher levels of air pollution.

- **Statewide average**
  - 51% are above risk guidelines

- **Low-income communities**
  - 66% are above risk guidelines

- **Communities of color and Indigenous communities**
  - 93% are above risk guidelines

**Living near permitted emissions sources**

- **Communities of color**: 14%
- **Low-income communities**: 9%
- **State-wide average**: 6%
For cleanup sites, the data shows it is more equitable.

Most cleanup sites are in communities of low income or communities of color.

- People of color communities: 29%
- Low income communities: 34%
- Statewide: 26%

Living in a groundwater area of concern:

- Statewide: 13%
- Low income communities: 10%
- Communities of color: 10%
Federal Homeowners Loan Corp "residential security maps" from 1930s rate risk of real estate investments, contributing to racially segregated neighborhoods in the Twin Cities.
1945 **Racist policies**

Eighty years ago, the federal government created maps that rated mortgage lending risk. Areas with high percentages of people of color were deemed “hazardous” and were **relined** by lending institutions.

2019 **Income and race**

Today, areas that were redlined in the past still feel the effects of those policies. The racial distribution of Minneapolis’s residents has changed little since 1945. Black neighborhoods remain mostly Black, and white neighborhoods remain mostly white.

2019 **Air pollution and health**

Sources of air pollution such as industrial facilities and freeways were built in Black neighborhoods and continue to contribute to higher air pollution in those neighborhoods today.
All people have an equal opportunity to participate in decisions that may affect their environment and/or health.

MPCA seeks out and facilitates the involvement of potentially affected communities.

Community members’ concerns will be considered in the decision-making process and their contribution can influence the outcome.
Community Engagement Practices

• Seek to understand community characteristics and specific barriers
• Engage early and often (in advance of required public meetings)
• Use trusted and culturally relevant sources of information
• Written materials should be free of jargon and undefined acronyms
• Translation if warranted
• Listen to residents’ concerns, and answer questions.
• Demonstrate how community input was considered.
• Identify areas where lower-income Minnesotans, people of color and tribal communities may be experiencing more harm

• Change our approach and increase our work in these areas:
  • Better understand sources of pollution and risks
  • Reduce pollution, improve livability
  • Communicate and engage earlier, more often and more effectively

• Integrate environmental justice strategies into MPCA programs
Areas of concern for Environmental Justice

- At least 40% of people reported income less than 185% of the federal poverty level
- 50% or more people of color
- Federally recognized tribal areas
MPCA online screening tool

Understanding environmental justice in Minnesota

The MPCA is committed to making sure that pollution does not have a disproportionate impact on any group of people — the principle of environmental justice. This means that all people — regardless of their race, color, national origin or income — benefit from equal levels of environmental protection and have opportunities to participate in decisions that may affect their environment or health.

The MPCA considers tribal areas and census tracts with higher concentrations of low income residents and people of color as areas of increased concern for environmental justice. This screening tool allows users to identify census tracts where additional consideration or effort is warranted to ensure meaningful community engagement and to evaluate the potential for disproportionate adverse impacts using three criteria:

- At least 40% of people reported income less than 185% of the federal poverty level
- 50% or more people of color
- Federally recognized tribal areas

The data are from the US Census Bureau.

www.pca.state.mn.us/ej
• **Environmental Justice** (EJ) is the 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 EJ Screening & Mapping Tool has more categories
  
  • EJ indexes, pollution and sources, socioeconomic indicators, health disparities, climate change data, and critical service gaps.

EPA’s EJ Page  |  [https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice](https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice)
EPA’s EJ Screening & Mapping Page  |  [https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen](https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen)
Clean-up sites (dots) & EJ Areas (hashed) in Metro Area
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Focus Areas</th>
<th>USA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>Twin Cities Metro Area</td>
<td>Harrison Neighborhood/Bassett Creek Valley, Minneapolis</td>
<td>314,107,084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population¹</td>
<td>5,383,661</td>
<td>3,352</td>
<td>30,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment¹</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>4.98%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons in Poverty, percent¹</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People of Color (several categories¹)</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median HH Income¹</td>
<td>$56,544</td>
<td>$29,239</td>
<td>$36,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Capita Income¹</td>
<td>$31,008</td>
<td>$14,895</td>
<td>$20,405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children²</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female¹</td>
<td>50.3%</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school ²</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistically isolated²</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over 64 years of age²</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td># of Brownfields¹</td>
<td>6,758</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Lake Street Apartments

Site

I-35W
Lake Street Apartments

- 0.52 acre, former oil burner warehouse, manufacturing, tin shop, auto body shop, and dry cleaner
- About 7.5 ft of fill material with debris, PAHs & mercury in soil and TCE, PCE, & Freon 113 in soil vapor
- $89,835 in assessment work
- Developer worked closely with the Whittier neighborhood, the James Ballentine Uptown VFW Post 246, & the City Planning Commission Committee
- Some units set aside for homeless veterans
- Helped Standard Heating & Air Conditioning relocated to Plymouth Ave & 2nd St

Photo from Terracon’s Phase I ESA
Lake Street Apartments – Redevelopment

- Phases 1 & 2: 6-story buildings for workforce & affordable housing, 111 & 75-95 units
- Phase 3: 7-story building for 132 market rate units

*Design plan from Lupe Development
*Photo from Twin Cities Affordable Housing
- 0.06 acre, former laundry, gas station, & auto repair
- Minor lead in soil & VOCs in soil vapor below mitigation criteria
- $31,627 in assessment work
Bailey Builds/Duluth Makers Loft

- Small business, Bailey Builds, on main floor
- Airbnb, Duluth Makers Loft, on upper floor

*Photos from Bailey Builds*

Bailey Builds │ https://baileybuilds.com/
• MNTBA grant program will get a boost from the BIL, starting in autumn 2022
• EPA’s TBA program will get a boost from the BIL
• MPCA may be awarded an EPA Assessment grant this spring
• MPCA legislative request to establish a state-funded grant program for community-driven sites in EJ areas.

MPCA Legislative Priorities | https://www.pca.state.mn.us/about-mpca/legislative-priorities
Are you receiving Remediation Division email updates? Environmental Justice updates?

If not, go to the MPCA webpage, www.pca.state.mn.us, click on the Gov Delivery link in the footer, and sign up for the lists you’re interested in!

*be sure to pick the Remediation and Environmental Justice lists!
Thank you!

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EJ criteria specifics if needed
1. At least 40% of the people have a reported income of less than 185% of the federal poverty level.

   • 2022 FPL = $13,590 for 1 person (185% = $25,141.50)
   • 2022 FPL = $18,310 for 2 person family (185% = $33,873.50)
   • 2022 FPL = $23,030 for 3 person family (185% = $42,605.50)
   • 2022 FPL = $27,750 for 4 person family (185% = $51,337.50)

The federal poverty level (FPL) is set by the US Department of Health & Human Services (HHS).

Alaska and Hawai‘i have different numbers.
Criteria: People of Color

2. At least 50% of the people identify as people of color (non-white categories).

- **Black or African American** – A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.

- **American Indian or Alaska Native** – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.

- **Asian** – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander** – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

- **White** – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

*The definition of race groups used by the U.S. Census Bureau are set by the 1997 U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) standards; OMB is an office within the Executive Office of the President of the United States.*
Criteria: Tribal Areas

3. A federally recognized tribal area.
   - American Indian Reservations, federal (federal AIRs).
   - American Indian Reservations, state (state AIRs).
   - American Indian tribal subdivisions.
   - Alaska Native Regional Corporations (ANRCs)
   - Alaska Native Village Statistical Areas (ANVSAs).
   - Off-Reservation trust lands.
   - Oklahoma Tribal Statistical Areas (OSTAs).
   - State Designated Tribal Statistical Areas (SDTSAs).
   - Tribal Designated Statistical Areas (TDSAs).

A tribal area is recognized by the US government if the area falls into one of the categories listed above. These categories are published on the US Census website, on the “My Tribal Area” application/mapper.