

Fall 2015



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE UPDATE



Welcome to the fall edition of EPA Region 9's *Environmental Justice Update*. Find information about grant opportunities and EJ-relevant resources and, learn about EPA's progress in meeting selected commitments we made in our [EJ Action Plan for 2015](#). In this issue we highlight the work of our Superfund Division and the Agency for Toxic Disease Registry on the Navajo Nation. There are also many upcoming events and webinars we hope you'll find of interest. On a national note, the many [comments](#) on EPA's [Draft EJ2020 Framework](#) are now available online.

Environmental Justice Action Plan Progress Highlight

URANIUM AWARENESS TRAINING COURSE EMPOWERS OVER 90 NAVAJO COMMUNITY HEALTH REPRESENTATIVES



Abandoned uranium mines can expose Navajo Nation community members to contaminated soil, rock, and water. To protect their health, community members must learn the location of mines and contaminated water sources and ways to prevent exposure.

An interagency team developed posters featuring nine different maps showing

mines and contaminated water sources and providing exposure prevention and health information. Team members Jamie Rayman, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), Secody Hubbard, US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Dorena Benally, of the Navajo Area Indian Health Service (IHS) also created four community fact sheets to accompany the posters.

"Normally an educational poster gets posted without any public education," said Mae-Gilene Begay, Program Director of the Navajo Nation Community Health Representative / Outreach Program at the Navajo Nation Department of Health (NDOH). So, she asked ATSDR to develop a training course for more than 90 CHRs to teach them about uranium and techniques for educating community members.

The team delivered the course in Window Rock in December 2014. CHRs learned health and safety messages, warning signs of uranium exposure, and map skills to show community members the location of mines and contaminated and regulated water sources.

CHR's took the posters to 110 Navajo Chapter Houses, and IHS displayed posters in their Area Office and 30 health care facilities across the Navajo Nation. Public education won't solve the problem of abandoned uranium mines on the Navajo Nation, but now community members can learn how to protect their families and themselves.

The training team included Candis Hunter (ATSDR), Robert Knowles (ATSDR), Jennifer Lyke (ATSDR), Sona Chilingaryan (EPA), Linda Reeves (EPA), Dolores Gruber (IHS), and Anna Rondon (NDOH). Janelia Smiley (IHS) assisted with Navajo language interpretation. Amanda Pease (EPA) contributed to development of training materials.

Check out this [blog post](#) for more details.

WHITE HOUSE OPEN SCIENCE AND INNOVATION EVENT: OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE

Citizen science and crowdsourcing were the focus of an exciting event at the White House on September



Recording of White House Open Science and Innovation Event

30th. Check out the video for remarks from panelists from many disciplines lauding the benefits of citizen science and crowdsourcing. Dr. John Holdren, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, kicked off the forum and announced the release of a [Federal Citizen Science and Crowdsourcing Toolkit](#) as well as plans for a [Citizen Science Day](#) in 2016. A [memo](#) issued by Dr. Holdren articulates principles that Federal agencies should embrace to derive the greatest value and impact from citizen science and crowdsourcing projects. West Oakland's Margaret Gordon, Co-Founder and Co-Director of the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project, was one of 12 citizen science leaders honored by the White House as part of the event. In our next issue we'll highlight some of the citizen science projects EPA is supporting through our grants and technical assistance programs.

EJ AT THE HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

The Hawaii Department of Health's Environmental Planning Office (EPO) just released a draft [Environmental Justice Plan](#) for 2015-2020. EPA Region 9's EJSCREEN lead, Chuck Swanson, provided information about [EJSCREEN](#) in



a series of six training and information sessions organized by EPO for various stakeholders in Hawaii. EJSCREEN is EPA's screening tool for identifying geographic areas with potential environmental justice concerns. Contact [Chuck Swanson](#) or [Deldi Reyes](#) if you'd like a demonstration of the tool for your organization or just want to learn more.

CALIFORNIA'S AIR RESOURCES BOARD RELEASES FUNDING GUIDELINES RE CLIMATE INVESTMENTS

The Air Resources Board ARB announces the release of the Revised Draft Cap-and-Trade Auction Proceeds: Funding Guidelines for Agencies that Administer California Climate Investments. These [Funding Guidelines](#) (also available in Spanish) consist of three volumes focused on: accountability and transparency; maximizing benefits to disadvantaged communities; and reporting to document greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions, co-benefits, and other project outcomes.

OCTOBER IS CHILDREN'S HEALTH MONTH - UPCOMING EVENTS

WEBINAR: Racism and Its Impact on Children's Health

Recent research paints a stark picture of the impact of racial discrimination on children's health. Join the American Public Health Association and the American Academy of

Pediatrics for a webinar on **October 13**, 2015, from 10am - 11am PST. Topics include racism as an adverse childhood event and a cause of toxic stress, and the role of racial socialization in helping children learn to navigate race issues. Register [here](#).

WEBINAR: Asthma, Climate Change, and Health

This webinar, for all health and social service providers, will discuss climate change in general terms and provide take-home messages that can be shared with vulnerable populations. It will also teach about indoor environmental health and asthma triggers, such as mold and pests, as well as how to identify and minimize these exposures. The webinar will be held on **October 19**, 2015, from 9am - 1030am PST. Register [here](#). Speakers include Dr. Ruth Etzel, MD, PhD., Director, Office of Children's Health Protection, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Nancy De Leon Link, MGA, Chief Operating Officer, National Nursing Centers Consortium; and Shawana Mitchell, HHS, Environmental Health and Safety Programs Coordinator, National Nursing Centers Consortium.

OTHER EVENTS

Webinar for Communities on EPA's Refinery Rule

Learn more about EPA's [Final Petroleum Refinery Sector Risk and Technology Review and New Source Performance Standards](#), issued on September 29, during a webinar on **October 14**, 2015, from 11am-12 pm PST. When implemented, this rule will reduce visible flare emissions and upset emission events, and for the first time require refineries to monitor emissions at key emission sources within their facilities and around their fence lines. Email [Virginia Hunt](#) or call 919-541-0832 to register.

Check out the [Security and Sustainability Forum](#), which is co-hosting three important webinars in October focusing on food security, urban resilience and global climate security. Each session convenes global experts to examine the impacts and address solutions. The next session, *Food System Resilience in an Era of Globalization and Environmental Change* is set for **October 19**, 2015.

Conference Call Re Tribal Treaty Rights

EPA's Office of Environmental Justice invites indigenous peoples to participate in a discussion on the draft EPA Policy on Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribes: [DRAFT Guidance for Discussing Tribal Treaty Rights](#). Call information: 1 866-299-3188, access code 202-564-2576. The call will be held **October 22**, 10am - 11am PST.

[Register](#) for *Equity Summit 2015*, to be held **October 27-29th**, in Los Angeles, Calif. Registration closes on the 9th.

[Register](#) for the [2015 Environmental Health Leadership Summit](#) on **November 21**, 2015, in Brawley, Calif.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Cal/EPA Doubles Funding to \$1 Million in Support of Vulnerable Communities

The California Environmental Protection Agency is now accepting applications from eligible community-based nonprofit groups and federally recognized tribal governments to support environmental justice-related projects across California. More than \$1 million is available from the Environmental Justice Small Grants Program, double last year's \$500,000 in funding and up from \$250,000 in 2013. Projects selected will address a variety of environmental and public health objectives, including education on the health and safety of pesticide use, reducing diesel emissions, ensuring safe drinking water, and participation in the environmental decision-making processes at the state and local levels. This year, the program adds a new funding category for projects that address climate change and its impacts. **Applications must be received by 4:00 pm PST on Friday, January 22, 2016.** For details, please visit CalEPA's Environmental Justice [website](#), email Malinda.Dumisani@calepa.ca.gov, or call (916) 445-9480.

U.S.EPA's [Urban Waters](#) program has announced a [Request for Proposals](#) from eligible applicants for projects that will advance EPA's water quality and environmental justice goals. Proposed projects will address urban runoff pollution through diverse partnerships that produce multiple community benefits, with emphasis on underserved communities. Proposed project activities must take place entirely within one of the Eligible Geographic Areas, as illustrated on the [interactive map](#). **Proposals are due by November 20, 2015.**

U.S. EPA's Office of Environmental Justice plans to release a request for proposals for the [EJ Collaborative Problem Solving](#) Program very soon. [Register](#) for a **webinar on October 15, from 1:30 pm to 3 pm PST** to hear how two recent grantees, *Diane Takvorian*, Executive Director of the Environmental Health Coalition and *Tommy Rock*, Executive Director of Tolani Lake Enterprises on the Navajo Reservation, have used their grants to address EJ challenges in their communities.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

EPA Region 9's [Brownfields program](#) provides free contractor assistance to assess brownfields sites for the presence of contamination and to develop cleanup plans, if needed. The sites must be a priority for the local government for redevelopment and may be publicly or privately owned. EPA's [brochure](#) explains the program. To request assistance, complete EPA's two-page [online application](#). Recent examples include the assessment of a site for a new school for an early childhood development non profit in East Palo Alto, the assessment of a site in Fresno for a community garden, and assessment of a site for reuse as a commercial redevelopment project for the Gila River Indian Community, a federally recognized tribe. For more information contact [Nova Blazej](#) at (415-972-3846).

EPA's [Office of Sustainable Communities](#) offers free smart growth assistance through their grantee, [Smart Growth America](#), as part of their Building Blocks for Sustainable

Communities program. Now in its fifth year, this free technical assistance program has helped more than 50 communities grow in ways that benefit residents and businesses while protecting the environment and preserving a sense of place. Applications are now open for a limited number of free technical assistance workshops. Learn about available workshops, how to apply and access the form [here](#). **Applications are due by October 21, 2015, at 2:00 PM PST.**

GRANTEES IN THE NEWS

EPA just announced nearly \$1.2 million in competitive grants to 40 non-profit and tribal organizations nationwide working to address environmental justice issues. Here in Region 9, this includes four grants in the amount of \$30,000 each. The **Sonora Environmental Research Institute** will assist low-income families in Tucson and South Tucson with the installation of rainwater harvesting systems through a revolving loan fund. **Clinica de Salud del Valle de Salinas** will focus on pesticide safety education informed by the insights gained from the [CHAMACOS Study](#), a longitudinal birth cohort study examining chemicals and other factors in the environment and children's health. The **Central California Environmental Justice Network** will help San Joaquin Valley community leaders build capacity by facilitating their participation in open-access regulatory trainings held by state agencies, working on community monitoring and conducting three citizen-science events. The **Community Water Center** will work with rural, low-income, unincorporated communities of color in Tulare, Kern, Kings and Fresno Counties to enable community members to collaborate with other partners (agencies and organizations) to secure safe and affordable drinking water.

Congratulations to the **Arizona Department of Health Services**. They were one of seven recipients of grant funding from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) under their [Brownfield/Land Reuse Health Initiative](#). This program focuses on protecting human health during the expansion, redevelopment, and reuse of brownfield sites.

The focus of the Arizona project is to directly improve the health of Arizonans by reducing environmental exposures to toxic substances while increasing access to healthcare and fresh fruits and vegetables in the most economically challenged, unhealthy, and underserved areas.

OPPORTUNITIES TO COMMENT

EPA Civil Rights External Compliance (Title VI) Strategic Plan, Due October 13, 2015

EPA's Office of Civil Rights has released the draft [External Compliance and Complaints Program Strategic Plan for FY 2015-2020](#). Learn more and find versions of the Plan in other languages at the [OCR website](#).

EPA seeking input on National Enforcement Initiatives, Due October 14, 2015

EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) recently released a

notice in the [Federal Register](#) seeking comment on FY 2017-2019 National Enforcement Initiatives (NEI).

The NEIs serve to focus EPA's civil and criminal enforcement resources and expertise on the most serious pollution problems affecting communities. Learn more [here](#).

Federal Interagency Working Group (IWG) on EJ, Due October 19, 2015

The [EJIWG](#) wants to hear from you about its draft FY2016-2018 Action Agenda Framework. The [Framework](#) is the EJ IWG's three-year strategic plan to advance greater Federal agency collaboration to support holistic community-based solutions to address environmental justice issues in environmental protection, housing, transportation, economic development, energy policy, natural and cultural resource management and health disparities. [Register](#) for a webinar on October 13, 2015, from 11am - 12 pm PST to learn more about the framework. If you need a reasonable accommodation, contact [Kevin Olp](#). Materials will be shared in advance.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FELLOWSHIP

The [Presidential Management Fellows \(PMF\) Program](#) seeks eligible individuals for selection as Finalists to obtain appointments as Fellows in the Federal Government. PMFs are assigned to work in a broad range of areas including public policy and administration, domestic and international issues, information technology, acquisition, human resources, engineering, health and medical sciences, financial management, and many other fields in support of public service programs. This year, the PMF Program continues the STEM track pilot for those applicants having specific advanced degrees in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM). Learn more about the PMF Program [here](#). **Closes October 13, 2015.**

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