



Maryland
Department of
the Environment

Office of Environmental Justice



The EJ Team's Mission

Clean Air, Land and Water for all Marylanders.





ENVIRONMENTAL BURDENS

Biological Vulnerable Populations include: Susceptible populations, Pregnant individuals, Children and the Elderly

- Children are physiologically more vulnerable because they breathe more air and drink more water per pound of body weight than adults

Exposure Vulnerability

- Inhalation, Ingestion, or Direct contact



ENVIRONMENTAL BURDEN (AIR)

- Poor Air Quality
 - Exposure to fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$)
 - They are so small, they can bypass the body's natural filters, travel deep into the lungs, and even enter the bloodstream (i.e. car exhausts, fires, driving on an unpaved road)
 - Urban Heat Island effect
 - Urban heat islands are associated with the built environment conditions that cause cities to warm at a greater rate than surrounding regions



ENVIRONMENTAL BURDEN (AIR)

- Developmental Delays
 - Low Birth weights
- Respiratory Distress
 - Asthma
- Heart Issues
- Irritability



ENVIRONMENTAL BURDENS (WATER)

- Lead typically enters drinking water through the corrosion of plumbing materials and lead-based solder.
- Many older homes and buildings, particularly in low-income communities and communities of color, still have this aging infrastructure.
 - Lead exposure is linked to lower IQ and behavioral disruptions
 - Pose severe neurodevelopmental risks to infants.



Meet the Team



Assistant
Secretary for
Environmental
Justice Aneca
Atkinson



Katie Walker
Executive
Assistant



Noble Smith,
ARA
Environmental
Justice
Coordinator



Alex Lima,
Civic, Community
& Public
Engagement
Coordinator
WSA Liaison



Ardenia Holland,
Civic, Community
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Engagement
Coordinator
LMA Liaison



Nevan Edwards,
Environmental
Justice
Coordinator
ARA Liaison



Key Goals and Initiatives

- Ensuring that communities of every culture, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background receive fair protection from environmental and health hazards, as well as equal access to decision-making processes for environmental policies by building relationships and equipping them with the tools and knowledge to effectively participate.
- [Appointed](#) an Assistant Secretary for Environmental Justice in the Office of the Secretary with a staff responsible for environmental justice community awareness, engagement and advocacy;
- We staff the CEJSC commission. CEJSC is a twenty member body that is tasked with advising State government on environmental justice and analyzing the effectiveness of State and local government laws and policies to address issues of environmental justice and sustainable communities.
- Wes Moore signed an [executive order](#) called VOICE (Valuing Opportunity Inclusion Community and Equity) to foster a whole-of-government approach and advance engagement with communities;
- MDE aggressively enforces permits for industry in communities, resulting in one of the largest environmental [fines](#) in history against an incineration plant in Curtis Bay and collaborates with the community on a new [permit](#) in order to maximize construction requirements in order to minimize pollution exposure.

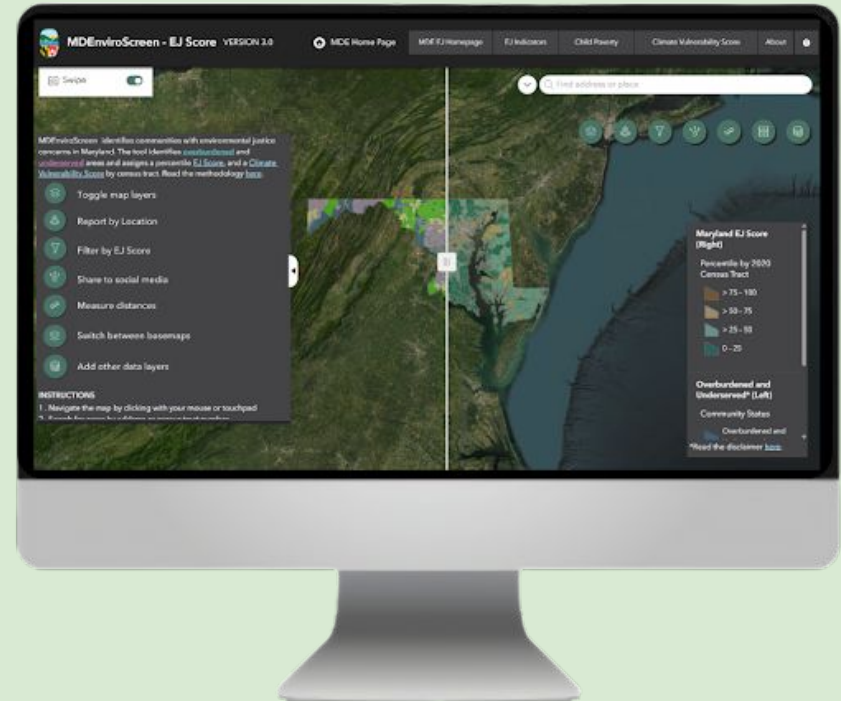


MDEnviroScreen

MDEnviroScreen is a tool that uses 21 indicators to track the amount of pollution a community may be experiencing, and includes several features to identify those experiencing environmental justice concerns.

The tool's primary objectives are to:

1. Identify and address EJ concerns in decision-making processes.
2. Foster transparency and public engagement by including EJ Scores on environmental permit applications.
3. Support climate resilience efforts by integrating vulnerability data to address emerging challenges.





Connect with us

For general questions about environment justice, requesting a listening session, and other topics, please email us.

ej.mde@maryland.gov

Sign up for MDE Environmental Justice Updates

Your Voice Matters

At The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) we believe that community members are experts in where they live, and we want to use that local expertise to assist in the Agency's decision making process. We know that input from local leaders and residents is the most effective method of collaboration to ensure inclusivity in State efforts to ensure Maryland's environment is healthy for all. By being involved, you will be one of the first to know about MDE initiatives and outreach tools!

We're Here to Help!

MDE collects and distributes information and provides assistance across a range of environmental justice issues. The MDE website helps the community stay abreast of the information about the agency's community engagement, resources including various screening tools, information about the Commission on Environmental Justice, as well as contact information for staff and for reporting emergencies and seeking assistance. To access this information click [here](#).

Please use this form to sign up to receive Environmental Justice related updates from MDE, including initiatives such as listening sessions, webinars and funding opportunities.

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