

What is it?

Monday, April 4th, 2022

Environmental justice seeks to involve all people in the creation and application of laws, regulations, and policies that cause or protect against hazards like air pollution, lead exposure, or poor-quality water.

Why is it important?

Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) are more likely to live in neighborhoods impacted by climate change and environmental hazards. Structural racism has impacted where BIPOC populations can live. For example, due to the city's industrial past and racist policies such as redlining, BIPOC populations live in neighborhoods at greater risk for childhood lead poisoning. In children under age 6, 1 in 5 have unsafe levels of lead in their blood. Such exposures lead to poor health conditions such as higher rates of asthma, heart disease, and early death.

What you can do

- Learn how structural racism and discrimination impact our environment
- Hold your representatives accountable. Contact your local community and public officials about environmental justice.
- Environmental hazards impact health. Ask your patients questions about their physical environment and potential hazards.

Learn more

- Healthy People 2020: Environmental Health
- Toxic City
- City of Philadelphia Environmental Justice Advisory Commission
- Environmental Justice and Health Equity
- Hear a story from Penn Medicine faculty, staff or students related to this topic (begin listening at 6:24)

[Click here to learn more and see the full schedule of HEW events!](#)