

Environmental Justice Map Tool

Threshold Criteria and Suggested Actions

Overview and Purpose

The following information is part of Ecology's internal map tool that was recently made available to staff. This information accompanies Ecology's environmental justice presentation for the Stakeholder Tribal Advisory Group (STAG) meeting no. 4 on March 5, 2020. The information was also discussed during the webinar preview for STAG on February 25, 2020.

Demographic criteria called "threshold information" help Toxics Cleanup Program site managers and staff determine if a site may be located in a highly impacted community. Suggested actions for each criteria are practical activities staff can do when working in those communities.

If you have questions about this list, please contact Scott O'Dowd, Policy EJ Lead, Toxics Cleanup Program, 360-407-7195, sodo461@ecy.wa.gov.

Threshold Information

Demographic criteria exceed the 80th percentile of Washington state when the following percentages are exceeded for a block group:

- People of color: > 43.9%
- Income less than 200% of poverty line: > 47%
- Under 5 years of age: > 8.9%
- Over 64 years of age: > 21.1%
- Education less than high school: >15%

Demographic thresholds targeting other criteria per block group:

- Speak English "less than very well": > 5% OR > 1000 total people in block group

Suggested Actions

Less than a High School Education

- Consider holding more in-person or face-to-face meetings, particularly if the site involves technical materials that might be hard to explain in plain talk in written documents.

- Include graphics such as figures and maps in your presentation materials.

Below 200% of the poverty line

- Schedule meeting times outside of normal working hours or on weekends to accommodate people who have limited flexibility or work multiple jobs (e.g., hospitality or food service workers).
- Hold more than one public meeting, ideally on different days and times to accommodate people who have irregular schedules.
- Coordinate with groups that provide support services, such as churches, clinics, food kitchens, or other local charities.

People of color

- Seek advice from and actively involve local community or advocacy groups to ensure that historically underrepresented voices are heard.

Less than 5 years old

- Share this knowledge with the potentially liable party (PLP) or Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) customer.
- Acknowledge greater risk from direct contact and consider advocating remedies that cut off that pathway completely.
- Notify local childcare centers and schools of site activities for emergency planning purposes.

Over 64 years old

- Share this knowledge with the PLP, require emergency planning at site to include potential notification and evacuation of mobility limited seniors.
- Print versions of your site materials in large-type fonts.
- Ensure that audio-visual accommodations are available at your meetings.
- Hold meetings during daylight hours.

Lack of English proficiency

- Perform outreach or hold public meetings with aid of a translator.
- Translate documents for site into the languages spoken by people in the block group.