



# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

A Social Determinant to Community Health and Wellness

# ?WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

- EPA : Environmental justice 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
- Helga Garza : “The Right to Know, the Right to Act” WE SPEAK FOR OURSELVES
- Benjamin Chavis : “Environmental justice is racial discrimination in environmental policy making and the enforcement of regulations and laws, the deliberate targeting of people of color communities for toxic waste facilities, the official sanctioning of the threatening presence of poisons and pollutants in our communities, and the history of excluding people of color from the leadership of the environmental movement.” Ben Chavis is credited with creating the term “Environmental Racism”

# ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

- Environmental racism refers to socially marginalized racial minority communities which are subjected to disproportionate exposure of pollutants, the denial of access to sources of ecological benefits (such as clean air, water, and natural resources), or both
- Trump's EPA : A new report finds that people of color are much more likely to live near polluters and breathe polluted air—even as the agency seeks to roll back regulations on pollution. The study finds that people in poverty are exposed to more fine particulate matter than people living above poverty, “results at national, state, and county scales all indicate that non-Whites tend to be burdened disproportionately to Whites.”
- South Valley : 81% Latino/Hispanic, poorest census tract in BernCo (30% below poverty line; \$20,780 for a family of three) → 5 bulk fuel terminals; 2 superfund sites; 30 EPA regulated sites; 84 facilities that emit pollutants

# ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTANTS

- Emmitants : carbon monoxide; nitro oxides; sulfur dioxide; gasoline/diesel/oil fumes; polychlorinated biphenyls; trichloroethylene; benzene, methane, ethane; various particulate matter ( also known as particle pollution, is a complex mixture of extremely small particles and liquid droplets that get into the air. Once inhaled, these particles can affect the heart and lungs and cause serious health effects)
- Ground contaminants: nitrates/nitrites; creosote; oil; dioxins; heavy metals; pesticides; fertilizers; nitrobenzene; dinitrotoulene; volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
- Water contaminants: nitrates/nitrites; fuel; fertilizers; pesticides; human/animal waste; polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs); pharmaceutical waste

# CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- Environmental Racism
- Classism
- Redlining
- Zoning (laws, regulations, enforcement, etc.) Mountain View is Zoned M-1 and M-2
- Lack of political representation
- Lack of political accountability
- Lack of notice for upcoming air quality permits (no system in place to notify all potentially impacted community members)
- Regulating/Approval entities (Abq. Air Quality Control Board; Air Quality program; Environmental Health Dept.) do not use cumulative impact models when approving, administering, or enforcing air quality regulations

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS IMPACTS

- Less time outside (Active Living)
- Well water contaminated by nitrates
  - Blue Baby Syndrome (Methemoglobinemia : the excess production of methemoglobin, a type of hemoglobin, that carries oxygen throughout the cells of the body without releasing the oxygen; internal suffocation)
- High rates of asthma
- High rates of respiratory illnesses/conditions other than asthma
- High cancer rates
- 10% of all statewide cases of hepatitis, shigella, and salmonella occur in the South Valley based on .03% of total state population

# THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

- New Mexico Transloading/FKA GandyDancer, located across the street from Mountain View Elementary School; ramped up capacity starting winter 2014
- Pre-Construction site preparation for second industrial park/transloading facility in Mountain View
- Widening of Rio Bravo and Rio Bravo freeway exit/entrance
- CABQ economic development : utilizing foreign trade zone (FTZ); railways; and current zoning without considering the human cost; the city has in the past and currently sends polluting businesses to the South Valley adding additional environmental stressors on a community that is already overburdened.

# COMMUNITY VICTORIES

- Majority of the Mountain View community is connected to city water and sewer
- Dump transfer station not located next to Mountain View Community Center
- Waste treatment facility no longer stores chlorine on site and utilizes an ultra-violet disinfection system
  - Impact zone, aka kill zone, of chlorine explosion had a 5 mile radius
- Construction on enclosing waste treatment facility is in process
- The founding of Valle de Oro
- Legislation: Presidential Executive Order 12898 (Clinton); Gubernatorial Executive Order 2005-056 (Richardson)



# MAP OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

- <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Valle+de+Oro+National+Wildlife+Refuge/@34.9818102,-106.6697927,808m/data=!3m2!1e3!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x87220e57ffbd7d7f:0x1e5c17ce23ad32bc!8m2!3d34.9818058!4d-106.667604>