

Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ)



# Environmental Justice Fact Sheet

**ESTABLISHING AN INFRASTRUCTURE.** *In 1992, EPA created the Office of Environmental Justice to coordinate the Agency's effort to address environmental justice issues. Since that time the Administrator has made environmental justice one of the agency's top priorities and has "... embarked on a mission to develop a new system of environmental protection: one that builds on the strengths of the past 25 years but overcomes the deficiencies of the past; one that works community by community to prevent pollution, rather than wait to clean it up after the fact." To do this EPA created a strong infrastructure to integrate environmental justice into EPA's policies, programs and activities. As a first step each region and headquarters office was asked to appoint an Environmental Justice Coordinator (see attached list of EJ Contacts) to serve as front-line staff specifically responsible for ensuring that environmental justice is included in policy input, program development, and implementation; the Policy Working Group, a group of high level policy staff, was formed to ensure that cross-media policy development and coordination occurs at all levels; and the Executive Steering Committee, senior managers at EPA, was established to provide leadership and direction on strategic planning to ensure that environmental justice is incorporated into Agency operations. A list of Environmental Justice Coordinators is on the reverse side of this fact sheet.*

**EXECUTIVE ORDER 12898 "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations"** was signed February 11, 1994, to focus federal attention on the environmental and human health conditions of minority populations and low-income populations with the goal of achieving environmental protection for all communities. The Order directed federal agencies to develop environmental justice strategies. The Order established an Interagency Working Group (IWG) chaired by EPA and comprised of the heads of eleven departments/agencies and

*several White House offices. These include the EPA, the Departments of Justice, Defense, Energy, Labor, Interior, Transportation, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Commerce, and Health and Human Services, the Council on Environmental Quality, the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the Domestic Policy Council, and the Council of Economic Advisors. Strategic plans may be obtained by calling 202-564-2515 or 1-800-962-6215.*

**OBTAINING STAKEHOLDER ADVICE.** *To ensure that the Agency receives significant input from affected stakeholders, the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC), a Federal Advisory Committee, was established. The NEJAC is comprised of 25 members and seven sub-committees with 5-10 additional members each, all appointed from key environmental justice constituencies. The purpose of this group is to provide consensus advice on a variety of documents, which include the Agency's environmental justice agenda, the Environmental Justice Strategic Plan, the Environmental Justice Annual Report, and other Agency materials. The NEJAC meets 2-3 times a year throughout the country to receive comments from local citizens and community groups on the state of the environment in local areas.*

**INTERNS.** *For the past six years, EPA has sponsored a summer intern program with the express desire to encourage students to pursue an environmental career. The EPA Partnership with the Environmental Careers Organization continues to flourish with more than 300 students being placed since January 1997, making a total of approximately 1,000 trainees and more than \$9 million dedicated to their training since January 1992. At least 40 percent of the trainees are students at minority academic institutes of higher education. The program benefits both the student and EPA. The student gets to spend up to 6 months working full time at an EPA laboratory, regional office, or in a headquarters program while the EPA*

*Sponsor gets the benefit of the student's skill and eagerness for a nominal investment on the average of \$12,000 extramural dollars per trainee-ship. The Cooperative Agreement is managed by Linda Smith (Project Officer) and Renee Goins (Program Coordinator) of the Office of Environmental Justice. For more information, call 202-564-2515 or 1-800-962-6215. Students must be registered at a university to participate.*

**COMMUNITY GRANTS.** *Two grant programs assist communities and tribal governments in addressing local environmental concerns. The EJ Small Grants Program was established in 1993 to assist community-based/grassroots organizations and tribal governments working on local solutions to local environmental problems. In FY 94, the Office took \$500,000 from its then quite small budget and started the Small Grants program. In Fiscal Years 1995, 1996 and 1997 the program was supported by additional funding additions and was increased to \$3 million with individual awards of up to \$20,000 each. More than 500 grants have been awarded to date. Since many communities did not have the expertise to address some of the more technical problems in their neighborhoods, the Program was expanded in 1995 to include a Community-University Partnership component. This Program is designed to help community groups address local environmental justice issues through active partnerships with institutions of higher education, including community colleges. The uniqueness of this program is the requirement that the University/Community College must have a formal partnership with one or more local communities in order to qualify for an award of up to \$300,000. To date 27 awards have been made.*

## REGIONAL COORDINATORS

### **Region 1** (ME, VT, NH, MA, CN, RI)

Jerry Ellis  
One Congress Street  
Boston, MA 02203  
Phone: 617/565-9454  
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### **Region 2** (NY, NJ, PR, VI)

290 Broadway, 26th Floor  
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Melva Hayden  
Phone: 212/637-5027  
Fax: 212/637-5024

### **Region 3** (MD, DE, WV, VA, PA, DC)

Reginald Harris  
841 Chestnut Building

Philadelphia, PA 19107

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Fax: 215/566-2901

### **Region 4** (AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)

Connie Raines  
61 Forsyth Street  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
Phone: 404/562-9671  
Fax: 404/562-9664

### **Region 5** (IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)

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Phone: 312/886-5993  
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### **Region 6** (AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)

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Phone: 214/665-7401  
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### **Region 7** (IA, KS, MO, NB)

Althea Moses  
726 Minnesota Ave  
Kansas City, KS 66101  
Phone: 913/551-7649 or 1-800-223-0425  
Fax: 913/551-7976

### **Region 8** (CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY)

Elisabeth Evans  
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### **Region 9** (CA, AZ, HI, NV, GM, AS)

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**EJ Information Line:** 415/744-1565

### **Region 10** (AK, ID, OR, WA)

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