



At a Glance

Catalyst for Improving the Environment

Why We Did This Review

On October 27, 2009, 16 allegations involving environmental justice issues were brought to the attention of the Acting Regional Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 4, Atlanta, Georgia, with a request that the Office of Inspector General (OIG) investigate these matters.

Background

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson has made environmental justice one of her top seven priorities and has created an office to promote environmental justice for affected groups and communities throughout the United States. 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.

For further information, contact our Office of Congressional, Public Affairs and Management at (202) 566-2391.

To view the full report, click on the following link:
www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2010/20100614-10-N-0145.pdf

Investigation of Allegations Concerning Environmental Justice Issues in EPA Region 4

What We Found

The OIG's Office of Investigations undertook a detailed review of the allegations to determine whether the OIG had investigative jurisdiction in terms of EPA contracts, assistance agreements, programs, or personnel involvement. Using these criteria, we determined that five allegations merited further investigative review. Our further investigative review of the five allegations disclosed no evidence that EPA contracts, assistance agreements, or programs were involved, or that an EPA employee committed any actionable offense(s). In instances in which we determined that applicable violations were outside of the OIG's jurisdiction, we made a professional referral to the appropriate investigative entity. In addition, some of the programmatic issues raised may merit further review and have been forwarded to the OIG's Office of Program Evaluation.

Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions To Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, directs federal agencies to make achieving environmental justice part of its mission to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law. The Executive Order states that it is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, nor does it create any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person. Consequently there are no enforcement provisions for environmental justice guidelines.