

MAPS AND AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Maps and aerial photographs are visual aids that help people understand the complexities of contamination and operable units and their proximity and the risks they pose to the public. Maps and aerial photographs can be used: in public notices, notifications for discovery of contamination, fact sheets, and final decision documents; at workshops, public meetings, public hearings, and public availability sessions; during poster sessions; and on social media and webpages. It is easier to communicate complex issues effectively with the benefit of these visual aids.

EPA's RCRA public participation guidelines for the use of maps and aerial photography are discussed briefly in Chapter 5 of the [2016 Edition of the RCRA Public Participation Manual](#).

Required activity?

No.

Making it Work

When to Use

Maps and aerial photographs can be used to:

- Help explain where a response action or operable unit will be occurring relative to the site;
- Indicate where residences, schools, playgrounds, and hospitals are located;
- Show how many citizens may be at risk;
- Display current contamination and predict paths of migration;
- Illustrate environmental receptors and natural resource damages;
- Show groundwater and surface water contamination relative to the area's watershed;
- Plan where to conduct interviews or determine whom to include on a **Mailing List**;
- Help predict community concern about a site by locating nearby schools, residences, bodies of water, and farmland;
- Enhance your own understanding of a citizen's relation to the site during interviews; and
- Guide citizens to the areas to visit and the areas to avoid during a site tour.

How to Use

Determine whether maps or aerial photographs (or both) are best suited for your needs. When choosing aerial photographs, determine the scale most appropriate for each activity. Ask the site Remedial Project Manager (RPM) or On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) for the most complete and up-to-date aerial photographs available and see if they can be provided in electronic format. When choosing maps, determine the type of map (e.g., satellite imagery or streetscape) and scale most appropriate for each activity. Consult the site RPM or OSC for applicable site information that you may want to include on the map. Also ask them if they have complete and up-to-date maps available. If so, ask them to provide them to you in electronic format. If not, consider using the following online mapping tools to display the information you want to present to the public:

<https://www.epa.gov/rcra>

Cleanups in My Community

Cleanups in My Community (CIMC) enables you to map RCRA hazardous waste corrective action sites and obtain information for those actions regarding: impaired waters; water monitoring stations; air pollution areas; toxic release inventory locations; congressional districts; and tribal areas. Cleanups in My Community can be found online at:

<https://www.epa.gov/cleanups/cleanups-my-community>.

EJSCREEN

EJSCREEN is an environmental justice screening tool that EPA uses to highlight places that may warrant further review, analysis, or outreach for environmental justice concerns. The EJSCREEN tool offers a variety of powerful mapping capabilities that make it easy for users to access environmental and demographic information. EJSCREEN can help agencies identify areas with potential environmental justice concerns by showing demographics and information on a variety of environmental factors that contribute to a community's environmental burden. EJSCREEN can be found online at: <https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>.

EPA's GeoPlatform

The EPA GeoPlatform is a shared, One EPA technology and governance framework that encompasses a community of expertise as well as a suite of geospatial tools, data, and services that will help coordinate and consolidate mapping activities, applications development, and data management across the Agency. It is available to every EPA employee as a foundation for all of the agency's geospatial applications. EPA GeoPlatform enables users to create customized maps with various environmental data layers to support EPA's community-based work.

Information about additional mapping tools can be found at: <https://www.epa.gov/geospatial/epa-geospatial-applications>

Tips

- Use the right type and scale of map for the job. For presentations, ensure that the map is large enough to be read by people in the back of the room.
- Label all areas (e.g., operable units, buildings, plume, or debris) that you will be referring to during your presentation. Include clearly labeled off-site reference points.