

EPA Region 10 and Environmental Justice



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Children's Environmental Health Working Group Presentation: November 14, 2013

EPA Region 10



Spanning:

Washington
Oregon
Idaho
Alaska

EPA Region 10

*Also: 271 Federally Recognized Tribes
(vs. 562 recognized nationally)*

EPA Region 10

650 employees in –

- Seattle (520)
- Operations and field offices in each state
 - 46 in WA: Lacey, Manchester Lab, Richland, Prosser
 - 36 in AK: Anchorage, Juneau, Kenai
 - 24 in ID: Boise, Coeur d'Alene, Pocatello
 - 24 in OR: Portland, Eugene, La Grande



EPA Region 10

FY13 budget: \$415 M

FY11: \$509 M

(60% = grants to states, tribes, other entities)

EPA Mission

The mission of EPA is to protect human health and the environment.

EPA Mission

The [EPA] shall give primary attention to those releases which the [EPA] deems may present a public health threat.

- 42 U.S.C. § 9604(a)(1)

Environmental Justice

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, regs, and policies.

Environmental Justice

Fair Treatment: no group of people should bear a **disproportionate burden** of environmental harms and risk.

“Fair Treatment”



Environmental Justice

Meaningful Involvement: community members have appropriate **opportunity** to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that could affect their environment or health.

“Meaningful Involvement”



South 6th Street Mercury Release: Fact Sheet for Residents

May 2007

Mercury release in South 6th Street

In mid-April the City of Yakima Fire Department learned that mercury had been spilled in the 1000 block of South 6th Street. Mercury was found in two homes and one boy was hospitalized with mercury poisoning. The Washington State Department of Ecology (WDOE) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) were called in to clean up the spill. The contaminated areas outside the homes have been identified and the cleanup will be finished very soon.

If you live in the South 6th Street area, you should be aware of the symptoms of mercury poisoning. If you think you have been exposed or have any additional questions, call the Yakima Health Department's Environmental Health help desk (509) 249-6508.

Symptoms of mercury poisoning

Mercury can cause health problems when it comes into contact with the skin or when it is breathed as a vapor and absorbed through the lungs. Exposure can occur when mercury is spilled or when products that contain mercury break and release mercury to the air, particularly in warm or poorly-ventilated indoor spaces.



Derrame de mercurio en la Calle South 6th Street: Boletín Informativo

Mayo 2007

Derrame de mercurio en la Calle South 6th Street

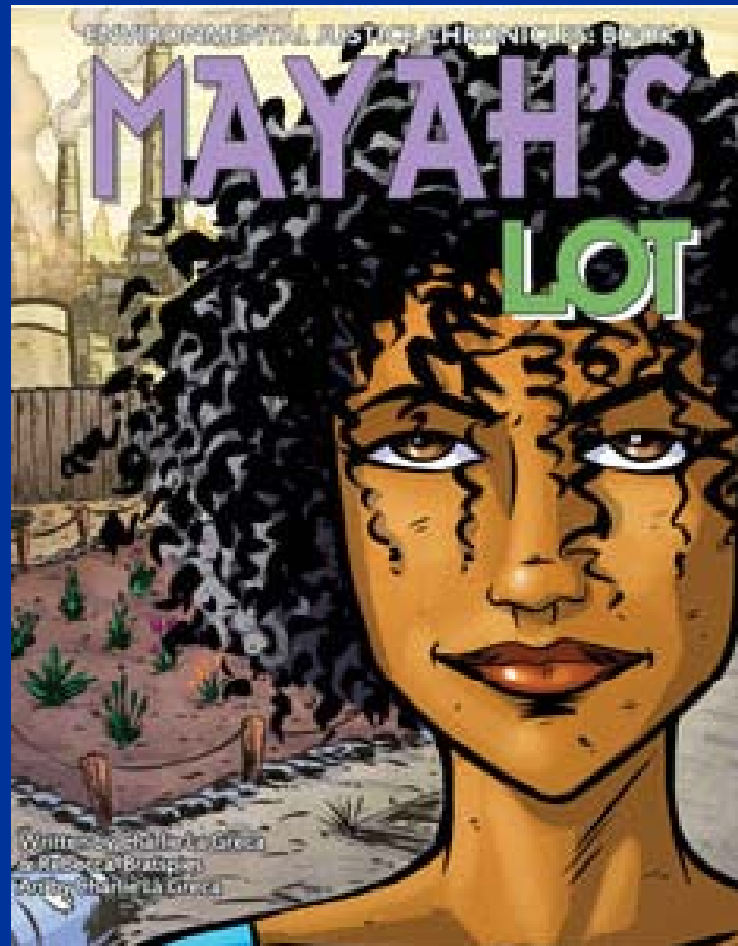
En abril del 2007, el departamento de bomberos de la ciudad de Yakima se enteró de que hubo un derrame de mercurio en el bloque 1000 de South 6th Street. Encontraron mercurio en dos casas y un niño fue hospitalizado con envenenamiento de mercurio. El Departamento de Ecología del Estado de Washington y la Agencia de Protección del Ambiente de los Estados Unidos fueron llamados para limpiar la contaminación del derrame de mercurio. Las áreas contaminadas fuera de los hogares han sido identificadas y la limpieza de la contaminación se terminará pronto.

Si usted vive en el área de la Calle South 6th Street, usted necesita enterarse de los síntomas de envenenamiento por mercurio. Si usted piensa que ha sido expuesto a mercurio o tiene preguntas, llame al Departamento de Salud de Yakima al teléfono (509) 249-6508.

Síntomas de envenenamiento por mercurio

El mercurio puede causar problemas de salud en contacto con la piel o los vapores son respirados y absorbidos por los pulmones. La exposición ocurre cuando el mercurio o productos que contienen mercurio se derraman y descargan el vapor al aire, particularmente en espacios sin ventilación.

“Meaningful Involvement”



“Meaningful Involvement”

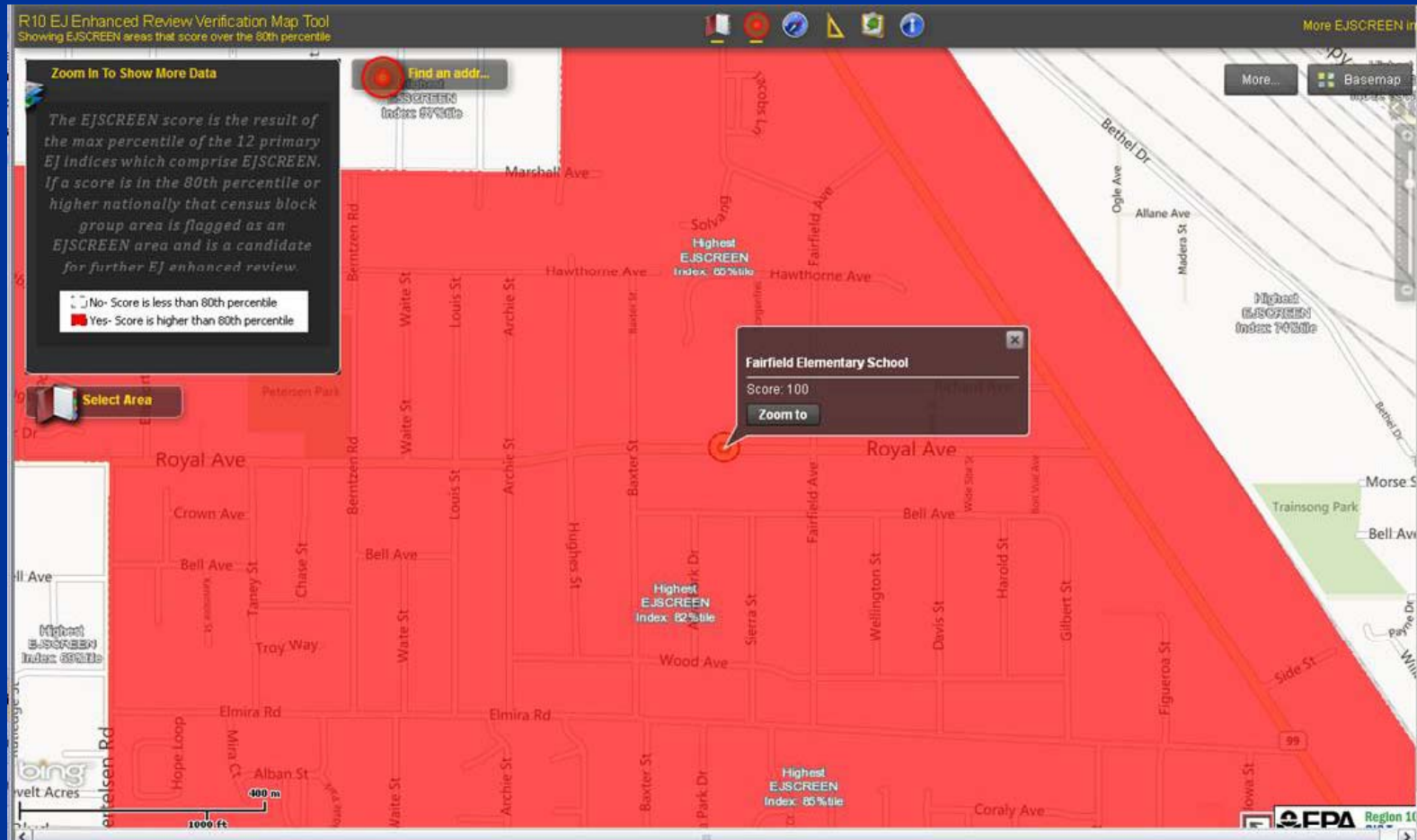


“EJ Concern”?

“the actual or potential lack of fair treatment or meaningful involvement of minority, low-income, or indigenous populations, or tribes, in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”

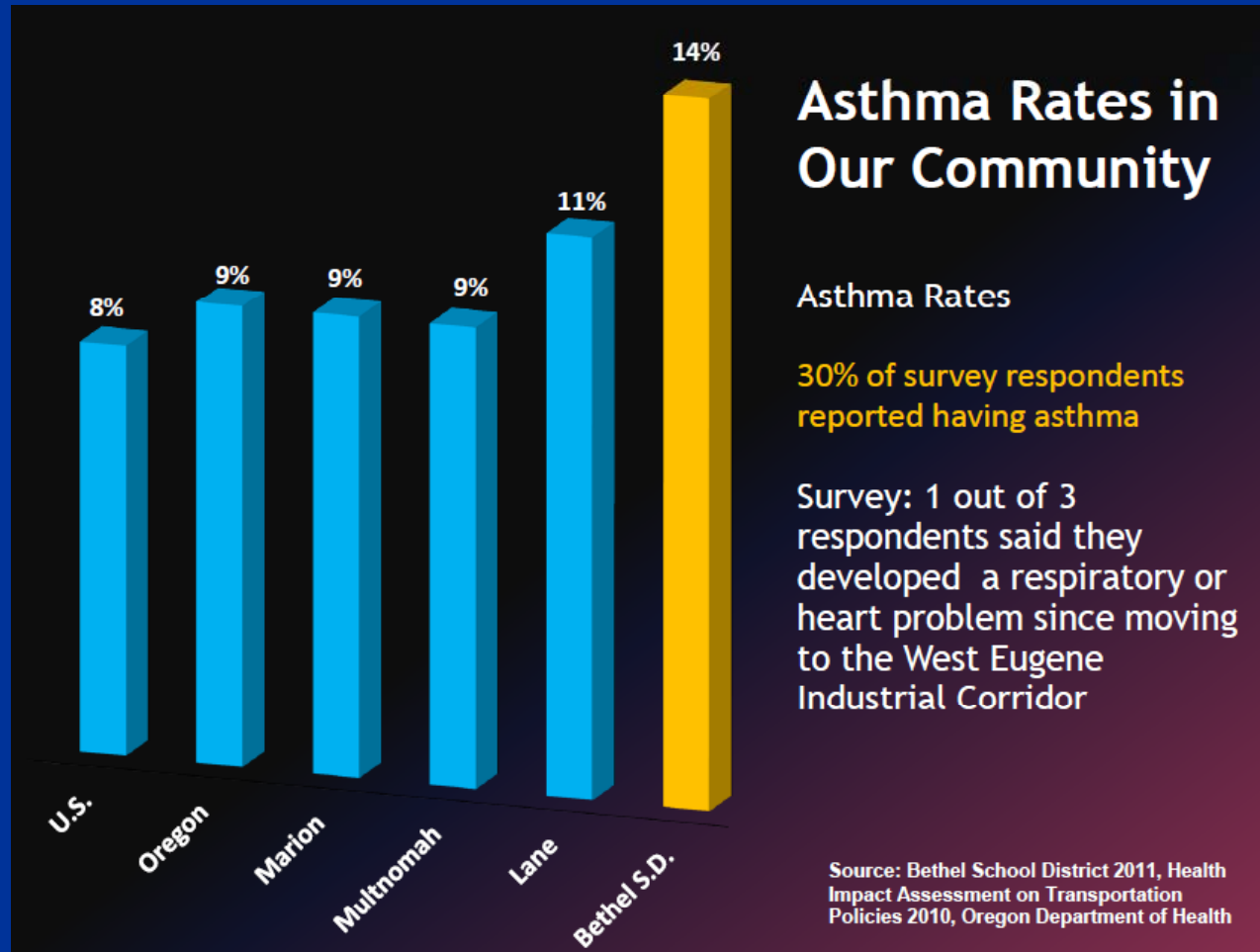
- U.S. EPA, *Interim Guidance on Considering Environmental Justice During the Development of an Action* (July 2010).

"EJ Concern"?



West Eugene, OR

"EJ Concern"?



West Eugene, OR

"EJ Concern"



West Eugene, OR



Photo credit: Beyond Toxics

Executive Order 12898

*Federal Actions to Address
Environmental Justice in
Minority Populations and Low-
Income Communities (1994)*

Executive Order 12898

“mission”

“strategy”

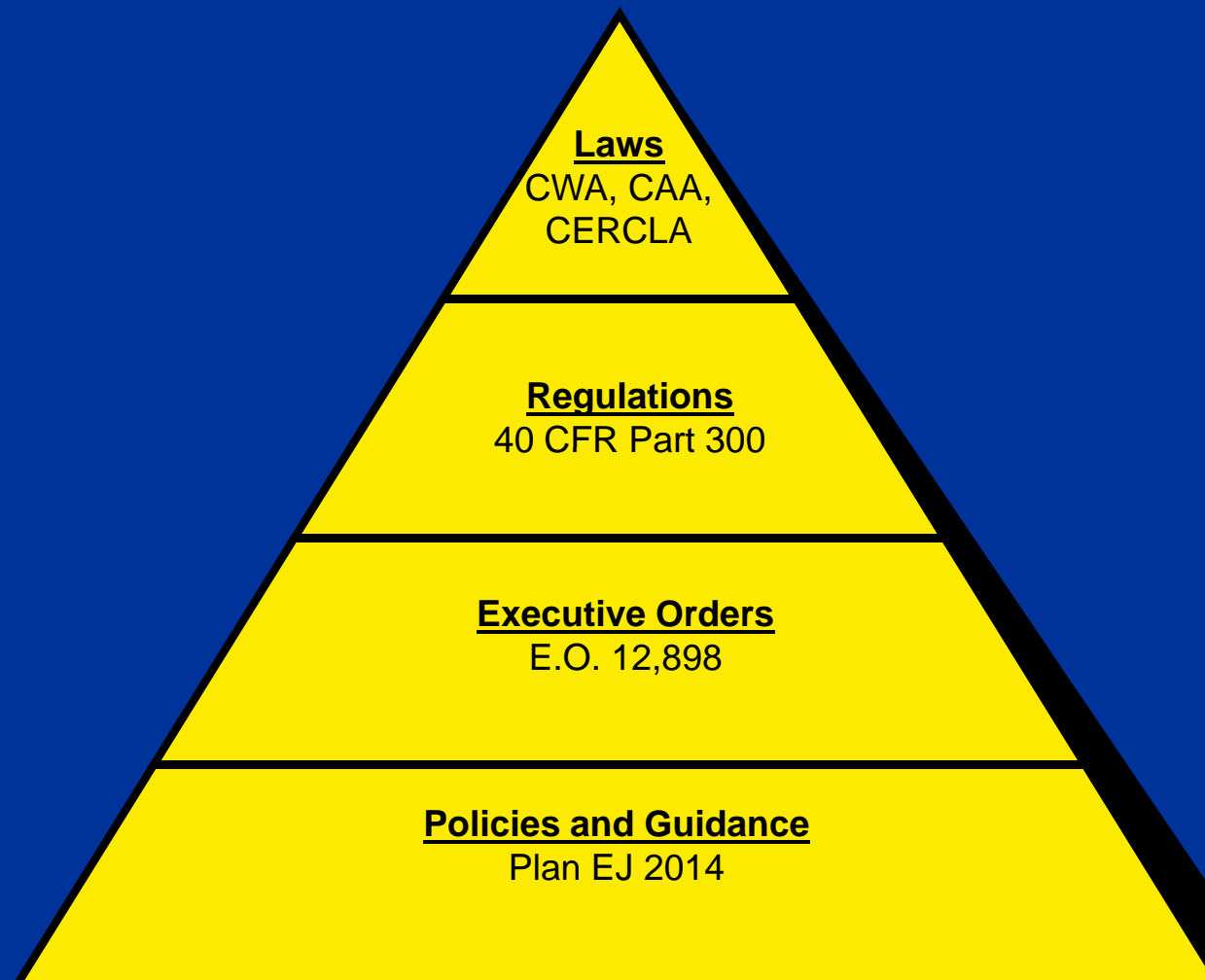
Plan EJ 2014

- ◆ EPA's EJ "strategy"
- ◆ Published Sept. 14, 2011.

Plan EJ 2014

- ◆ *Policy*, not rule or law...

Hierarchy of Authorities



Hierarchy of Authorities

U.S. CONSTITUTION

CERCLA

Regulations
40 CFR Part 300

Executive Orders
E.O. 12,898

Policies and Guidance
Plan EJ 2014


Environmental Justice

What now?





Plan EJ 2014

- ◆ EJ in Rulemaking
- ◆ EJ in Permitting
- ◆ EJ in Enforcement
- ◆ EJ Administration-wide

EJ and Enforcement

 **EPA**
United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Plan EJ 2014



**Advancing
Environmental Justice
Through Compliance
and Enforcement**

EJ Legal Tools



Plan EJ 2014

Legal Tools



EJ in Enforcement

Goal: *fully integrate consideration of environmental justice concerns into the planning and implementation of [enforcement] strategies . . . to benefit [EJ] communities.*

EJ and Enforcement

◆ Inspection targeting



EJ and Enforcement

◆ Community input

*[EPA] will continue to use ... screening tools and other information; e.g., **community input**, to support targeting of enforcement actions....*

– FY2012 NPM Guidance

EJ and Enforcement

◆ Citizen tips



For more information . . .

www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice



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