



**The mission of the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ)** is to help ensure the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people with the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental policies, regulations, and laws; as well as the identification of environmental issues that affect the commonwealth's most vulnerable communities.

### **What is Environmental Justice?**

Historically, minority and low-income populations have been forced to bear a disproportionate share of adverse environmental impacts. It is the duty of DEP to ensure that all Pennsylvanians, especially those that have typically been disenfranchised, are meaningfully involved in the decisions that affect their environment and that all communities are not unjustly and/or disproportionately burdened with adverse environmental impacts. Simply put, environmental justice ensures that everyone has an equal seat at the table.

### **How does DEP identify Environmental Justice areas?**

An Environmental Justice area is any census block group where 20% or more individuals live at or below the federal poverty line, and/or 30% or more of the population identify as a non-white minority, based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the federal guidelines for poverty. EJ areas are mapped on DEP's EJ Areas Viewer at [dep.pa.gov/EJViewer](http://dep.pa.gov/EJViewer).

## **OEJ Goals**

### **Minimizing Adverse Environmental Impacts:**

Low income and minority populations are especially vulnerable to the negative impacts of pollution. The focus of the OEJ must be to ensure that all existing and potential pollution sources, both in and outside of EJ communities, are considering those most at risk regardless of where the project is located.

### **Empowering Communities:**

Environmental Justice Communities typically have the least access to the political processes that can affect them the most, so it is critical that they have a seat at the table. In addition to the permit triggers, there must be an open dialogue between Pennsylvania industries and EJ communities.

### **Fostering Economic Opportunities:**

The OEJ hopes to cultivate environmentally responsible, community-led economic development within EJ communities. The OEJ will foster relationships with the community members, local industry, partners in all levels of education, the trades, philanthropic foundations, and other stakeholders, to further economic pursuits.

## DEP Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ)

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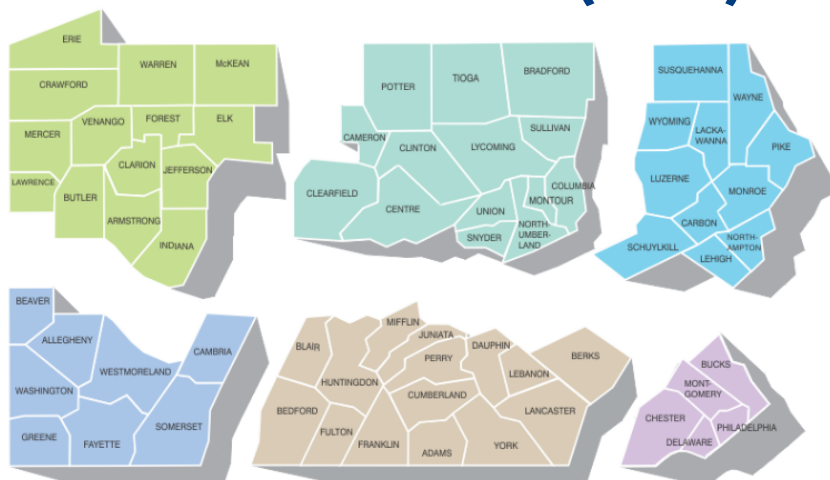
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**WEBSITE:** [dep.pa.gov/environmentaljustice](http://dep.pa.gov/environmentaljustice) **GENERAL INQUIRES:** [DEP-OEJ@pa.gov](mailto:DEP-OEJ@pa.gov)

## Tools and Resources

**OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE** [dep.pa.gov/environmentaljustice](http://dep.pa.gov/environmentaljustice)

DEP's Office of Environmental Justice webpage provides updates on the office's activities, links to resources, and information on environmental justice.

**EJ AREAS VIEWER** [dep.pa.gov/EJViewer](http://dep.pa.gov/EJViewer)

DEP's interactive mapping tool to visualize datasets and better understand Environmental Justice.

**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY BOARD HOMEPAGE** [dep.pa.gov/EJAB](http://dep.pa.gov/EJAB)

DEP's Environmental Justice Advisory Board (EJAB) charged with making recommendations on EJ initiatives.

**eNOTICE** [www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/enoticeweb](http://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/enoticeweb)

Automatically updates users via email as permit applications progress through the DEP's review process.

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION GRANTS** [dep.pa.gov/grants](http://dep.pa.gov/grants)

Grants and rebates that can help support environmental improvement projects and education.

**EPA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE** [epa.gov/environmentaljustice](http://epa.gov/environmentaljustice)

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website provides many resources for gaining an understanding of environmental justice issues nationwide.

**PENNSYLVANIA BULLETIN** [pabulletin.com](http://pabulletin.com)

Published weekly, the Bulletin includes all permit applications, actions, and special notices announced by the DEP.