

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Environmental Justice Framework

2015-2018

May 15, 2015 – public comment draft

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We want your feedback!

Please provide your comments on this draft to by July 15, 2015 to Ned Brooks, MPCA's Environmental Justice Coordinator at ned.brooks@state.mn.us or 651-757-2557. You may also attend a community meeting, to be scheduled for mid-June 2015 to learn more about this document and provide your comments. Please check MPCA's web site at www.pca.state.mn.us/ej for more information.

Comments requested by July 15, 2015

Summary

All Minnesotans deserve to live in conditions that support a healthy and fulfilling life. One important part of this is living in an environment with clean air, clean water, and unpolluted land.

Working to achieve this is at the heart of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's mission to protect and improve our environment and enhance human health.

What's the issue?

Over the past 30 years, the MPCA, other government units, community organizations, businesses, and residents have come together to significantly reduce air and water pollution and to clean up contaminated sites. Many of these improvements have come by reducing emissions from larger sources through traditional regulatory methods – such as permitting, compliance, and enforcement. Other improvements have come by addressing pollution that originates from smaller and more diffuse sources, which are often more difficult to control.

And because of this work, most Minnesotans enjoy a natural environment that contributes to a high quality of life.

- But not all Minnesotans have benefitted from this work in the same way, and the impacts of pollution vary across the state. A wide range of past practices and decisions have contributed to differences in exposure rates among certain groups.
- Lower income Minnesotans and people of color in some parts of the state are exposed to more pollution than middle and upper income white Minnesotans.
- Older residents, children, many lower income Minnesotans, and people of color are often more vulnerable to health impacts from pollution due to existing health disparities.
- Climate change disproportionately threatens vulnerable groups and can amplify economic and health challenges that people already face.

Why it's important?

The MPCA is committed to making sure that pollution does not have a disproportionate impact on any group of people —the principle of environmental justice. The MPCA recently renewed its commitment to fully integrate environmental justice into our work.

But we can't achieve environmental justice without actively involving people of all backgrounds, in all communities around the state — especially lower-income residents and communities of color — in the work that affects their communities.

Unfortunately, many Minnesotans, including those with lower incomes, face barriers that make it difficult to participate in public meetings, regulatory decisions, and other aspects of our work.

The changing racial and ethnic demographics of Minnesota make eliminating these barriers especially important. In 1980, people of color accounted for only 3% of Minnesota's population. Now, while still below the national average, people of color represent about 18% of the population.

This increase is due in part to immigrants from other countries, with foreign-born Minnesotans now accounting for 7% of the population statewide and 11% in the metro area. Geographic pockets with higher concentrations of immigrants are present both in the metro area and in greater Minnesota. For example in 2013, 14% of Ramsey County residents were born in other countries. These more recently-

arrived Minnesotans face a unique set of barriers to full participation, ranging from language and communication methods to different cultures and customs.

DRAFT

MPCA's environmental justice policy

The MPCA's updated policy states:

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) will, within its authority, strive for 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.

Fair treatment means that no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and commercial operations or policies

Meaningful involvement means that:

- People have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health;
- The public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision;
- Their concerns will be considered in the decision making process; and
- The decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected

The above concept is embraced as the understanding of environmental justice by the MPCA.

To demonstrate this renewed commitment, the MPCA included an environmental justice goal and objectives in its current strategic plan that guides the agency's work.

Goal: *Pollution does not have a disproportionate negative impact on any group of people.*

Objectives

- *Develop and implement program strategies to identify and address environmental justice concerns.*
- *Identify and enhance opportunities for all Minnesotans to provide meaningful input into MPCA environmental decision-making.*

The MPCA, as a recipient of significant funding from the federal government, is also required to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits the discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in its programs or activities.

How does the MPCA move from policy to action?

This environmental justice framework will guide our work. The framework consists of a set of goals and strategies to integrate environmental justice into MPCA's main program areas as well as goals, strategies, resources, and tools to support integration.

Goals

- Reduce pollution and increase livability.
- Remedy past harm and prevent future harm.
- Provide the benefits of our work to all Minnesotans.

These goals apply to all our work in all parts of the state, but are especially important in historically overburdened areas where residents may not have had equal access to decision-making and services.

To reach these goals, we will work to:

- Establish strategies, processes, and practices to embed environmental justice in the way we do business.
- Describe to our partners in government, community members, and the people we regulate, our shared roles in addressing environmental justice and a systematic, transparent and understandable approach to do so.
- Monitor our progress.

Implementation

Key implementation principles will help us more effectively and deeply integrate environmental justice into the MPCA's programs, regulatory decision-making and activities. These are:

Targeted and risk-based approach. The MPCA will target areas where our work can have the most benefit for vulnerable people and in areas that are already overburdened. The MPCA will direct activity toward the most important pollution sources and will scale our efforts depending on the potential for risk.

Proactive and reactive. Many MPCA programs, especially our regulatory programs are "reactive." For example, MPCA's work on a facility permit usually results from a decision by a private company to build a new, or make changes to an existing facility. We must look for opportunities that are independent of a permit or enforcement action. We can do so by proactively targeting our permitting, compliance, technical assistance, and grant resources to address environmental justice concerns.

Adaptive, phased approach. We have placed priority on preparing implementation plans for areas of the agency's work that most often involve environmental justice concerns, such as permitting and other regulatory programs. The MPCA expects that through experience with implementation, agency staff and stakeholders will identify areas for improvement. We will regularly modify our implementation of this framework to reflect new approaches.

Strategies for implementing environmental justice into MPCA programs

Regulatory programs

As an agency with significant regulatory responsibilities, one of the MPCA's primary duties is to limit pollution caused by businesses, organizations and individuals in order to protect human health and the environment. We develop permits to control activities that affect the environment, and take compliance and enforcement action to make sure regulations are followed. We also identify and clean-up past contamination sites and polluted water bodies through our remediation and impaired waters programs. By integrating environmental justice principles into these activities and programs the MPCA will work to reduce harm and strive to achieve a healthy environment for all Minnesotans.

Permitting, environmental review and remediation

Permits are an important regulatory tool used by the MPCA to protect the environment and human health in Minnesota. The MPCA manages more than 15,000 air, water, and land permits for facilities in the state. The permits contain requirements from state and federal environmental laws, including limits on the amount of pollution that can be released to the air, water, and land.

We understand that the permitting process is often a focal point for community involvement, particularly in areas where environmental justice concerns are present. Even though permits often require a formal public notice period, we want to expand the opportunities to understand and address neighborhood concerns — and for the MPCA and the facilities to establish or build on relationships with the surrounding community.

For the permitting of new or expanding facilities, a process called environmental review may be required. The overall purpose of environmental review is to provide an information-gathering document (an Environmental Assessment Worksheet or an Environmental Impact Statement) to inform permit decision-makers, the public, and others about the human health and environmental impacts of the project. For facilities located in areas of concern for environmental justice, the environmental review process provides an opportunity to involve community members early on in the permitting process, allowing for robust public participation to identify and address community concerns.

MPCA's remediation programs investigate and determine appropriate clean-up and development plans for abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites, closed landfills, and leaking storage tank systems and other sites that pose risks to human health and the environment due to past contamination. These risks can include surface and groundwater contamination, outdoor air pollution and vapor intrusion into buildings. The MPCA works with owners or operators of these sites, past and present, community groups and surrounding residents throughout this process.

Goals

Provide for meaningful involvement of community members in the environmental review, permitting, and remediation processes. Use MPCA tools to address environmental justice issues to the extent practicable and within our authority.

Strategies

- 1. Identify facility and permit types that need additional actions based on the potential for adverse effects.** This includes increased levels of public involvement and additional work to avoid and diminish those impacts.

- 2. Employ enhanced civic engagement, public participation, and outreach tools for community groups and residents.** Inform community members early and often using trusted, community-identified sources. Provide easily accessible and understandable information to community members on activities that may affect their environment and/or health. Actively seek to understand and address community concerns and barriers to participation in our regulatory processes. Consider ways to increase community members' ability to participate. Implement other relevant outreach and public participation tools identified in MPCA's outreach and public participation plan (See pages 12-13)
- 3. Foster increased regulated party community involvement and actions.** Encourage facilities located in areas of concern for environmental justice to increase engagement with local government, community groups, and area residents early in the environmental review and permitting process to understand and address concerns. Work with regulated parties to explore ways to mitigate environmental and health-related impacts in the community and make other quality-of-life enhancements.
- 4. Consider ways to prioritize work in order to enhance benefits to environmental justice communities.** Give priority to permitting and remediation work in areas of concern for environmental justice, such as investigating potential vapor intrusion, targeting permit reissuance, or review of non-expired permits for facilities in these areas.

Compliance and enforcement

Through inspections, review of test results and reports, and complaint investigations (collectively referred to as compliance determination activities), the MPCA monitors the environmental performance of facilities with permits and licenses or businesses that engage in other activities that affect Minnesota's environment. These include large and small facilities that emit pollutants into the air, water dischargers, hazardous waste generators, and solid waste landfills. The MPCA and local government partners conduct inspections and other compliance determination activities on a routine basis. When violations are noted, the MPCA uses its compliance tools and enforcement authority to address noncompliance.

In areas of concern for environmental justice, in addition to continued routine inspections of facilities, MPCA will employ compliance and enforcement tools to identify and address environmental justice concerns by conducting supplemental inspections and by supporting permitting efforts.

Goal

Increase frequency of inspections to further ensure that facilities operating in areas of concern for environmental justice are in full compliance with applicable requirements and for facilities out of compliance, explore appropriate activities to return them to compliance in ways that will also benefit the community.

Strategies

- 1. Conduct supplemental compliance and enforcement activities.** Conduct additional inspections or other compliance determination work at targeted facilities in areas of concern to ensure that they are in compliance with applicable regulations and permit conditions. Select facilities based on their potential to release pollutants of concern in a particular area.
- 2. Resolve noncompliance with community benefit in mind.** Seek resolution of compliance issues at facilities located in enhanced review areas in ways that benefit the community. For example, the facility could propose a community improvement project as part of their means to correct violations, or to reduce a fine, or by mitigating risks above what is needed to be in compliance.

- 3. Support MPCA permitting programs with additional compliance determination and assistance to facilities.** When an existing facility submits a permit application to modify or expand its operations, or when the MPCA is renewing a permit, MPCA staff will research the facility's compliance history, determine current compliance status (either by inspection, site visit or file review) and, if needed, provide additional compliance assistance to facilities.
- 4. Communicate with affected communities.** When compliance issues at facilities in potential environmental justice areas occur, and when there is potential for adverse effects, provide information to known community contacts, except when prohibited by law such as during a formal investigation or ongoing enforcement action.

Monitoring, assessment, and consideration of cumulative impacts

A fundamental role of the MPCA is to evaluate and describe — both qualitatively and quantitatively — the condition of our environment, what causes it to be in the condition it is in, and what effectively could be done to make desired improvements. We do this by:

- **Monitoring the air and water.** A network of air monitors and systematic water monitoring approaches allow MPCA scientists to characterize the condition of our groundwater, lakes, wetlands, rivers and streams and air.
- **Modeling and computational analysis.** While our work is extensive, environmental monitoring is limited by where monitoring and sampling occurs and by what is measured. To fill in gaps, the MPCA uses tools to predict or estimate pollutant levels and their impacts on human health. Modeling also allows us to evaluate what *might* happen if permits or other requirements change or a new project moves forward, which can help us decide if proposed changes are protective of the environment and human health before they occur.
- **Risk assessment and problem investigation.** The MPCA compares information to standards and benchmarks and investigates sources of environmental impacts. These levels are evaluated along with health information from the Department of Health, such as disease rates and emergency room visits, to identify threats and impacts, inform standards development, guide our regulatory and assistance programs, and measure progress in achieving environmental goals.

Part of our work includes evaluating and preventing actual or potential impacts. As part of this process the MPCA considers the cumulative impacts of pollutants as a way to provide additional context for decision-making. The effects of multiple pollutant sources, multiple exposure pathways (where the exposure occurs and how- through inhalation, ingestion or skin contact), and multiple contaminants with similar effects are regular considerations in many of MPCA's environmental decision-making processes. These factors are taken into account in air and water permitting, risk assessment, environmental review, and remediation activities. While the quality of the data and tools available to consider these factors vary, it is important to note that in these ways, consideration of cumulative impacts is an integral part of the decision-making framework of MPCA programs.

Less common in MPCA decision-making is the consideration of non-chemical stressors (such as loss of open space or road safety concerns) or differences in community vulnerability when evaluating the cumulative impacts of a project. Although there currently are no quantitative methods to incorporate non-chemical stressors and community vulnerability into typical regulatory evaluations, this field is growing and some existing evaluations do already incorporate these concepts. Evaluations incorporating non-chemical stressors and community vulnerability are largely qualitative due to the diverse nature of the data and the more recent emergence of this field of study.

Goal

Through the uses of monitoring, modelling, risk assessment and cumulative impacts analysis tools and resources, strive to identify and understand environmental impacts, to inform and target efforts to meet our environmental justice goal of ensuring that no Minnesotan is disproportionately impacted by environmental pollutants.

Strategies

1. **Consider known or potential environmental justice concerns and overburdened areas when planning for environmental monitoring.** When deciding where, when and what to monitor, expressly consider contaminants of concern in overburdened areas. Strive to generate and use the highest quality data to inform environmental decision making.
2. **Consider more comprehensive risk assessment and cumulative impact analysis.** In areas of concern for environmental justice, determine if additional analysis (multiple sources, non-chemical stressors and community vulnerability) will better inform decisions. MPCA programs (air permitting, remediation, wastewater permitting, etc.) identify when and how they support more comprehensive cumulative impact analysis.
3. **Communication and outreach.** Seek to and understand concerns community members have about environmental risks. Clearly explain to community members when and how we conduct risk assessments; how we consider cumulative impacts in our existing standards, procedures and reviews; and when additional analysis is conducted. When concerns are expressed about non-chemical stressors and community vulnerability, involve other government entities who may be able to assist in addressing concerns that are not within the scope of MPCA authorities. Explain findings and proposed decisions, including how community concerns were addressed.

Prevention and assistance

In addition to our regulatory and pollution clean-up work, the MPCA also employs tools to prevent or minimize the negative impacts of pollution on public health and the environment. This work often targets smaller, diffuse sources such as cars and trucks and small businesses. Challenged by our lack of regulatory authority over many of these sources, our approaches and tools include assistance, grants, education, outreach, and collaborative work with partners. Through providing resources that build knowledge, capacity, and resilience, MPCA strives to empower communities and foster attitudes and actions that strengthen the natural environment, economy, and social well being.

Goal

MPCA prevention and assistance work contributes to improved environmental quality and livability in areas of concern for environmental justice and that small businesses and residents in areas of concern for environmental justice experience the full benefits of MPCA's services and work.

Strategies

1. **Identify programs and tools with greatest potential to contribute to environmental and human health benefits.** Considering pollutants and sources of greatest concern in overburdened areas, the MPCA will identify programs and strategies that are likely to lead to the greatest reductions in those pollutants, and have the largest positive effect on impacted communities and their quality of life.

- 2. Consider ways to prioritize work.** Identify and give priority to prevention and assistance work that has the potential to eliminate or reduce harmful pollution in areas of concern for environmental justice. This could include modifying existing pollution prevention grants and technical assistance programs to prioritize work in areas of concern, or creating new programs that specifically target work in these areas. MPCA will support and increase outreach and education efforts focused on reducing pollution in areas of concern for environmental justice.
- 3. Employ public participation and outreach tools.** Facilitate awareness and access to prevention and assistance programs and resources that have the opportunity to benefit overburdened communities. Widely promote the availability of grants, technical assistance, and services to community organizations, local units of government, and individuals living or serving in areas of concern for environmental justice.
- 4. Foster increased partner involvement and actions.** In areas of concern for environmental justice, the MPCA will look for opportunities to reduce risk and improve access to services through building and leveraging partnerships with other state agencies, local units of government, and community organizations. MPCA will strive to increase the impact and effectiveness of its prevention and assistance work through the sharing of resources, knowledge, skills, and experience with others working toward common goals.

Equity in rulemaking, policy development, and program implementation

The MPCA's mission is to protect human health and the environment; and one of the MPCA's main concerns is developing responses to address problems that threaten human health and the environment. To implement the MPCA's environmental justice policy, it is important to consider the meaningful involvement of all people in developing responses to environmental concerns and to ensure that the responses do not create disproportionate impacts.

When determining whether or not to undertake a certain action, one consideration is the ultimate equity impacts of the proposed action. Equity analysis can be roughly defined as looking at the allocation of "goods" (benefits) and "bads" (costs or burdens), either monetary or non-monetary, within the affected society. In other words – who pays and who benefits? More particularly, does the proposed action change the distribution of the "goods" and "bads" among different groups of concern within society? Is anyone made better off? Is anyone made worse off?

An equity analysis helps to understand any equity shifts that would be caused by a proposed action, though it is generally not determinative in deciding whether a particular action should be implemented. Rather, it sheds light on whether the beneficial outcomes of an action outweigh any adverse distributional effects, and can also point towards adverse impacts that may need to be mitigated.

The MPCA will work to evaluate equity impacts whenever we consider possible actions to address environmental concerns. These equity impacts can provide information to any entity considering implementing the possible action, whether that be the Legislature, the Governor, the MPCA or other state agencies, or public-private partnerships.

One important way that the MPCA takes action to respond to environmental concerns is by adopting rules. The consideration of EJ issues will rest on the principles of meaningful involvement and fair treatment, focusing on specific groups in our society: low-income populations and historically under-represented communities of color.

Goals

MPCA develops rules and policies to:

1. Ensure that all populations have a voice and effective representation in rule and policy development.
2. Ensure that new rules and policies do not exacerbate existing conditions where burdens are disproportionately borne or benefits not experienced by populations of concern.
3. Move toward creating rules and policies that help ensure that the distribution of environmental quality is fair and equitable among all Minnesotans.

Strategies

1. **Employ public participation and outreach tools.** Public participation and enhanced outreach strategies and tools will be used to facilitate early and meaningful involvement in the rulemaking process. In addition to using plain language in rule-related notices and supporting documents, this will also include communicating about rules outside of the legally required avenues and standard avenues. It is likely also to require additional kinds of documents (fact sheets, FAQs, etc.) to describe rules in a way that promotes meaningful involvement.
2. **Review and document distributional impacts of rules and policies. Prepare** an equity analysis for each rule that shows the effects of the proposed rule– the costs and benefits or gainers and losers – and how the proposed rule changes the existing distribution of burdens and benefits between the groups of concern and other groups.
3. **Conduct equity analysis of policies and program implementation, when applicable.** Outside of rule-making, other policy development, implementation of rules and other initiatives may have equity implications. When possible equity concerns are identified by the MPCA or stakeholders, the MPCA will conduct a qualitative analysis of possible equity impacts to inform policy development and program implementation decisions.

Resources to support environmental justice integration

Enhanced screening for possible environmental justice concerns

As a first step to considering environmental justice concerns, the MPCA will use screening tools to identify potentially overburdened areas and areas that warrant additional review for environmental justice concerns. This information will direct and influence actions under other parts of this framework, such as increased community outreach, enhanced regulatory or pollution prevention attention, as well as additional monitoring or risk analysis. This screening is only a first step. It does not provide a definitive designation that an area is subject to a disproportionate burden. It simply flags an area as one where additional consideration or effort is needed to identify and potentially mitigate disproportionate adverse impacts.

Goal

MPCA program staff, community members and regulated parties are able to identify areas where additional review or action is needed or desired to address possible environmental justice concerns.

Strategies

- 1. Develop data-driven screening methodology.** Identify data sources and procedures to provide information about possible environmental justice concerns in a geographical area using demographic and environmental variables. Variables will provide information on race and income levels, language proficiencies, potential environmental exposures, vulnerabilities to climate changes impacts and other factors to inform efforts to facilitate community engagement and the potential for disproportionate burdens. Data sources should include other state agency data, county and city data.
- 2. Include community engagement in the screening process to gather community knowledge.** Seek out information from community members about conditions in their community, including non-chemical stressors. Use this information to verify and supplement data-driven sources.
- 3. Apply the screening methodology to identify areas for enhanced review and action by MPCA programs and facilities located in these areas.** MPCA program areas act as appropriate to adapt program work to engage community members, further evaluate risks, mitigate disproportionate impacts, and other actions.

Public participation, outreach and engagement

All MPCA stakeholders must have opportunities to participate in decisions about activities that affect them and have equal access to programs and services. One goal of environmental justice efforts is to pay particular attention to previously underrepresented communities and address barriers that have limited their ability to engage in the MPCA's work. In areas of concern for environmental justice, the MPCA will take additional steps to provide increased opportunities to be involved, and to seek out and facilitate the participation of communities that may not have previously experienced meaningful involvement. The MPCA will also provide easily accessible and understandable information to community members on activities that may affect their health and quality of life.

In addition to the activities related to specific MPCA actions and programs, the MPCA also recognizes the need to develop and maintain meaningful relationships with a variety of community stakeholders,

organizations and individuals to establish the foundations for long-term collaborative work. To this end, the MPCA will work with community members to establish strategies for more long-term and comprehensive community engagement.

Goal

The MPCA employs specific measures that improve civic engagement generally and increase public participation in all aspects of the Agency's work. This includes increasing and improving communication and outreach during our traditional regulatory roles such as permitting, rulemaking, and environmental review, as well as when promoting technical assistance, grants, and other services.

Strategies

- 1. Tailor outreach and public participation to specific community.** Seek to understand the community characteristics and specific barriers to meaningful involvement. Develop outreach and public participation to engage and inform the community via trusted sources and to work to remove barriers they may have to participate. Begin communication to community members at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 2. Use plain and understandable language.** Written materials, presentations and informal communication should be easily understandable, free of jargon and undefined acronyms, and available in multiple languages, when appropriate.
- 3. Hold community meetings and events early and frequently.** Community meetings and events can be effective ways to share information and understand community concerns. In addition to and in advance of formal and required public meetings, employ a variety of formats early on and frequently to share information, listen to residents' issues and answer questions.
- 4. Expand public notification methods.** During certain actions, such as some permits and rulemaking, the MPCA is required to formally notify the public through specified traditional media. When environmental justice is of concern, the MPCA will employ additional methods specifically tailored to reach potentially underrepresented audiences as early in the process as practical, and as often as appropriate.
- 5. Encourage facility or regulated party to plan for public participation.** In addition to employing the approaches above, the MPCA will suggest or request that the regulated party, such as a facility applying for a permit, prepare and implement a public participation plan that includes the same strategies as above.
- 6. Build upon previous efforts to deepen community connections and understanding.** Collaborate with a range of stakeholders to foster supportive and mutually beneficial partnerships, authentic relationships and culturally competent long-term engagement. Expand the network of community stakeholders that we interact with to ensure representation from affected communities, and inclusion of as many community members and organizations working on environmental justice as possible.

Agency training and development

Integrating environmental justice principles into MPCA's work will require staff and MPCA leadership to implement new procedures and approaches. Successful adoption and practice may also require new skills, new learning, and in some cases new perspectives. It is essential that MPCA staff approach their work inclusively and respond appropriately to the needs and perspectives of people from diverse racial, economic, and cultural backgrounds. We must also ensure that cultural bias does not contribute to different access, service, and outcomes.

Goal

Develop and maintain a workforce that values diversity and delivers services in a multi-culturally competent, sensitive and equitable manner.

Strategies

1. **Recruit, hire, and maintain a diverse work force.** Increase awareness of MPCA's mission and employment opportunities among diverse groups and communities. Build and strengthen partnerships and connections that will aid in recruiting a diverse pool of candidates for MPCA and state of Minnesota positions. Encourage and facilitate applicants from diverse backgrounds for student worker and regular positions. Create a workplace culture that values diversity and is inclusive.
2. **Train and develop** all managers and staff in multicultural competency, institutional racism, MPCA EJ policy, Civil Rights Act Title VI requirements, and other areas identified to support MPCA's capacity to assure equal access and achieve equitable outcomes.
3. **Train relevant program staff** in procedures and policies to integrate environmental justice principles into their specific area of work (incorporated into work plan for each specific area of work).

Ongoing stakeholder and community involvement in framework implementation and improvement

This document is MPCA's initial attempt to define strategies and develop implementation approaches to integrate environmental justice principles into our daily work. Community and stakeholder feedback played a significant role in developing the elements of this framework. These approaches reflect lessons learned from past experiences as well as stakeholder feedback during 2014 and early 2015.

While much work remains to be done, we are already implementing some of the strategies and will continue to expand implementation while we work to develop the remaining approaches described in this plan. The MPCA fully expects that through experience with implementation, agency staff and stakeholders will identify areas for improvement.

The MPCA will regularly improve and modify implementation of the strategies in this framework based on initial experience, learning and feedback. The MPCA expects and invites regular feedback from all stakeholders to further develop and shape implementation.

Goal

Feedback from a variety of stakeholders informs improvements to MPCA's environmental justice work and all interested stakeholders have a satisfying level of access and opportunity to contribute.

Strategies

1. **Community advisory group.** Establish an advisory group made up environmental justice community members and advocates that meets regularly to provide feedback to the MPCA on framework implementation.
2. **Targeted engagement.** As needed or requested, provide opportunities for additional stakeholders to provide input and feedback on MPCA's work including with businesses, local and tribal governments and others.
3. **Environmental justice all-stakeholder events.** Convene and sponsor events that provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to learn, share experiences and provide feedback related to environmental justice work. MPCA presents on implementation progress.

Coordination with federal, state, local, and tribal governments

While the MPCA has significant authority and responsibility to protect the environment of Minnesota, we share this role with the U.S. EPA, Tribal governments, county and municipal governments. Local governments in particular also play a key role in land use decisions that factor in to many concerns about environmental justice. Similarly, decisions and actions by other state agencies also impact our work. And we have overlapping responsibilities and missions with many of our sister state agencies, especially the Minnesota Department of Health. Given our shared roles and common interests with other governments, we also have an opportunity to learn from and support each other's work.

Goal

The MPCA coordinates its work with all levels of government to improve joint effectiveness in reducing disparities in exposures, health effects and other overlapping public interests.

Strategies

- 1. Coordinated work with state agencies and local government** in Minnesota to reduce disparities across multiple agencies/jurisdictions and to foster meaningful involvement in our work. Establish and build on relationships with our partners in government in the state. Involve local government staff, elected officials in others in actions and projects in areas of concern for environmental justice.
- 2. Learn from the experiences of other states' agencies and the EPA.** Identify best practices, tools and lessons learned from the EPA and other states that could inform integration in Minnesota. Participate in national information-sharing and working groups such as those convened by EPA or the Environmental Council of States.
- 3. Tribal coordination.** Ensure environmental justice issues are considered in our government-to-government interactions with Minnesota tribes. See Governor Mark Dayton Executive Order 13-10
- 4. Collaborate with EPA.** Identify ways that the expertise and resources of the EPA could help to advance our work in Minnesota and ways that MPCA can support EPA's work in the state.

Measuring and reporting on progress

The MPCA is committed to achieving results. To monitor our progress in meeting the goals of this framework, the MPCA has identified three types of measures that we will routinely track.

Pollution and health — changes over time in potential exposures and effects:

- Air pollution measures in areas of potential EJ concern
 - Monitored levels of key air pollutants of concern (PM_{2.5}, formaldehyde, ozone, nitrogen dioxide)
 - Predicted (modeled) non-cancer risks (MnRiskS)
 - Emissions of criteria pollutants
- Asthma healthcare use rates, statewide and in areas of potential EJ concern

Meaningful involvement — activities and satisfaction of community members related to public participation and engagement with members of the EJ community:

- Successful implementation of the MPCA's outreach and engagement plan
- Participation in community events and activities
 - Number of meetings or community events that the MPCA attended or participated in

- Number of community members attending MPCA events or meetings
- Number of interested people routinely engaging in MPCA work.
- Community input is reflected in agency outcomes
- Satisfaction of community members related to meaningful involvement in MPCA public participation activities

Programmatic measures — progress in integrating environmental justice into the MPCA’s work:

- Number/portion of MPCA programs that have developed and fully incorporated EJ strategies
- Creation and documentation of tools/guidance/procedures for addressing EJ in identified program areas.

The MPCA will regularly communicate with stakeholders and seek feedback on implementation of this framework during periodic meetings, electronic communication and personal contact. We will also periodically report on our progress in achieving the goals of this framework.

During initial implementation, beginning in 2016 and until at least 2018, the MPCA will prepare report a report every year on or before January 15. After 2018, the reporting frequency will be evaluated in consultation with stakeholders.

Implementation details

MPCA has developed initial implementation plans, guidance documents and procedures that describe in more detail how key portions of this framework will be implemented. We will continue to develop and regularly update these approaches based of feedback and experience. Current versions of these plans and documents are available on request:

- Implementation plans for permitting, compliance and enforcement
- Planned approaches for public participation when environmental justice is a concern
- Procedures for enhanced screening for possible environmental justice concerns
- Guidance on considering environmental justice in rulemaking

Additional documents will be listed on the MPCA environmental justice web page as they become available. Please check www.pca.state.mn.us/ej or contact ned.brooks@state.mn.us for more information.