

San Diego Regional Public Workshops on the Draft California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (CalEnviroScreen)

Thursday, August 23, 2012

Perkins Elementary School, 1770 Main Street, San Diego, CA 92113

The third regional workshop in San Diego attracted about 35 participants that included local residents and business and government representatives. Members from the Environmental Health Coalition, the Advocates for Safe Airport Policy and businesses such as Waste Management, the National Steel and Shipbuilding Company, Gannett Fleming Inc., and BAE Systems were present. Governmental representatives from the San Diego County Air Pollution Control District, the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health, and the San Diego Association of Governments also participated.

Staff sought comments and suggestions related to the overall approach taken and specifically on proposed indicators, data sources, and the methodology. Numerous comments were made at the workshop and are grouped and described below. Comments made more than once were consolidated and placed in the most appropriate category.

Methods/General:

- Missing: proximity to hazards
- Applaud progress
- Tool assumes aggregate exposure
- Direction or language to identify lead agencies for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and that lack of resources
- Precaution needs to be added back into project
- Science is not complete
- An environmental effect is significant if exposures occurred from it
- What decisions are you trying to make with the data?
- If you combine the indicators together, you might lose areas with significant factors
- Toxic releases can be considered synergistically
- Should have discussion with other agencies and their criteria for their work
- Encourage transit and work with other agencies
- Broad aggregation of factors may leave out important pollution sources (like airports)
- Environmental Justice Screening Method (EJSM) is better
- Additive model should be used, not multiplicative (too much like a risk assessment; should be like an index)
- Information gathering is important to get to the core of the matter

- There is an obligation to bring in green jobs
- Auto shops in National City are an important source of pollution
- Storm drains used as disposal sites
- Cars are lined up blocking streets
- Often official data is bad or incomplete
- Include impact on pets
- In Barrio Logan we have large impacts from many contaminants like the port, trucks, the train, and industries
- Can't park in front of our houses because workers park on our streets
- In Barrio Logan we are exposed to too much pollution: freeway, port, industry, NASSCO
- CCEEB comments on 2010 document not responded to
- Economics are more important--access to clean water
- Industries provide jobs to communities
- Industry employees are part-time residents of these areas
- People spend more time at work than in home ZIP
- Consider types of employment

Geographic Scale and Mapping:

- ZIP code will dilute impacts of pollution (National City as example), should use Census tract
- If funds are distributed by ZIP code rather than Census tract, communities will get left behind
- Schools need to be listed; missed by the ZIP code measure
- Measuring by ZIP code could have many smaller areas that get lost in scoring process
- Tribal populations are missed in census ZIPs
- Local decision makers use different scale—Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs); small subset of census tracts
- Should replace maps with narrative
- Coachella isn't on any of the maps

Exposures:

- Incorporate information on zoning or land use patterns (Barrio Logan is a mixed industrial use area)
- Concerns over lead exposure

- Diesel PM should be included, can use National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) data or Air Resources Board (ARB) diesel monitoring data
- Sites that are closer to sensitive uses should be weighted by distance
- Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) thresholds too high, include smaller sources
- Should look into including local air pollution control district monitoring data to supplement
- Auto shops are an issue in the community
- Emissions from airplanes are not included
- Lead in homes should be included
- Should look into gallons purchased of certain fuels
- Many older cars found in EJ neighborhoods don't meet today's emissions standards
- Traffic and meteorological air flow issues are important (not just traffic density)

Public Health Effects:

- Should look at cancer incidence not mortality
- Health risk assessment component is not completely science-based
- Should use health data from household surveys
- Should look at California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) data
- Asthma is a multifactorial disease
- Kids miss school from asthma-check school records
- ER visits not good to characterize asthma; people of low SES don't go to ER
- Get info from clinics, school nurses, school attendance records
- Consider diabetes incidence
- Consider obesity rates

Environmental Effects:

- On posters/report, definition of 'impaired' needs clarification
- Will OEHHA provide data sets or will people have to go to source?
- Clean-up sites near ZIP borders should be accounted for
- Are cleaned up Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites included?
- Could color code sites on maps based on status
- Do ground-truthing because some data sources have been incorrect in past
- Some places are not regulated
- Not sure about correlation between presence of facility and exposure
- Are these data up to date?

- How do we know this data is accurate?
- Include airports, rail yards, buses
- Consider dumps and other pollution sources on tribal lands

Socioeconomic Factors and Sensitive Populations:

- Consider access to health care and insurance
- Consider noise pollution-factories operate at all hours
- Consider linguistic isolation
- Look at home ownership vs. renting
- Consider lack of green space
- Consider access to public transportation
- Consider lack of access to hospitals
- Consider low performance in schools
- Model not organized correctly-SES factors increase sensitivity all other things being equal
- Issues like access to health insurance, prenatal care, health habits, stress, crime are more important than these indicators
- Should consider elder care facilities
- Economics are not the only factor
- Old and young can't move away from hazards
- Radio stations could disseminate information
- Linguistic isolation is tied to educational attainment
- Should use a higher age cut off for elderly
- Should use a higher age cut off for children-development continues past age 5
- Consider where schools and day care centers are-where are children spending a lot of time
- Consider location of hospitals
- Consider disabled populations that cannot move away from pollution
- Consider veterans
- Consider the transient nature of different populations
- Consider rent burden
- Consider economic data
- Consider students on free lunch program
- Consider tenancy from property tax rolls
- Consider tenure of home ownership
- Consider voter turnout

- Consider access to technology, internet proficiency
- Need to show relationship between health outcomes and SES factors and sensitive populations
- Consider unemployment rate
- Consider distance to ER and how people can get there
- Some areas have no hospitals, few clinics
- Look at government amenities like fire departments, parks, etc.

Use of Tool:

- Summarize results for the communities
- Tool will help identify where to allocate federal and state resources
- Can focus pollution prevention/reduction with special attention to the sources of pollution and people near them
- Can help with planning, specifically transit plans
- Can provide direct funding to communities
- Concerns that if used with CEQA, need to be careful of preventing healthy development