

San Bernardino Public Workshop on the draft CalEnviroScreen 3.0

September 8, 2016
Fifth Street Senior Center
600 W 5th St, San Bernardino, CA 92410



The second regional workshop on the CalEnviroScreen 3.0 draft in San Bernardino was an opportunity for the public to learn about updates to the tool and provide comments on these updates. The workshop attracted about 12 participants from local community organizations and state government as well as residents.

Staff sought comments and suggestions related to the four major components of CalEnviroScreen—exposures, environmental effects, sensitive populations and socioeconomic factors. Comments from workshop participants are listed below. Similar or related comments were consolidated and placed in the most appropriate category.

General Comments

- Jurisdictional boundaries are not always helpful; align with census funding (Department of Water Resources, for example).
- Urban areas are difficult and are divided up in different ways; communities are divided up; benefits are aggregated to communities.
- Could we show a map showing differences between CES 2.0 and CES 3.0?
- Why are we using percentiles and not other forms of ranking?
- Could we do regional analyses and include more local data (issues of concern for certain areas)?
- Large rural census tracts tend to dominate the CalEnviroScreen maps and make rural areas look more disadvantaged than urban areas, even though that is not true.

New Indicator Ideas

- Natural gas storage facilities should be included.
- Power plants should be included.
- We should add an indicator of vector control: Mosquitoes (concentrations of mosquitoes in an area) and exposure to chemicals that they spray for vector control (what they are spraying and where they are spraying).
- Add an indicator that represents lack of infrastructure. Potable water, sanitation water. We should possibly weight areas outside water systems more than areas served by water systems. (would represent lack of infrastructure in those areas)
- Add an indicator: paved roads versus non paved roads. Non paved roads use a lot of dust which children are exposed to.

- Lead exposure
 - To get an indicator of lead exposure, but exclude wealthy people living in those homes, add an indicator of age of housing and income level or house price
 - Could we include lead exposure in schools?
- Food and nutrition
 - Another potential socioeconomic indicator would be food deserts.
 - Other possible indicators to include: Nutritional information from children, food access, school lunches (this would represent vulnerable children).
 - Could we include children that are iron or calcium deficient?
 - Nutrition is an important issue, and can lead to susceptibility.
- We should look at the social vulnerability index. It's by block group. Dr. Susan Cutter at University of South Carolina is working on this.
- Could we include mortality rates/life expectancy?
- Would like to see diabetes included.
- Cancer
 - Could we include cancer clusters? Is there enough data on cancer clusters?
 - Cancer rates should be considered as an indicator.
- Physical activity should be included.
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD):
 - Is COPD, chronic bronchitis, and emphysema included in the asthma indicator? If not, these diseases should be included.
 - COPD is not covered by our asthma indicator. Would like to see COPD and other lung diseases.
- Obesity
 - Obesity, especially in children, should be included as an indicator. Data are available from schools and from Head Start.
 - COPD is not covered by our asthma indicator. Would like to see COPD and other lung diseases.
- Is there a way to create an indicator for early mortality or for life expectancy?
- How many people have Medicare/medical insurance in an area? (% of population)
- Crime and prison
 - Perhaps there should be an additional indicator for incarceration rates? Kids miss a lot of school due to asthma, which results in a high incarceration rate when the kids grow up. This is a reflection of a community's vulnerability to pollution.
 - A similar example is links between lead exposure and violent crime.
 - A related desirable indicator would be for crime.
- You should also consider an indicator for foreign-born residents, which might correlate with undocumented residents.
- Could density of new development be an indicator? Rural areas don't get funding because their population density isn't there. There should be a way to make funding for rural and urban areas equitable.

- There are a lot of mobile home parks in this area. Do you have data on mobile home parks? Do any indicators account for utility costs? People tend to live in mobile home parks because the rent is cheap, but utilities are not.

Comments on the removal of the age indicator:

- The new approach to the age indicator makes sense. If the removal of age doesn't have much impact on the overall map, then it's fine to remove it.
- It seems useful to show the number of children and elderly in each impacted census tract. Communities could use that information for various purposes, including when they are seeking funding.
- If people in impacted communities are dying young, then it doesn't make sense to include the percent elderly in the score.
- Age isn't a disease, so it shouldn't be included in the same way as the diseases and other bad things in the indicators.

Rent-Adjusted Income Indicator

- Rent-adjusted income indicator does not reflect the cost-of living in the Inland Valley. People move to the Inland Valley because housing is relatively cheap, but car costs are high because distances are great and transit is very limited. Why not have a car-cost indicator? The rent-adjusted income puts the Inland Valley at a disadvantage by not recognizing that.
- Rent-adjusted income indicator seems accurate.
- Rent-adjusted income indicator seems to respond to Bay Area's concern that housing costs weren't being reflected, but does anything cover access to transit? Transit costs are much lower than driving, and we don't have a lot of transit here.

Exposures

- Time analysis
 - Time capture analysis of pollution indicators (across time, is pollution getting worse or better).
 - Could we do a cumulative real time analysis? (exposure indicators)
- Is there overlap with toxic releases facilities and facilities used in Environmental Effects indicators?
- Could we include salt in water in the drinking water indicator? Salt intrusion is a source of contamination of drinking water.
- Use only violating systems, not all concentrations.
- Highly concerned about truck idling at warehouses and while loading and unloading. Is this included in CalEnviroScreen?
- We should include population density or distance to populations in relation to traffic.

- Naturally occurring contaminants in drinking water should be weighted higher than industry (other sources) causing contaminant concentrations. Naturally occurring is harder to clean up.
- What are the impacts of pesticides to nearby populations? Maybe we should use a ratio to proximity to homes to these areas using pesticides.
- There is some overlap in indicators, for example, perchlorate in groundwater and drinking water.
- The Highland area has no drinking water treatment center.
- Long-term drinking water degradation in tribal communities should be recognized.

Environmental Effects

- Could model perchlorate plumes and use this information for public outreach.
- Natural hazards could be included, such as shake maps and fire hazards.
- Methodology
 - Should make more use of spatial modeling tools
 - Do the other components use weighting of facilities?
 - When rolling scores into categories, should do it as one to 12.
- Septic tanks should be included; especially important in Eastern Coachella Valley where they can serve 12 to 100 people.
- There are many indirect sources of impact: freight hubs associated with goods movement; the “dry” vs. “wet” ports; logistics hubs; pollution along highways; only covered by Diesel PM indicator; 800 trucks per hour; local residents can’t go outside; children can’t go outside; basic mobility is affected; can’t bike to work near facilities.
- The OmniTrans gas storage facilities have impacts on nearby households, causing headaches and nosebleeds over the course of a year; difficult to ensure that no leaks are occurring.
- Gas storage facilities for SunLine Transit Agency should be included.
- Natural gas storage data should be included.
- People who live near natural gas storage facilities and railyards face increased cancer risks.
- Natural gas storage facilities are frequently co-located with other sources of impact.
- The issue of septic tanks is the No. 1 threat to groundwater, especially in rural areas and mobile home parks.
- Is the Salton Sea counted in CalEnviroScreen?
- Is hazardous waste generation from refineries included?
- It is not clear whose jurisdiction warehouses fall under; many impacts are not kept in check because of regulatory gaps.
- Is poor infrastructure contributing to impaired water bodies?
- Additional sewer treatment and water treatment facilities are needed.

Sensitive Populations

- Concerns about using Emergency Departments(ED)
 - Asthma - not everyone can afford to go to an ED. How is this addressed? What about the uninsured? Some people take their kids to the fire department.
 - How does distance from EDs affect the asthma and cardiovascular disease indicators? Is there any way to incorporate visits to community clinics?
- In the low birth weight indicator, we are not capturing all women. Some women have PO Boxes, which are not stable housing.
- What pollutants are linked to cardiovascular disease? Are these links seen worldwide?
- Is there any association between elevation above sea level and the disease outcomes? The rates seem to be higher in the mountainous areas.
- There are high rates of cardiovascular disease, asthma and low birth weight in the Cajon Pass area north of San Bernardino. Some concerns expressed that the rural areas of the county have decreased in overall score, even though they're high for sensitive populations indicators.
- Include transportation options and distance to hospitals. Look at community clinics, not just ERs.

Socioeconomic Factors

- Is the poverty indicator a measure of income rather than wealth? In this area, there are middle and high-income families, but their wealth might be less than other places in the state.
- Affordable housing: It would also be good to give a higher score to areas with affordable housing. That could provide incentives to build affordable housing, and draw funding for affordable housing.
- The educational attainment indicator could account for distances from colleges to communities.