



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY

# Racial Disparities and Environmental Justice in Michigan

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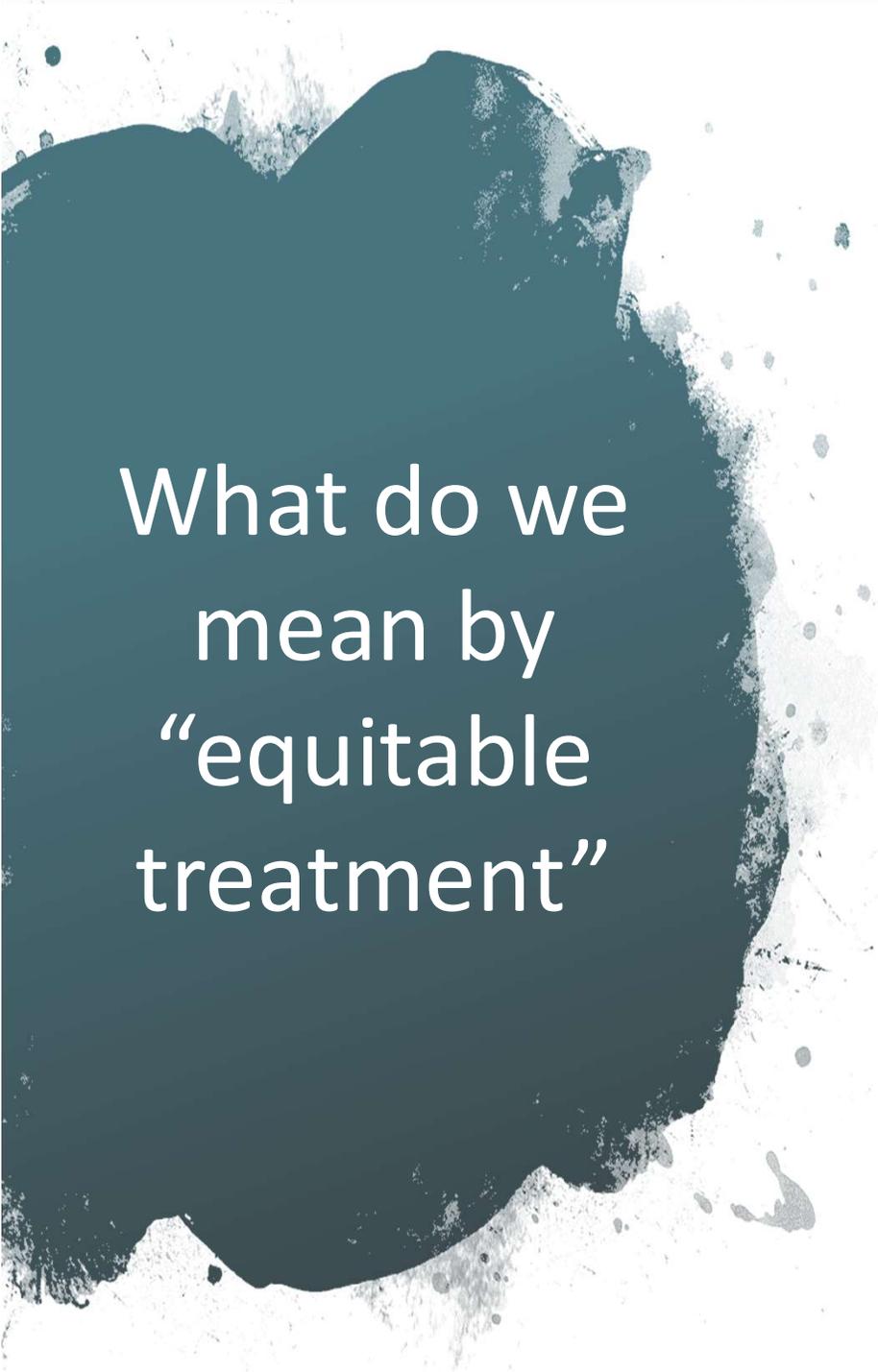
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[Michigan.gov/environmentaljustice](https://Michigan.gov/environmentaljustice)



## What is Environmental Justice?

Environmental Justice is the **equitable treatment** and **meaningful involvement** of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, ability or income and is critical to the development and application of laws, regulations, and policies that affect the environment, as well as the places people live, work, play, worship and learn.



# What do we mean by “equitable treatment”

No group of people bears a disproportionate share of the negative consequences resulting from governmental, industrial or commercial operations and policies

All people benefit from the application of laws and regulations

Eliminating barriers such as poverty and lack of access, as well as repairing systemic injustices

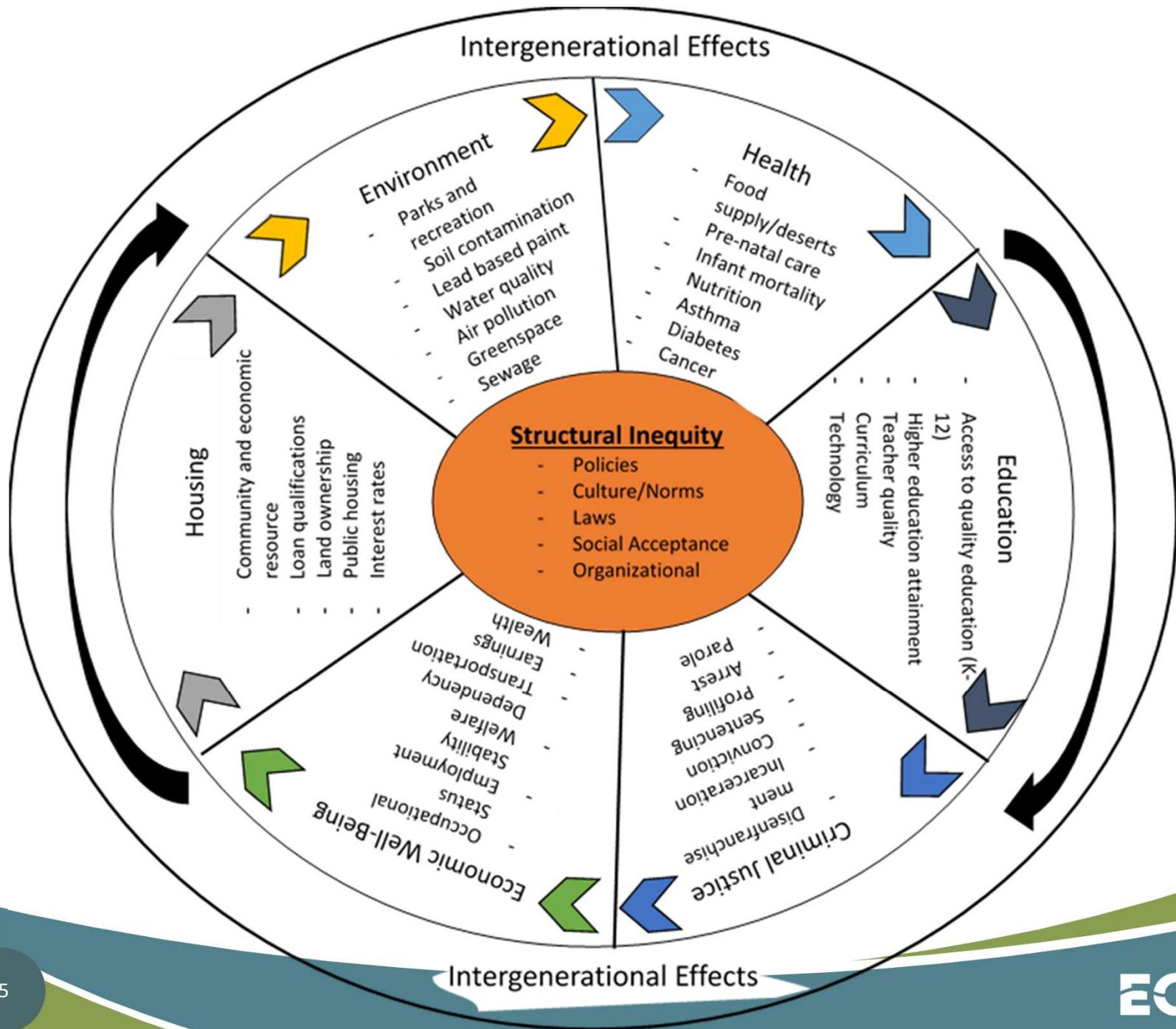
# What do we mean by “meaningful involvement”

People have an opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their environment and/or health

Decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected

People’s concerns are considered in decision-making processes

People can influence state agency decisions



# Disparate Impact Factors



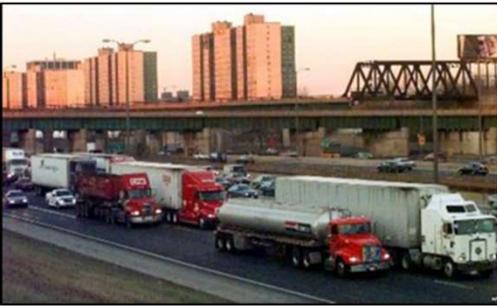
Proximity and Exposure



Unique Exposure Pathways



Physical Infrastructure



Cumulative Impacts



Public Participation



Vulnerable Populations

# The Intersection of EJ and Racial Inequities

- The intersection of environmental justice and racial disparities is at the core of our work addressing inequities that put communities of color at a disadvantage.
- The creation of a work group to address existing inequities that were exacerbated by the onset of the pandemic provided a vehicle to explore options.

# RDTF & MACEJ Work Group

- Includes members of both the Racial Disparities Task Force on Coronavirus and the Michigan Advisory Council on Environmental Justice.
- Focused on short- and long-term opportunities to address disparate impacts of air quality and COVID 19

# Work Group Recommendations

- **Integrate environmental justice into climate initiatives**
- **Increase air monitoring -- PM 2.5**
- **Provide air quality assessments in EJ community schools**
- **Enhance Statewide Emergency Notification System**
- *Investigate Opportunities for PM 2.5 mask filters*

# Intersection Climate and Justice

- The 14-member Climate Solutions Council began meeting in March
- **A 5-member Climate Justice Brain Trust was created, which includes members of the MACEJ**
- Braintrust is play a role in incorporating equity into development of the MI Healthy Climate plan.

# Air Quality in Schools

- Program originated with a focus on schools in environmental justice communities
- Designed to provide an indoor air quality assessment for school buildings (HVAC assessments)
- Grants available to cover costs of assessments
- Providing recommendations for improvements to make indoor air more protective from virus spread

# EJ Community School Air Quality Assessments



- HVAC system assessments to assess updates to protect students in environmental justice communities from air poor quality and exposure to COVID-19
- Funding has been set aside for schools in EJ Community HVAC assessments (SW Detroit)
- Provide recommendations for improvements
- Identifying funding to assist with air quality improvements
- Building on broader K12 schools funding for air quality assessments



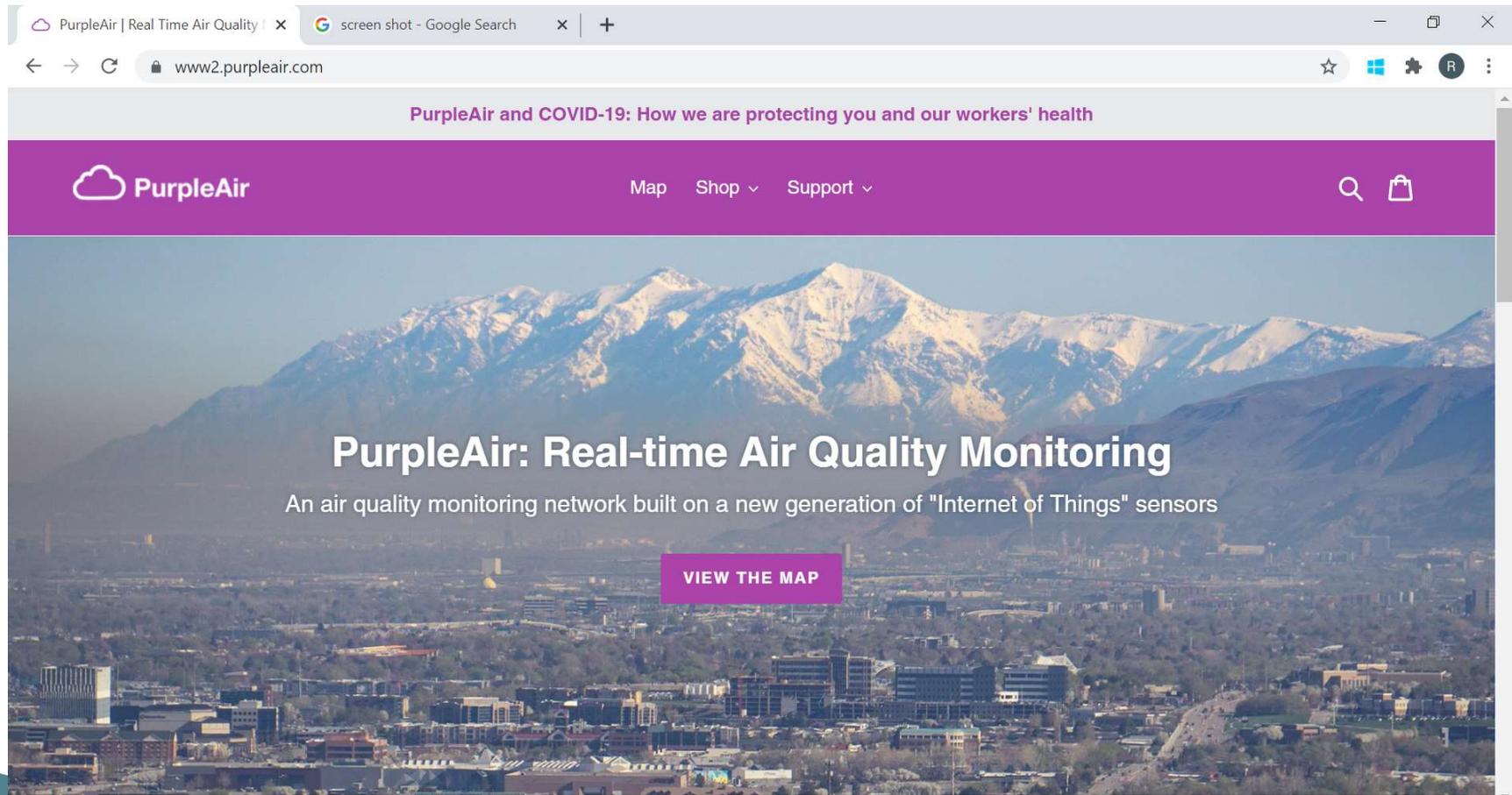
# Partners

- EGLE – Energy Office, OEJPA
- Michigan Department of Education
- Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity
- Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs
- Michigan School Business Officials
- School Nutrition Association of Michigan
- Detroit and Western ASHRAE Chapters
- Michigan Energy Efficiency Contractors Association
- National Association of State Energy Officials
- National Association Energy Services Companies
- Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioner Companies
- Energy Service Providers
- Department of Energy

# EJ Community Air Monitoring Project

- In response to concerns regarding air borne nature of COVID 19 and existing air quality issues
- Collaboration with EGLE Air Quality Division Air Monitoring Unit to develop a project targeting environmental justice communities with desire for additional monitoring/sensors
- 10 Purple Air monitors for deployment to do short term air monitoring at varying locations
- Purple Air monitors primarily track fine particulate matter
- Assessment of mobile monitors with existing stationary monitors prior to actions in communities.
- Monitors been assessed by AQD
- Deployment begins this summer

# Purple Air Monitoring System



# Office of Environmental Justice Public Advocate and MACEJ/RDTF

- Working collaboratively toward work group goals
- Emergency Notification exploration continues
- Assessment of EJ Community schools air quality is ongoing
- Identifying funding for HVAC work in schools in low-income and EJ communities through American Jobs Plan and American Rescue Plan funding



# Questions?

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