

## CUMULATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

CDPH, the Office of Climate & Environmental Equity (OCEE), and the Environmental Equity Working Group (EEWG) conducted a 15-month-long baseline Cumulative Impact Assessment using funding in the Chicago Recovery Plan. This Assessment, co-led and co-designed with people and organizations who are impacted by environmental injustices every day, **identifies neighborhoods that experience the greatest cumulative impacts**. This process also included consideration of both historic and current community input prior to, and during the assessment.



## WHAT ARE CUMULATIVE IMPACTS?

**Certain communities experience unequal exposure to multiple environmental, health, and social stressors.** These are referred to as cumulative impacts. Cumulative impacts add up over time to make communities more vulnerable to negative health outcomes.

## CHICAGO'S HISTORY

**Chicago has a rich history of community-led environmental justice advocacy.** For years, Chicago's environmental justice organizations and community members have voiced concerns about cumulative impacts. They have described how intensive industrial development and other environmental stressors affect health and quality of life in their neighborhoods, and called upon the City to recognize and remedy the harm caused by policies that compound cumulative burdens in certain parts of Chicago.

## KEY FINDINGS

The Chicago Environmental Justice (EJ) Index map shows that the areas of greatest concern for pollution burdens and vulnerability to its effects are located on the South and West Sides of the city. EJ Neighborhoods are designated as census tracts with:

- A Chicago EJ Index Score of 75 or greater; or,
- A Chicago EJ Index score of 70 or greater and contiguous with another census tract with a Chicago EJ Index Score of 75 or greater.

These EJ Neighborhoods are often bisected by major highways and have high concentrations of industry.

## ASSESSMENT DELIVERABLES:

- A Chicago EJ Index and map that identifies EJ Neighborhoods
- An EJ Action Plan that includes dozens of specific, actionable policy changes that can be implemented now and developed in partnership with more than 10 City departments
- EJ/cumulative impact policy recommendations
- Two community input summaries - one with input from before the Assessment on City actions, and another with feedback on deliverables provided during the Assessment's engagement events

## NEXT STEPS

CDPH, OCEE, and the EEWG will continue to support strategies in the Chicago EJ Action Plan; finalize and advocate for the EJ and Cumulative Impacts ordinance; develop a public-facing data dashboard; and continue community engagement to strengthen and ensure ongoing accountability.



## RESOURCES

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
[CHICAGO.GOV/CUMULATIVEIMPACT](https://chicago.gov/cumulativeimpact)

