



The Community PACE-Setter

The Official Newsletter of the Multnomah County PACE-EH Community Coalition

Summer/Fall 2004



**EXTRA! EXTRA!
Special Double Issue**

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

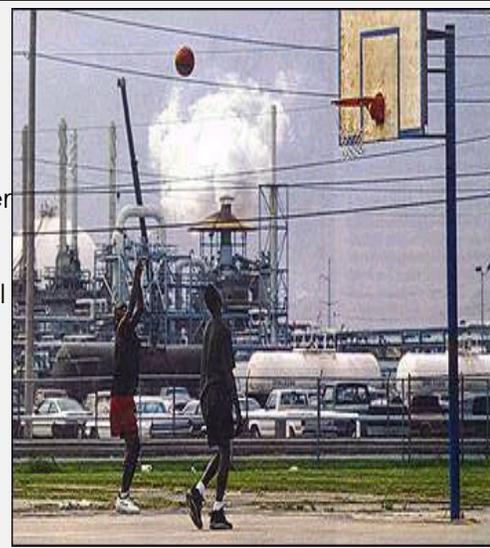
The Community PACE-Setter takes a look at Environmental Justice in Portland and beyond!



What is Environmental Justice?

The 1991 People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit adopted Principles of Environmental Justice covering an extensive range of topics. Environmental justice has been broadly defined as “the pursuit of equal justice and equal protection under the law for all environmental statutes and regulations without discrimination based on race, ethnicity, and /or socioeconomic status” and also as one of four related concepts including environmental equity, environmental racism, and environmental classism.

The definition of environmental justice used by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency focuses on “disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences” which flow either directly from “industrial, municipal, and commercial operations” or indirectly from the way that “federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies” are carried out. The National Governors Association definition focuses more specifically on “protect[ing] minority and low-income communities from bearing a disproportionate share of pollution.”



Only a narrow street separates Diamond, an African-American community in Norco, from a giant Shell refinery and chemical plant. This basketball court, all that's left of a school that once stood on the site, is a stone's throw from the smokestacks.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Hardly a day passes without the media discovering some community or neighborhood fighting a landfill, incinerator, chemical plant, or some other polluting industry. This was not always the case. Just three decades ago, the concept of environmental justice had

not registered on the radar screens of environmental, civil rights, or social justice groups.¹ Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. went to Memphis in 1968 on an environmental and economic justice mission for the striking black garbage workers. The strikers were demanding equal pay and better work conditions. Of course, Dr. King was assassinated before he could complete his mission. Another landmark garbage dispute took place a decade later in Houston, when African American homeowners in 1979 began a bitter fight to keep a sanitary landfill out of their suburban middle-income neighborhood.² Residents formed the Northeast Community Action Group or NECAG. NECAG and their attorney, Linda McKeever Bullard, filed a class action lawsuit to block the facility from being built. The 1979 lawsuit, *Bean v. Southwestern Waste Management, Inc.*, was the first of its kind to challenge the siting of a waste facility under civil rights law.



Warren County (NC) PCB Landfill Protest--1982

The landmark Houston case occurred three years before the environmental justice movement was catapulted into the national limelight in the rural and mostly African American Warren County, North Carolina. The environmental justice movement has come a long way since its humble beginning in Warren County, North Carolina where a PCB landfill ignited protests and over 500 arrests. The Warren County protests provided the impetus for an U.S. General Accounting Office study, *Siting of Hazardous Waste Landfills and Their Correlation with Racial and Economic Status of Surrounding Communities*.³ That study revealed that three out of four of the off-site, commercial hazardous waste landfills in Region 4 (which comprises eight states in the South) happen to be located in predominantly African-American communities, although African-Americans made up only 20% of the region's population. More important, the protesters put “environmental racism” on the map. Fifteen years later, the state of North Carolina is required to spend over \$25 million to cleanup and detoxify the Warren County PCB landfill.

The 1991 First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit was probably the most important single event in the movement's history. The Summit broadened the environmental justice movement beyond its early anti-toxics focus to include issues of public health, worker safety, land use, transportation, housing, resource allocation, and community empowerment.⁵ The meeting also demonstrated that it is possible to build a multi-racial grassroots movement around environmental and economic justice.⁶ Held in Washington, DC, the four-day Summit was attended by over 650 grassroots and national leaders from around the world. Delegates came from all fifty states including Alaska and Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Chile, Mexico, and as far away as the Marshall Islands. People attended the Summit to share their action strategies, redefine the environmental movement, and develop common plans for addressing environmental problems affecting people of color in the United States and around the world.

On September 27, 1991, Summit delegates adopted 17 “[Principles of Environmental Justice](#).” These principles were developed as a guide for organizing, networking, and relating to government and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). By June 1992, Spanish and Portuguese translations of the Principles were being used and circulated by NGOs and environmental justice groups at the Earth

**Principles of Environmental Justice
The First People of Color Leadership Summit
October 24-27, 1991 Washington D.C.**

Preamble

We, the people of color, gathered together at this multi-national People of Color Leadership Summit to begin to build a national and international movement of all peoples of color to fight the destruction and taking of our lands and communities, do hereby re-establish our spiritual interdependence to the sacredness of our Mother Earth; to respect and celebrate each of our cultures, languages and beliefs about the natural world and our roles, in healing ourselves; to ensure environmental justice; to promote economic alternatives which would contribute to the development of environmentally safe livelihoods; and to secure our political, economic and cultural liberation that has been denied for over 500 years of colonization and oppression, resulting in the poisoning of our communities and land and the genocide of our peoples, do affirm, and adopt these Principles of Environmental Justice:

1. Environmental Justice affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction.

2. Environmental Justice demands that public policy be based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination or bias.

3. Environmental Justice mandates the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for humans and other living things.

4. Environmental Justice calls for the universal protection from extraction, production and disposal of toxic/hazardous wastes and poisons and nuclear testing that threaten the fundamental right to clean air, water and food.

5. Environmental Justice affirms the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples.

6. Environmental Justice demands the cessation of the production of all toxins, hazardous wastes, and radioactive materials, and that all past and current producers be held strictly accountable to the people for detoxification and the containment at the point of production.

7. Environmental Justice demands the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision-making including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.

8. Environmental Justice affirms the right of workers to a safe and healthy work environment, without being forced to choose between an unsafe livelihood and unemployment. It also affirms the right to those who work at home to be free from environmental hazards.

9. Environmental Justice protects the rights of victims of environmental injustice to receive full compensation and reparations for damages as well as quality health care.

**EJ Legalese ("Wonk")
Executive Order 12898 and
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act**

Executive Order 12898

In February of 1994, President Clinton signed an executive order that required all federal agencies to develop strategies for incorporating environmental justice concerns into their regulatory, policy-making and enforcement strategies. US EPA's Office of Environmental Justice is supposed to play a central role in coordinating inter-agency activities on the President's executive order. EPA also established the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC). The objective of the Commission is to advise the Agency on how to incorporate environmental justice into the areas of environmental health research, enforcement and penalty assessment, public participation in rule-making, and facility siting decisions.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act

EPA's Office of Civil Rights administers the agency's compliance program under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in all programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Although Title VI itself prohibits intentional discrimination, the Supreme Court ruled that Title VI authorizes federal agencies, including EPA, to adopt implementing regulations that prohibit discriminatory effects as well as intentional discrimination. Frequently, discrimination results from policies and practices that on their face are neutral, but have discriminating effects. EPA has developed a Title VI Guidance for investigating complaints of discrimination in permitting decisions.

10. Environmental Justice considers governmental acts of environmental injustice a violation of international law, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, and the United Nations Convention on Genocide.

11. Environmental Justice must recognize a special legal and natural relationship of Native Peoples to the U.S. Government through treaties, agreements, compacts, and covenants, affirming sovereignty and self-determination.

12. Environmental Justice affirms the need for urban and rural ecological policies that clean up and rebuild our cities and urban areas in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of our communities, and providing fair access for all to the full range of resources.

13. Environmental Justice calls for the strict enforcement of principles of informed consent, and a halt to the testing of experimental reproductive and medical procedures and vaccinations on people of color.

14. Environmental Justice opposes the destructive operations of multi-national corporations.

15. Environmental Justice opposes military occupation, repression, and exploitation of lands, peoples, and cultures, and other life forms.

16. Environmental Justice calls for education of present and future generations which emphasizes social and environmental issues, based on our experience and an appreciation for our diverse cultural perspectives.

17. Environmental Justice requires that we, as individuals, make personal and consumer choices to consume as little of Mother Earth's resources and to produce as little waste as possible; and make the conscious decision to challenge and reprioritize our lifestyles to insure the health of the natural world for present and future generations.



APR PHOTO

Local Environmental Justice Activism in Portland Metro

The Environmental Justice Action Group (EJAG)

"A community that educates itself and speaks out for itself can best protect itself."---EJAG Motto



EJAG Air Quality Organizer Sylvia Evans is organizing citizens in N/NE Portland around indoor and outdoor air quality issues

"No More Lanes"—EJAG Defeats expansion of 1-5 Freeway

The Environmental Justice Action Group (EJAG) is a community based organization with over 300 members working on environmental justice issues in the North and Northeast neighborhoods of Portland, Oregon.

Threatened with a highway expansion proposal that would further divide their neighborhood and increase the already alarming asthma rate, EJAG launched the "No More Lanes" campaign to bring the health and environmental needs of their community into the planning process.



Jeri Sundvall, Executive Director of EJAG

EJAG had their first major victory in 2002 after the Bi-State task force voted against the four-lane freeway expansion proposal. Now the dialogue has shifted to other transit options such as an expansion of the light rail system and possibly paying reparations to those residents who may suffer the negative affects of construction. Initially EJAG worked to gain a voice in the planning process and was eventually invited to have a representative on the task force overseeing the project's development. EJAG has worked hard to make the task force accountable to the resident's effected by the proposed expansion. Because of their involvement, the meetings have been moved to a community center in the neighborhood and have been restructured to include time for public comment.

North/Northeast Portland Brownfield Showcase Community Advisory Committee

Community Activists lead and determine Brownfield work in N/NE Portland neighborhoods

In May 1997, Vice President Gore Announced a Brownfields National Partnership to bring together the resources of more than 15 Federal agencies to address local cleanup and reuse issues in a more coordinated manner. This multi-agency partnership pledged support to 16 "Brownfields Showcase Communities" - models demonstrating the benefits of collaborative activity on brownfields. Portland was selected as a Showcase community in 1998 because of its commitment to brownfields redevelopment, as well as the strong relationships already established among local, state, and federal partners. Brownfields redevelopment efforts in Portland have resulted in an increase in mixed-use development in the city, while preventing urban sprawl.



One of the key components of the Showcase program in Portland has been community involvement. Community members formed the North/Northeast Portland Brownfield Community Advisory Committee (CAC), which worked closely with property and business owners to identify potential brownfield properties for inclusion in the program. Property owners made presentations at community forums, describing their plans for redevelopment. Community members voted on proposed properties, and final recommendations were made to the Portland Brownfield Showcase Policy Committee, a 20-member board made up of the Mayor, a City Commissioner, several other elected officials, representatives from federal, state and local organizations, and community members. The CAC recommendations, introduced at the July and October, 2000 Policy Committee Meetings, were unanimously accepted.

EJ Activism through Academia: PSU School of Community Health

Assistant Professor Stephanie Farquhar broadens her MPH curricula at Portland State University

Stephanie Ann Farquhar is Assistant Professor of Community Health at Portland State University and a member of the Community Coalition. Dr. Farquhar draws primarily from the principles of community-based participatory research to address issues of social and environmental equity as it relates to health. She is currently working with community organizations and local agencies to examine environmental justice issues in Oregon. She teaches Health Promotion Program Planning, Community Organizing, and Foundations of Public Health, integrating knowledge of social and environmental justice issues into public health and further broadening the scope for her graduate students to better understand the effects of environment on human health and at-risk populations..



Stephanie Farquhar, PhD

Additionally, in partnership with Multnomah County Health Department and several community organizations, Dr. Farquhar is principal investigator of a 3-year Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) grant to examine the role of Community Health Workers and popular education in Latino and African American communities in Portland, Oregon. She is also investigator on a 4-year National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) grant that seeks to reduce pesticide exposure among indigenous farmworkers in Oregon. Dr. Farquhar also serves on the board of the Oregon Center for Environmental Health and the Sustainable Development Commission.

More About Environmental Justice

DID YOU KNOW.....

The population of the U.S. is about 70% white and 30% minority. Yet, in many health jobs that identify and remedy environmental illness - epidemiology, family practice, and nursing - 80% to 90% of the health professionals are white. Poor minority communities are medically underserved. This is due, in part, to the lack of service provided by white health professionals. The leadership of state and federal environmental health agencies, as well as non-profit environmental health groups, remains overwhelmingly white, while environmental illness threatens poor minority communities more than other communities. Recent reports from the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine recommend greater racial diversity among health professionals as vital to achieving environmental justice. In response to the shortage of minority health professionals, the American Medical Association and American Nurses Association have responded with funds and diversity policies as have private foundations such as the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.



Grassroots Activism in the East!

Bridgeport councilwoman and community activist Shirley Bean has a reason to smile, because the city's Planning and Zoning Commission has denied proposals for an asphalt plant on her street. A grassroots campaign that included a virtual siege of the mayor's office changed the political climate in the much dumped-upon city.

Nasty-Wasty Pollution in Louisiana!



"Cancer Alley" in all its glory, an unbroken string of heavy industry, refineries and chemical plants that follows the Mississippi River from Baton Rouge to New Orleans.

Now all of the issues of environmental racism and environmental justice don't just deal with people of color. We are just as much concerned with inequities in Appalachia, for example, where the whites are basically dumped on because of lack of economic and political clout and lack of having a voice to say "no" and that's environmental injustice.

-Dr. Robert Bullard

Direct Action!

© 2003 Susan Bassein



Did you know that according to its own reports, industry tries to avoid opposition by choosing locations where people are poor and less well educated to site nuclear and toxic waste dumps? The people need to educate and organize themselves against those dumps because the government doesn't stop them from being built. But we can!

Coalition Co-sponsors Environmental Justice Trainings for Community Citizens from around the Pacific NW attend; Trainings a great success!

The PACE-EH Community Coalition cosponsored a series of environmental justice trainings in September geared for community advocates and governmental agencies to better understand the history, nuances, and significant aspects of environmental justice in both Portland and the United States. The goal and intent of the 4 workshops focused on giving individuals tools to advocate for community-based solutions to environmental health problems, strategies in obtaining meaningful involvement in government decision-making, the legal rights of citizens, how to work with the media effectively, the roles of a government employee in implementing environmental justice, and how government and community can work together to solve problems and create change. The jam packed sessions brought together a diverse audience and was a resounding success for both attendees and presenters.



The coalition would like to thank fellow cosponsors and coalition members the **Environmental Justice Action Group** and **Jeri Sundvall**, **Cascade Advisory Resource Group**, the **Multnomah County Health Department**, the **Environmental Protection Agency**, and Workshop facilitator and trainer **Greg Wolley**. And a special thanks to EJ Activists and Advocates **Robin Morris Collin** and **Bob Collin**, who presented and facilitated the policy and legal pieces of the trainings and enlivened the audiences with stories of their work in both Oregon and the US.

EJ Training Planning Committee



Greg Wolley, Facilitator



Tricia Tillman, MCHD



Charles Bishop, PACE-EH Coalition



Rahna Epting, CRAG

EJ Training Presenters and Speakers



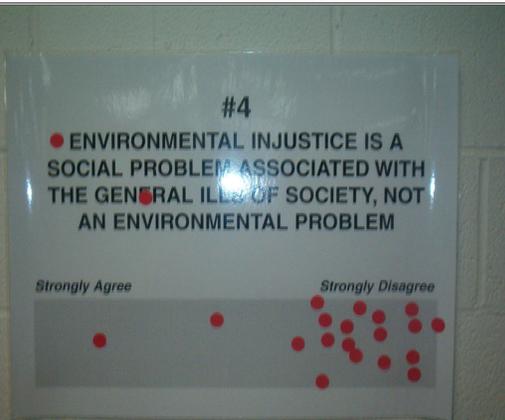
Robin Morris Collin, Willamette University School of



Robert Collin, Willamette University



Jeri Sundvall, EJAG



Workshop Attendees Participated in Interactive Training Exercises including Creating a Timeline of Environmental Justice and Understanding what Environmental Justice is via Questions and Statements





“Images of Environmental Justice”
1st Annual Community Coalition EJ Training---2004



Community Coalition Quick Facts

49 Endorsed Members of Coalition

5 Environmental Justice Communities in Multnomah County

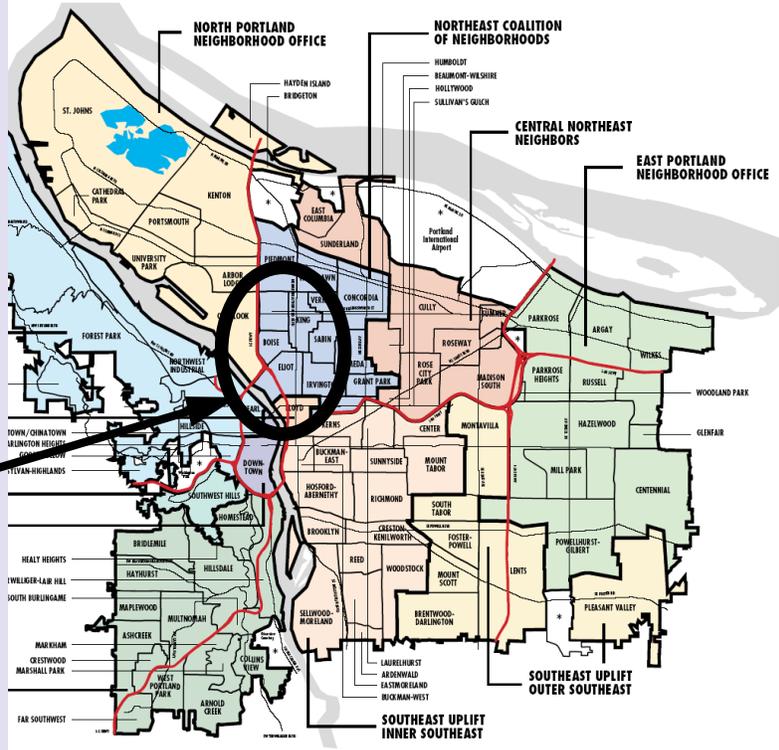
10 Community Coalition Meetings and Faith-Based Gatherings have been organized

Newsletter and Virtual List Serve/Alert List have been created for issue and message dissemination—583 community members and citizens have signed up for the on-line alert list and newsletter

1st Community Assessment Pilot Project: North and Northeast Portland Affordable Housing Community (8 Multi-Family Housing Complexes)

84 Residents of Multi-Family Housing participated in Community Assessment activities

Prioritized Issues Derived from Assessment: Mold, Lead and Trash



Recommendations from the Community Assessment Team

The PACE EH Community Coalition Assessment team created 9 recommendations to address assessment findings in June 2004, urging the Community Coalition to consider the following when planning actions for community intervention:

The PACE Community Coalition should:

1. Help residents, property managers, and owners work together to identify and solve environmental health problems affecting multi-family affordable housing units.
2. Work with existing organizations to inform residents, management, and owners about mold, trash, and lead issues.
3. Advocate for health-based, sustainable building practices and property development to prevent problems such as mold and insufficient garbage facilities in future housing developments.
4. Investigate the causes for the shortage of dumpsters in housing areas.
5. Help residents organize neighborhood cleanups.
6. Work with community partners to educate residents about how to protect children from lead problems, and how to get homes and children tested for lead.
7. Partner with housing groups to advocate for health-based priorities in housing maintenance standards and compliance with housing codes.
8. Promote Tenant's Rights training for community residents.
9. Increase PACE's ability to work effectively with multiple cultures living in affordable housing.

**If we want a beloved community,
we must stand for justice,
have recognition for difference
without attaching difference to privilege**
—Bell Hooks



Community Coalition Update

The Coalition gets Public Health Prevention Specialist from CDC

The Community Coalition welcomes CDC Public Health Prevention Specialist Andrea (Onie) Greiling. Onie is a 2nd year fellow in a 3-year training program devoted to competency development in public health program management.

While at CDC she worked with the Air Pollution and Respiratory Health Branch on a variety of asthma programs and medication policies for school children and the emergency medical services. Prior to her work with CDC she held program management positions at the local level on a variety of nutrition and maternal and child health programs. She earned her Master's degree in Public Health with an emphasis on Health Education and Behavioral Sciences from the University of Arizona in 2003, and a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition from San Diego State University in 1999.

Her public health areas of interest included cultural competence, community/systems development, chronic disease prevention, behavioral and environmental health, and children's health. A Seattle native, she loves being back in the natural beauty of the Northwest! Onie hopes to meet everyone involved with PACE EH and work with them over the next two years to increase awareness to environmental health and environmental justice issues in the Portland area. Please contact her at the Multnomah County Health Department at andrea.k.greiling@co.multnomah.or.us



Andrea (Onie) Greiling



Master Home Environmental Class will graduate Nov. 17th

A fresh crop of Trained Master Home Environmentalist (MHE) volunteers will be graduating on November 17th at the NE Health Center. The MHE program is a trainer-to-trainer course from coalition member the American Lung Association of Oregon. MHE graduates and certified volunteers use a Home Environmental Assessment List (HEAL) to help identify health hazards in your home. You and the MHE can do a walk-through of your home, looking at different problem areas, or by sitting at a table and going through the list. The two of you then develop an action plan and prioritize steps you can take to create a healthier home environment, with an emphasis on low-cost and no-cost solutions. The HEAL experience is a problem solving and educational process. No testing or cleaning is done by the MHE volunteer.

Why the MHE Program?

People spend about 90% of their time indoors, and thanks to our more tightly insulated/sealed homes and workplaces, the concentration of pollutants indoors is equal to or greater than outdoors. Major indoor pollutants include; molds, and dust mites, radon; combustion products stemming from sources such as stoves, furnaces, fireplaces, and heaters; biological pollutants such as pet dander, pollen; volatile organic compounds present in paints, cleaners, pesticides, copiers, printers, art supplies, glues, and adhesives; lead dust from old, lead-based paints; asbestos, and environmental tobacco smoke (secondhand smoke). You can become a Master Home Environmentalist yourself by participating in our free 35 hour training program and doing 35 hours of community service. For more information, call Rachel Langford at 503-924-4094.

We are now up and running on the World Wide Web. Find out information on the next coalition meeting, who's in the coalition and our next steps at:

www.pace-eh.org

National Association of County & City Health Officials Acknowledge Charles Bishop

Community Coalition organizer Charles Bishop was officially acknowledged by the National Association of County & City Health Officials



Community Connector Charles Bishop (Pre-Dreadlocks)

(NACCHO) for his work in the community coalition. Bishop presented in Albuquerque, NM in August at the invitation of NACCHO to talk about the organizing and community-assessment work of the community coalition for an audience of potential PACE-EH sites and stakeholders interested in environmental health and environmental justice issues. MCHD Executive Director Lillian Shirley also took time to acknowledge the work of Charles in her "Notes from the Director" email missive. Congratulations Charles!

PACE-EH Community Coalition Members--

WE CONTINUE TO GROW

- Multnomah County Health Department (MCHD)
- The Environmental Justice Action Group (EJAG)
- Portland State Univ.--School of Community Health
- Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ)-Oregon
- Community Energy Project
- American Lung Association of Oregon
- Environmental Justice Advocates
- Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU)
- Urban League of Portland
- Physicians for Social Responsibility-Oregon
- City of Portland--BHCD/Brownfields
- AEHAP (Association of EH Academic Programs)
- Concordia Neighborhood Association
- Environmental Protection Agency (Region 10)
- Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition (SEUL)
- Center for Environmental Equity
- State of Oregon - Lead Based Paint Abatement
- Northwest Service Academy-Americorps Program
- Oregon Toxics Alliance
- Rose Community Services
- Independent Living Resources
- Coalition for A Livable Future
- Josiah Hill III Clinic
- Oregon Health Career Center
- HOST Development Inc.
- Oregon Department of Human Services
- Tri-Met-Diversity and Equity Program
- Upstream Public Health
- Humboldt Neighborhood Association
- Albina CDC
- Boise Neighborhood Association
- Plaza Neighbors Association (PNA)
- POWER
- ROOTS!
- African American Health Coalition (AAHC)
- Portland Community College--Cascade Campus
- YWCA of Portland-Housing Enrichment Center
- Vernon Neighborhood Association
- Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods (NECN)
- Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT)
- Albina Youth Opportunities School (AYOS)
- Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc.
- Cascade Resource Advisory Group (CRAG)
- Multnomah County Commissioner Serena Cruz
- Concerned Citizens of Multnomah County

And Many More.....

Get Involved with the Community Coalition, TODAY!

Call us at 503-988-3663 Ext. 22439

Kevin Raymond Odell and Charles E. Bishop

Multnomah County PACE-EH Community Coalition

MO31

Multnomah County PACE-EH

727 NE 24th Avenue

PORTLAND, OREGON 97232