

VIII. Environmental Quality

Title:	Data Source:	Publish Date:	Contact:
Summer Quarterly Report, East Palo Alto Air Monitoring Project	Community Development Institute (CDI)	September 24, 2006	Carlos Chavez, CDI 650-327-5846 carlos@cdi-usa.org

Major Findings

Ozone and particulate matter data for the 2006 summer quarter is fairly consistent with levels in other parts of the Bay Area. Ozone data is consistent with measurements taken from other locations monitored by the BAAQMD, and indicates that only one day exceeded the federal 8-Hour ozone standards. The data indicates a normal diurnal variation peaking in the late afternoon. Particulate matter data is similarly consistent; however there are several outliers which have yet to be explained. This includes several instances of PM10 and PM2.5 data which exceeds average values by over 3 times the standard deviation. It is feasible that these measurements are real events, from a local source such as a BBQ.

Why is this Topic Important?

Rates of asthma and other respiratory diseases are higher in East Palo Alto than in the rest of San Mateo County. While the reasons for these higher rates are not known, poor air quality is known to contribute to asthma and respiratory problems. It has been speculated that high traffic volumes in East Palo Alto and industrial operations in the eastern portion of the City may negatively impact air quality. Regulatory agencies do not currently monitor air quality in East Palo Alto. For this reason, CDI entered into a contract with the City of East Palo Alto to set up air monitors under a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Resources

For more information on this project, please contact the Community Development Institute at 650-327-5846. Additional air monitoring reports will be available in the future.

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You Think You Know...But You Have No Idea: A Community Health Survey Report	Prepared by the Youth United for Community Action (YUCA) Health Survey Team	August 2005	YUCA 2135 Clarke Ave. EPA, CA 94303 (650) 322-9165 www.youthunit ed.net

Major Findings

- 55% of people in East Palo Alto (EPA) said that air quality in EPA is at least fair, poor or very poor
- 48% of the people in EPA report that the air in their community smells like smoke (not cigarette, BBQ or marijuana) daily or weekly, with 31% reported smelling smoke daily
- 14% of the people surveyed say that the air causes them to experience negative health effects (ex. Dizziness, coughing, gagging, choking, etc.
- 31% of the people surveyed have allergies
 - 33% of the people with allergies smell sewage daily
 - 74% of the people with allergies smell smoke daily
 - 93% of the people with allergies smell exhaust daily
- 23% of people surveyed suffer from headaches and/or dizziness
 - 49% of people who suffer from headaches and dizziness smell exhaust on a daily or weekly basis.
 - 56% of people who suffer from headaches and/or dizziness smell smoke on a daily or weekly basis

Why is this Topic Important?

In 1983, when the City of East Palo Alto became incorporated, residents gained direct control over our community for the first time. Since then, the city has struggled with a land-use jigsaw puzzle created by years of racist and classist policies that shaped the city to be Silicon Valley’s dumping ground. Tracks of land that were and are host to a railspur right of way, auto wrecking yards, negligent chemical waste facilities, and the county dump remain contaminated by toxic substances including arsenic, chromium, pesticides, herbicides, and chlorinated solvents. East Palo Alto suffers from many environmental problems, like ground water contamination, contaminated land, air pollution, and corporate polluters. These hazardous problems could all be negatively affecting people’s health. That is why when people ask us why we fight for environmental justice, it is ultimately because we are fighting for our lives.

Title:	Data Source:	Publish Date:	Contact:
One East Palo Alto Community Survey Report	Prepared for the One East Palo Alto Neighborhood Improvement Initiative, East Palo Alto Community and Stakeholders by Empowerment Research!, a Program of the Community Development Institute.	March 2004	Dr. Faye McNair-Knox: mcnair@lepa.org or Lome: lome@cdi-usa.org

Blight Indicators Major Findings

- The blight indicator that residents were most concerned about is residential overcrowding at 16%.

- 13% of respondents expressed concern over abandoned vehicles in their neighborhood.

Why is this Topic Important?

Survey respondents were asked to rank the top 3 housing status issues in their neighborhood. This was meant to serve as an indicator for blight within the OEPA service area. The blight indicators that respondents were asked to rank are as follows: attractive nuisances (refrigerators, dryers, shopping carts, etc., in front yards), dilapidated housing (problems with exterior walls, deteriorated fixtures, foundation visibly weak, or roof in poor condition), graffiti, electrical or fire hazards, inoperable vehicles (unused cars in front of yards), overgrown vegetation or grass, residential overcrowding (parking or loitering), trash in yard, or vacant buildings/lots or boarded up houses. A plurality of respondents, 28%, believed that there were no issues relating to blight in their neighborhood.