

Environmental Health Disparities Map Assignment

You work for the state [Environmental Justice Task Force](#) as a representative of your local community. Your job is to compare and assess the environmental health of Washington, and your local community.

Environmental justice in Washington is when, “everyone—regardless of race, ethnicity, language, income, or other demographic factors—has the right to live, learn, work, and play in a clean, safe, and healthy environment We will know that we have successfully achieved EJ when we eradicate health inequities caused by environmental hazards.” - Washington Environmental Justice Task Force 2019-2021

Before you begin your community engagement strategy, you want to get an idea of how environmental health factors impact the diverse populations of Washington. To do this, you will use the Environmental Health Disparities Map. This map will help you visualize relationships between exposure to pollution and environmental hazards compared to socioeconomic factors such as income, race, education, and more.

Part one

Open up the [Environmental Health Disparities Map](#)

- 1) In the box on the left, you will see seven different categories. Click on each category and then click the “i” at the top of the box. This section contains information about each topic. Read the information for all topics and in your own words, summarize the information each topic displays in 2-3 sentences.
 - Environmental health disparities

 - Diesel pollution and disproportionate impact

 - Social vulnerability to COVID-19

 - Social vulnerability to hazards

 - Lead exposure risk

 - Health disparities

 - Planning for health.

- 2) Getting used to the map.
 - a. Click on Environmental Health Disparities V1.1.

Environmental Health Disparities Map Assignment

- b. Under Environmental effects click on Proximity to hazardous waste treatment storage and disposal facilities
 - c. Click the layers button at the top (three squares on top of another)
 - i. Select: tribal land boundary, ethnic radio stations, and prisons.
 - ii. Take a screen shot of the map and place it on a new page (in landscape orientation). Label the diagram.

- 3)
 - a. Click on Environmental Health Disparities V1.1.
 - b. Click on Wastewater discharge
 - c. Take a screen shot of the map and place it on a new page (in landscape orientation). Label the diagram (what information is being displayed?)

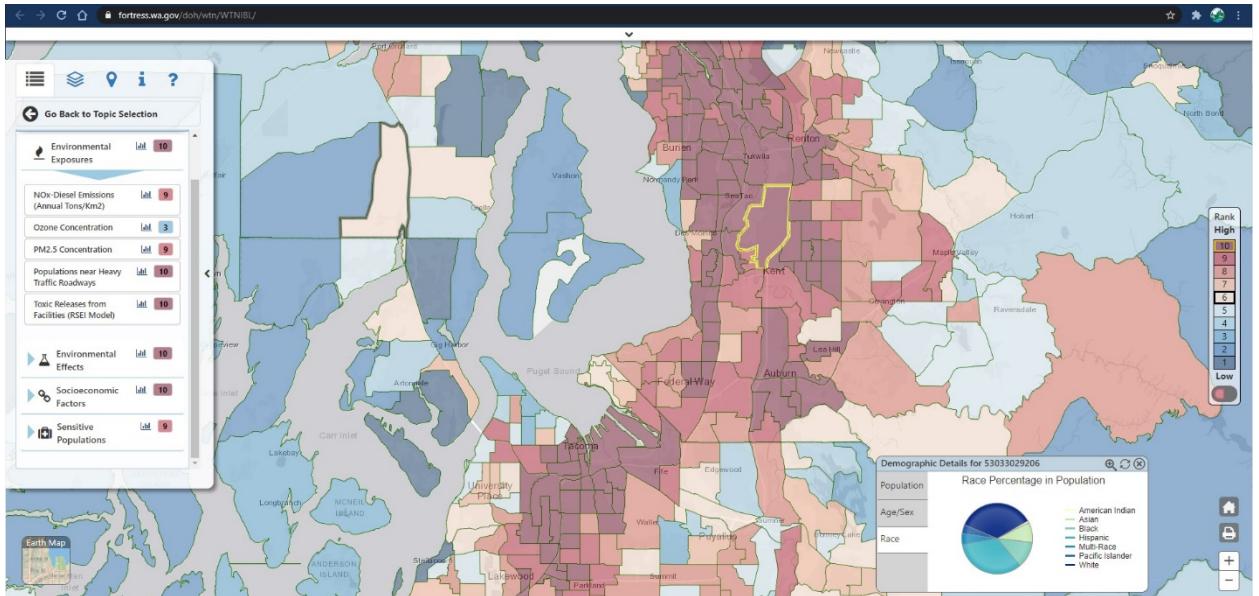
- 4)
 - a. Click on Socioeconomic factors
 - b. Click Population Living in Poverty
 - c. Take a screen shot of the map and place it on a new page (in landscape orientation). Label the diagram.

- 5)
 - a. Click on "Socioeconomic factors
 - b. Click People of color
 - c. Take a screen shot of the map and place it on a new page (in landscape orientation). Label the diagram.

- 6) Compare all five graphs and describe overlap between the graphs.
 - a. i.e., I noticed that tribal nations in central Washington experience a high burden of wastewater discharge (this may or may not be the case, but is used merely as an example).
 - b. Based on the graphs, what hypotheses can you make about where hazardous waste is treated and stored and where wastewater is discharged?

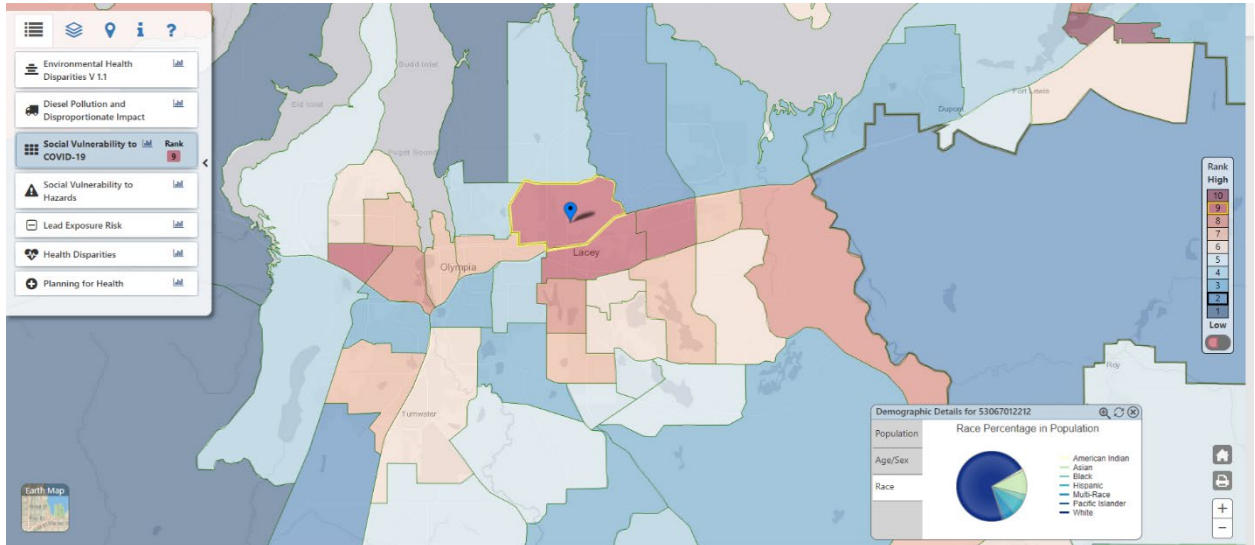
Environmental Health Disparities Map Assignment

- 7) a. Remove all layers.
- b. Click on Environmental Health Disparities V1.1.
- c. Zoom in and click on an area that is dark red (rated nine or ten). You will see this area is outlined in yellow and that different numbers populated in the box. (see example below)
- d. In the box to the left, explore the different rankings under each of the five sub-topics. Record all of these rankings.
- e. navigate back to the main topics page. Click on health disparities and explore and record the rankings of these subtopics.



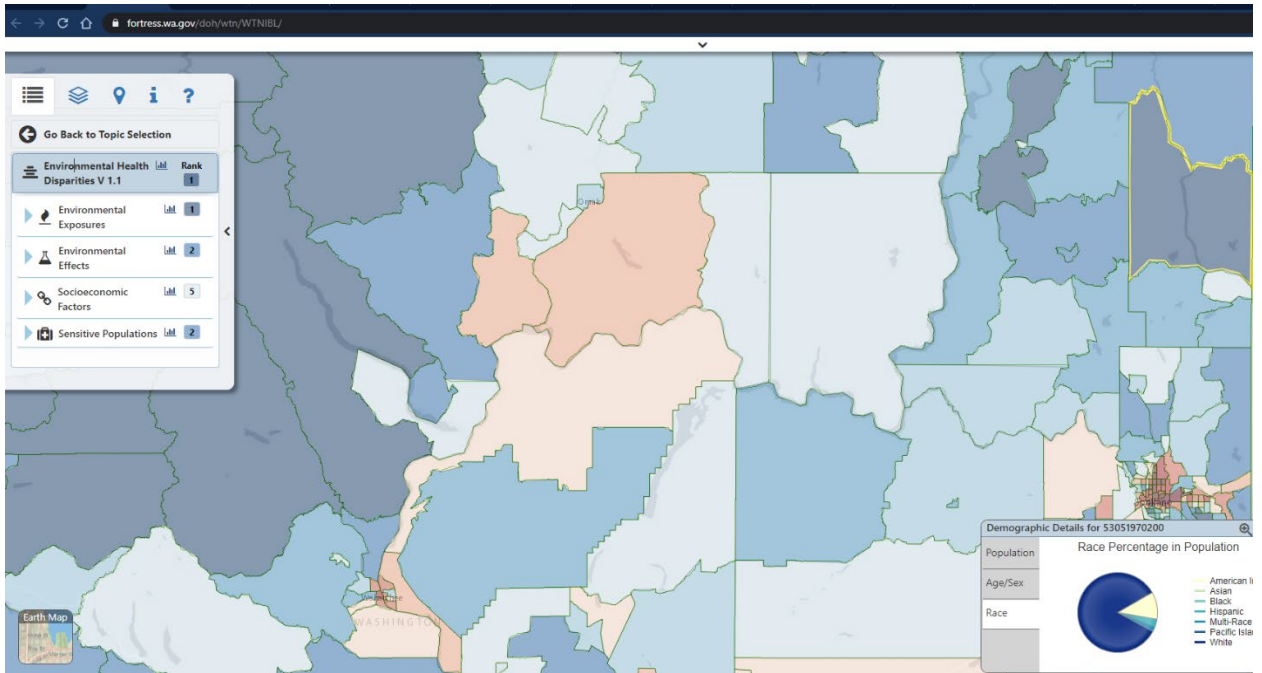
Environmental Health Disparities Map Assignment

- 8) a. click the locate icon at the top of the box (upside-down teardrop shape) and type in your address, or your school's address. This will populate what census tract you live in. (see example below)
- b. Click on Environmental Health Disparities V1.1.
- c. In the box to the left, explore the different rankings under each of the five sub-topics. Record all of these rankings.
- e. navigate back to the main topics page. Click on health disparities and explore and record the rankings of these subtopics.



Environmental Health Disparities Map Assignment

- 9) a. Remove your address.
- b. Click on Environmental Health Disparities
- c. Choose an area in dark blue (rated one or two). You will see this area is outlined in yellow and that different numbers populated in the box. (see example below)
- d. In the box to the left, explore the different rankings under each of the five sub-topics. Record all of these rankings.
- e. navigate back to the main topics page. Click on health disparities and explore and record the rankings of these subtopics.



Environmental Health Disparities Map Assignment

10) Synthesize and compare the data from all three geographic areas and make a hypothesis about any correlation between environmental health disparities and human health disparities.

(Remember [correlation is not always causation](#), but you are making a hypothesis based on the limited data you have from this map).

Consider:

- a. Race percentage per population. Is it primarily a community of color?
- b. Age and gender of population. Older or younger? Is gender distribution even? *
- c. Population living in federal poverty.
- d. Unfordable housing.
- e. Population 18-65 with no health insurance.
- f. Limited English
- g. other factors your find relevant to your data analysis.

**As of 2020, the United States Census Bureau did not collect gender information for those who identify as non-binary or other.*

Environmental Health Disparities Map Assignment

Part two

You and two other team members will compare your analysis of your collected data. Identify ways your analyses vary and ways they are similar. Together write a brief statement deciding whether your communities have achieved environmental justice citing data from your individual analyses.

Read through pages 14-17 of the [2020 Environmental Justice Task Force Final Report](#).

- Do the findings match your team's results? Explain why or why not.
- Any critiques of the findings? Explain.
- According to the report, environmental injustices disproportionately impact more low-income and communities of color. The Task Force made recommendations for state agencies to address the environmental disparities. Some of these include:
 - o Recommendation 1: In partnership with communities, agencies should create a standard method to develop, track, evaluate, and publish environmental justice and health goals focused on pollution reduction, eliminating environmental health disparities, and improving community engagement.
 - o Recommendation 2: Convene a permanent environmental justice interagency workgroup of relevant agency staff that includes members representing overburdened communities.
 - o Recommendation 5: Environmental justice considerations should be incorporated into a range of state environmental laws. Further, environmental and natural resource state agencies should consider environmental justice in developing agency request legislation, analyzing bills during legislative session, and conducting rule reviews.
 - o Recommendation 10: The EJTF recommends ensuring that enforcement and reporting processes are accessible to overburdened communities by elevating awareness and addressing barriers to access (such as technology, literacy, and language).
 - o Recommendation 25 (CE): Change state laws that restrict agencies from purchasing goods and services, such as childcare and food, which support broad community participation.
- You and your team will evaluate these recommendations and determine if they are feasible for the communities you're representing. Consider:
 - o Cost, Safety, Reliability, Aesthetics, Social impacts, Cultural impacts, Environmental impacts.
- Research what different policies or actions (historic or current) have impacted these various communities? Have these policies helped them achieve environmental justice, or created an injustice?
- What cultural relationships do different communities have to their environment, both generationally and traditionally? How might these affect how this communities interact with their ecosystems today?
- How should this information inform the Task Force on how to engage diverse groups of people?