

Gulf Coast Town Hall Meeting

February 24, 2021

Summary

Speakers:

- Charles Maguire, Division Director, EPA Region 6 Office of Water
- Kathy Eglund, Education, Economics, Environmental, Climate, Health and Organization (EEECHO)
- Joe Womack, Clean, Healthy, Educated, Safe, and Sustainable (CHESS) Community

Some key discussions:

- Participants noted that environmental health impacts are preventable; however, this is with the exception that the systemic injustices confronting color and class are still very real and prevalent factors in our society.
- Federal government should focus on prevention by looking at our environmental housing and health policies.
- Federal government should listen to and partner with frontline, grassroots, and faith-based communities and engage in periodic, strategic disaster response planning and training with community stakeholders.
- Funding needs to be distributed and tailored to environmental justice communities.
- There is a need to formalize disaster preparation into risk management plans so that it is not an afterthought.
- There is a need to create grants and incentives for building local infrastructure.
- It is necessary to educate federal, state, and local governments on environmental justice.

*Please note that these comments only reflect a portion of the discussion from the Town Hall Meeting. Key findings and recommendations from the meeting will be incorporated in a draft report to the EJ and Natural Disasters Subcommittee. If you have additional comments you would like to incorporate into the meeting notes, please email environmental-justice@epa.gov with the subject line "EJ and Natural Disaster Town Hall."