

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

EQUITY FOR ALL

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

is defined as "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies" (US EPA). In 1987, race was the most significant factor in siting hazardous waste facilities, and "three out of every five African Americans and Hispanics lived in a community housing toxic waste sites" (Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States). These numbers are not much better today.



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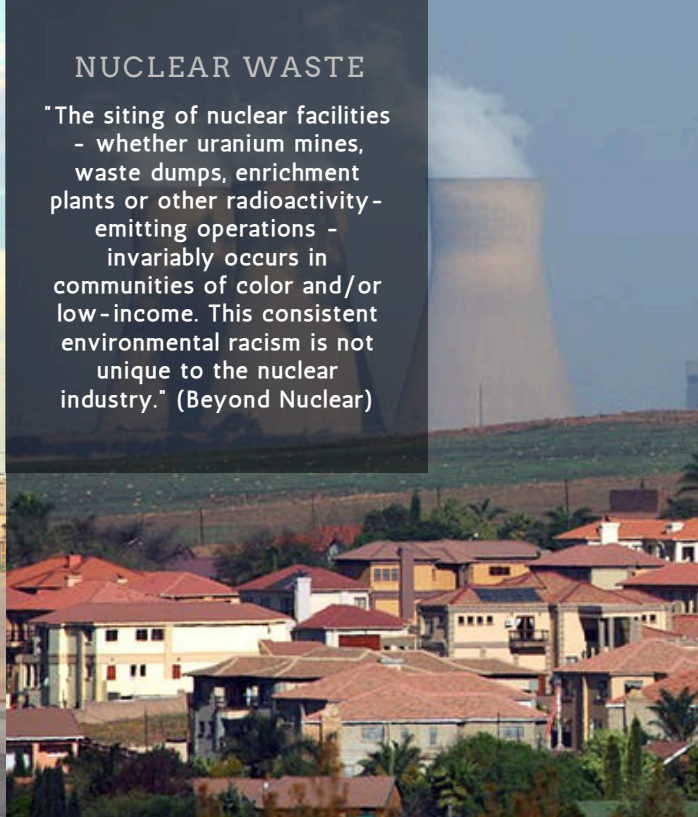
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN THE US

Environmental harms from various industrial facilities like nuclear power plants, coal power plants, oil refineries, and landfills disproportionately affect low income communities and communities of color. These plants are also disproportionately built in or near these communities.



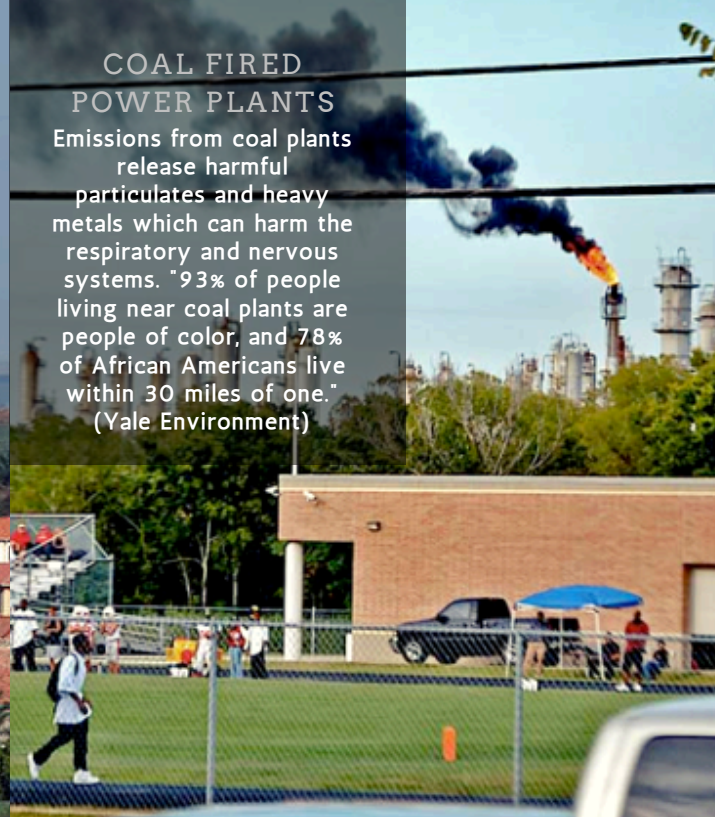
NUCLEAR WASTE

"The siting of nuclear facilities - whether uranium mines, waste dumps, enrichment plants or other radioactivity-emitting operations - invariably occurs in communities of color and/or low-income. This consistent environmental racism is not unique to the nuclear industry." (Beyond Nuclear)



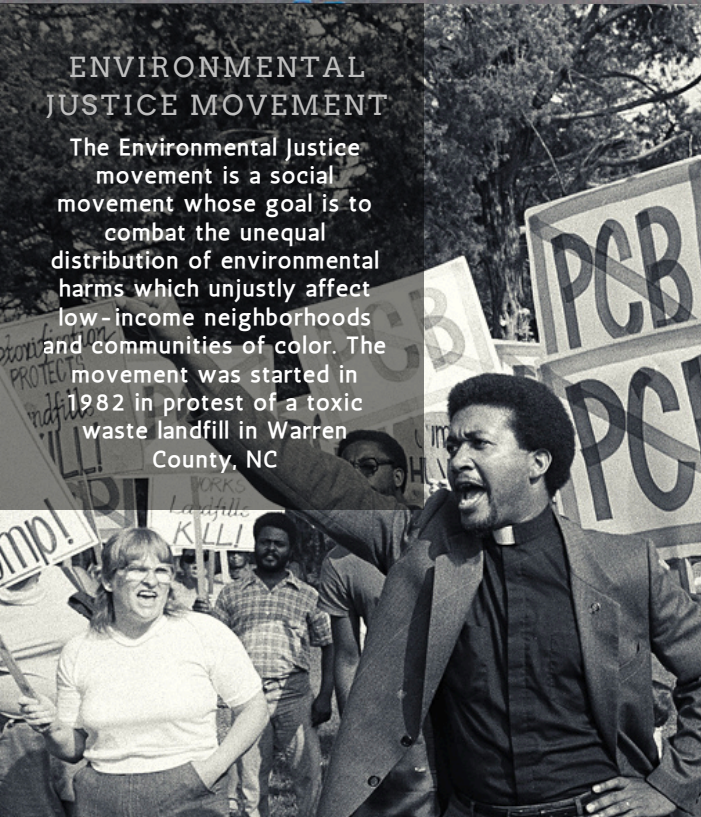
COAL FIRED POWER PLANTS

Emissions from coal plants release harmful particulates and heavy metals which can harm the respiratory and nervous systems. "93% of people living near coal plants are people of color, and 78% of African Americans live within 30 miles of one." (Yale Environment)



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT

The Environmental Justice movement is a social movement whose goal is to combat the unequal distribution of environmental harms which unjustly affect low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. The movement was started in 1982 in protest of a toxic waste landfill in Warren County, NC



OIL REFINERIES

Oil refineries are another source of harmful pollutants which can cause respiratory harm and pollute surrounding soil and water. The oil can also catch on fire, causing an even worse issue. In Richmond, CA, a Chevron oil refinery is sited right outside the community, causing many environmental and health problems.



LANDFILLS

Gases from landfills can cause respiratory issues and leachate can infiltrate the water table, contaminating local water supplies. Landfills are also sited disproportionately in low-income neighborhoods. The environmental justice movement was started over the siting of a toxic wastes landfill.

