

Minnesota Environmental Justice Framework Overview



July 10, 2017
Ned Books



Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Environmental Justice at MPCA

- ❑ Started work in early 1990s
- ❑ Renewed commitment in 2012
 - Increased national, local attention/concern
 - Minnesota government-wide efforts to reduce disparities
 - Strategic plan goal
- ❑ MPCA Environmental Justice Steering Team
 - Commissioner's Office, Division Directors
- ❑ 2 full-time staff



What is “environmental justice”?



MPCA and EPA definition:

Environmental Justice is 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.



Environmental Justice at MPCA- “Fair Treatment”

- All people benefit from equal levels of environmental protection and service
 - Pollution does not harm one group of people more than another
 - Protecting Minnesotans most at risk



Environmental Justice at MPCA – “Meaningful Involvement”

- All Minnesotans can participate in decisions that affect their environment and health
 - People can influence the decision
 - Everyone’s concerns are considered



MPCA Strategic Plan Goal

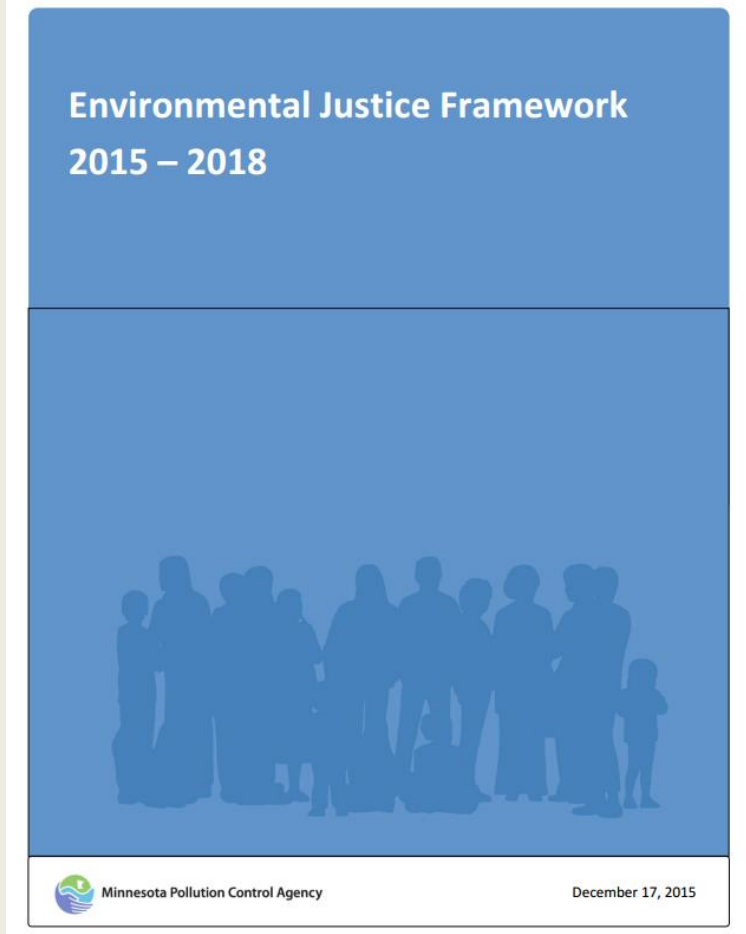
- ❑ Pollution does not have a disproportionate negative impact on any group of people
 - Objectives:
 - Develop and implement program strategies to identify and address environmental justice concerns
 - Identify and enhance opportunities for communities to provide meaningful input into MPCA environmental decision-making



MPCA's Environmental Justice Framework

www.pca.state.mn.us/ej

- ❑ Our plan for integrating environmental justice into work
- ❑ Developed during 2014 with stakeholder input
- ❑ Public meetings in 2015
- ❑ Public comment period
- ❑ Completed December 2015
- ❑ Advisory group in 2016



Main framework approaches

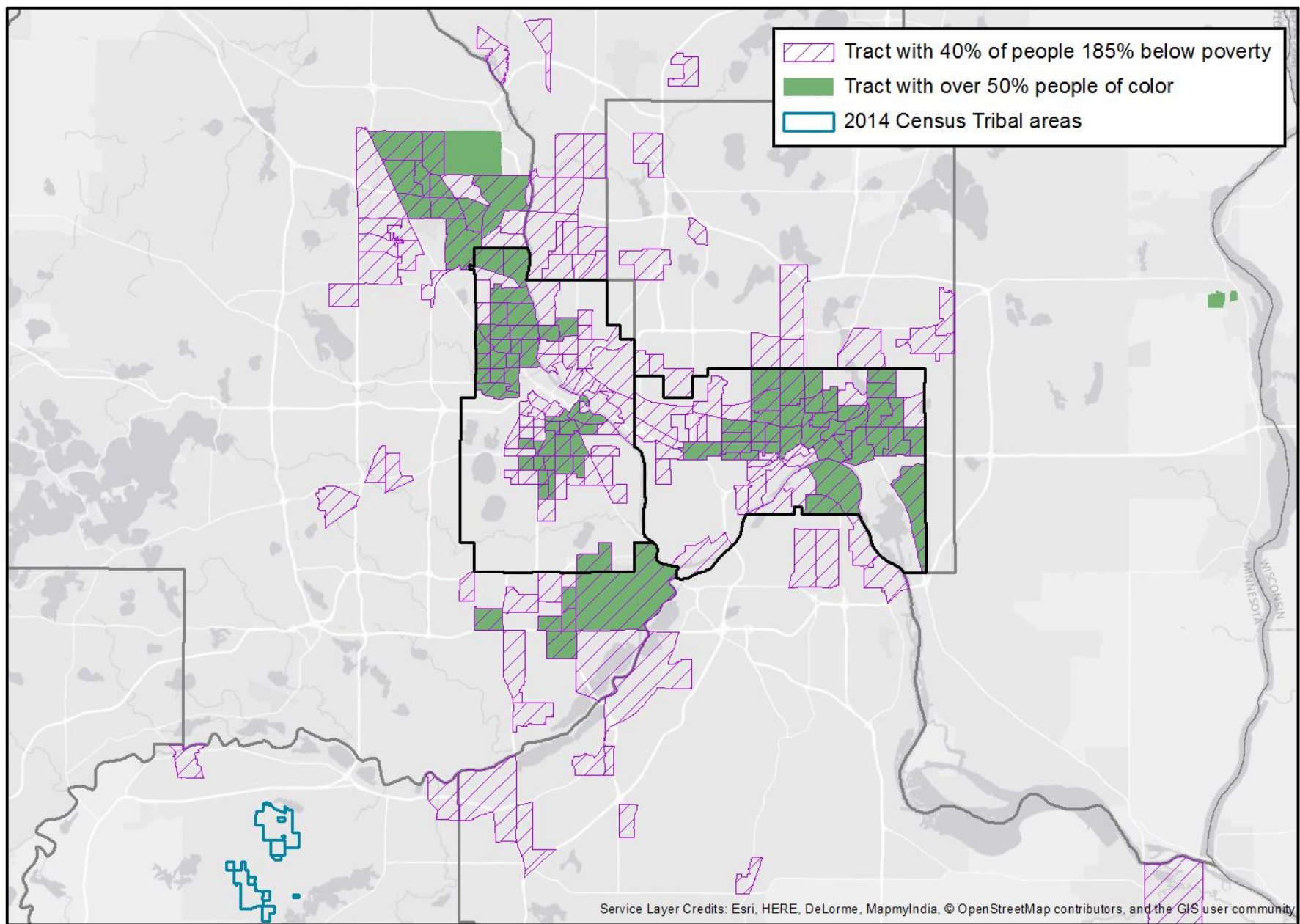
- ❑ Identify areas where lower income Minnesotans, people of color and others may be experiencing more harm
- ❑ Change our approach and increase our work in these areas:
 - Better understand sources of pollution and risks
 - Reduce pollution, improve livability
 - Communicate more and better



Identifying areas of potential concern

- ❑ Who lives in the area?
 - Preliminary screening: information on household income and race
 - Gather community knowledge
 - Additional information: languages spoken, age, education
- ❑ What pollution burdens are nearby?
 - Pollution sources, water and contaminated land/soil
 - Predicted risks from air pollution
 - High traffic corridors
- ❑ Other information sources:
 - US EPA tools EJSCREEN, C-FERST
 - MN Department of Health data
 - Local health, environmental information





Environmental Justice census story map

Checking your story content x

Edit

Understanding environmental justice in MN



Environmental Justice - MN Census data viewer

Poverty

People of color

Tribal areas

Language

MPCA What's in my neighborhood sites

All Minnesotans deserve to live in conditions that support a healthy and fulfilling life. One important part of this is living in an environment with clean air, clean water and unpolluted land.

Working to achieve this is at the heart of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's mission to protect and improve our environment and enhance human health.

The MPCA is committed to making sure that pollution does not have a disproportionate impact on any group of people — the principle of environmental justice. This means that all people — regardless of their race, color, national origin or income — benefit from equal levels of environmental protection and have opportunities to participate in decisions that may affect their environment or health.

EJ

2014 Census Tribal Areas



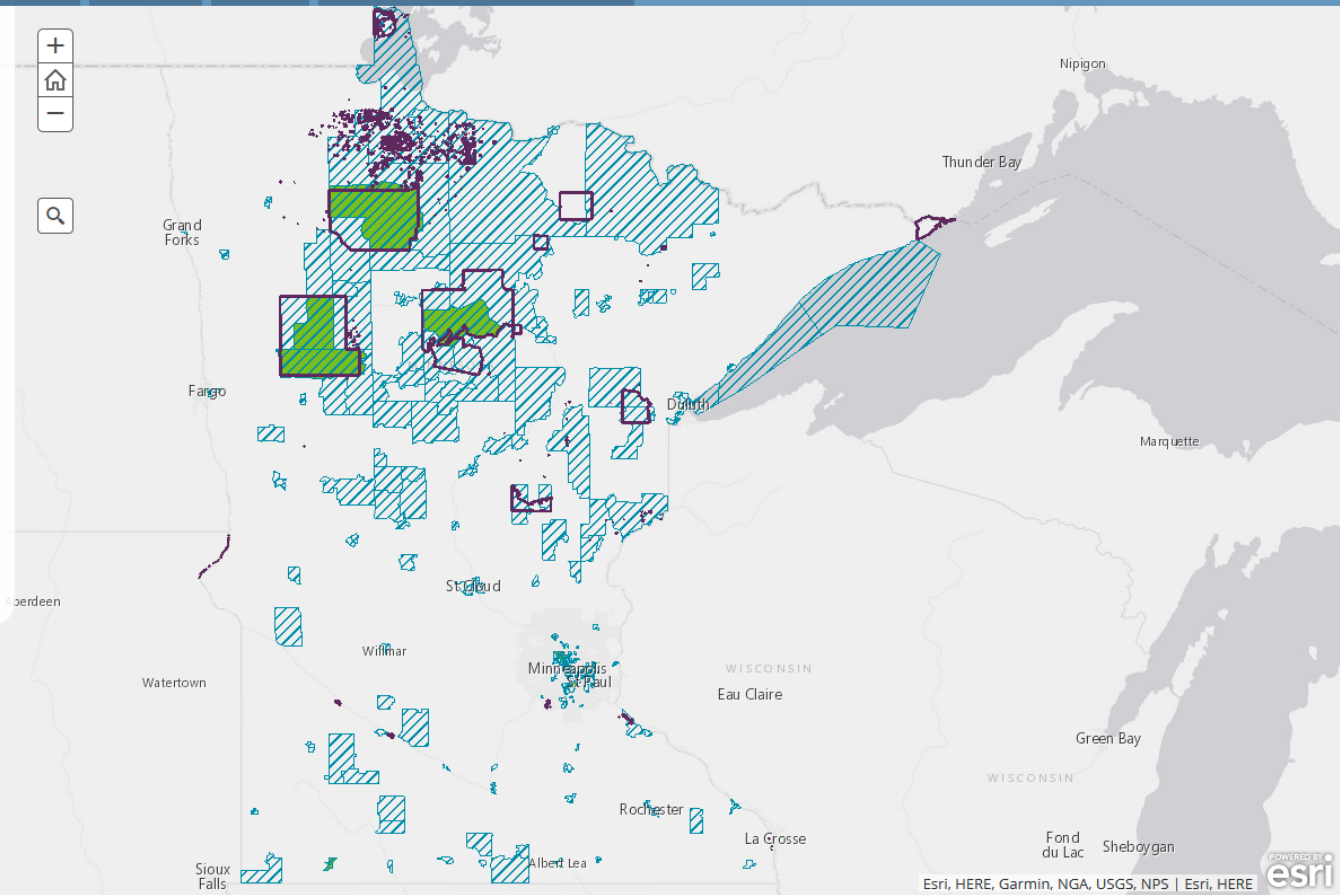
2010-2014 5 year ACS summary, 40% of people 185% below poverty level

 Consider for poverty issues

2010 Census Counts- Over 50% people of color



Over 50% people of color



Esri, HERE, Garmin, NGA, USGS, NPS | Esri, HERE

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Integrate environmental justice into our work

- ❑ Modify our approaches and sharpen our work in areas of concern:
 - More measuring of pollutants and evaluation of possible risks to health
 - Take a harder and closer look at pollution sources that we regulate
 - Target prevention and assistance work
 - More community-oriented communication and access



Modifying our approach in EJ areas – Program strategies

- ❑ Monitoring and assessment
- ❑ Regulating pollution sources
 - Permitting
 - Inspections
- ❑ Rule-making & policy development
- ❑ Remediation & Redevelopment
- ❑ Grants and Assistance



Permitting and regulatory work – program integration strategies

- ❑ Identify facilities and activities that we regulate that pose the greatest risk
- ❑ Take a harder and closer look at pollution sources and identify ways to reduce that risk
- ❑ Involve public much earlier in facility permitting and other decisions
- ❑ Use community-oriented communication strategies
- ❑ Encourage facilities to be engaged with community members



Resources/tools

- ☐ Screening for possible environmental justice concerns
- ☐ Civic engagement and outreach
- ☐ MPCA training and development
- ☐ Ongoing stakeholder involvement/oversight
- ☐ Coordination with other governments
- ☐ Measuring and reporting progress



Tools- Public participation, outreach and engagement

- ❑ Learn about the community,
- ❑ Tailor outreach and public participation
- ❑ Use plain and understandable communication, in multiple languages as needed
- ❑ Hold informational meetings when warranted
- ❑ Hold formal public meetings in a convenient, neutral location and actively promote
- ❑ Continually work to build and deepen community connections and understanding



Other parts of framework

- ❑ Agency training and development
- ❑ Measuring and reporting progress
- ❑ Ongoing stakeholder involvement in framework implementation
 - advisory council



Environmental Justice Advisory Group

- ❑ Advise MPCA Commissioner on MPCA's EJ work, provide community perspective
- ❑ 16 members from around the state
- ❑ Mostly community members, advocates and tribal members
- ❑ Formed in 2016 with community input
- ❑ Meets every 2 months





www.pca.state.mn.us/ej

Ned Brooks

Environmental Justice

Coordinator

651-757-2557

Ned.brooks@state.mn.us



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How do we measure Environmental Justice?

- Do all Minnesotans have the same opportunity to live a healthy and fulfilling life?
- Are low income residents and people of color exposed to more pollution?
- Are people experiencing different “health outcomes?”
- Are we doing what we can to reach out to and involved all Minnesotans in our work?
- Are we seeking involvement that can influence the outcome?
- Are we considering everyone’s input?



MPCA EJ Measures - examples

☐ Disproportionate impacts:

- Air pollution in areas of potential EJ concern
 - Monitored Levels of PM_{2.5}, formaldehyde, ozone, NO₂
 - Modeled risks from air pollution (MnRiskS)
 - Emissions of criteria pollutants
- Asthma healthcare utilization rates
 - Statewide and areas of potential EJ concern

☐ Programmatic measures

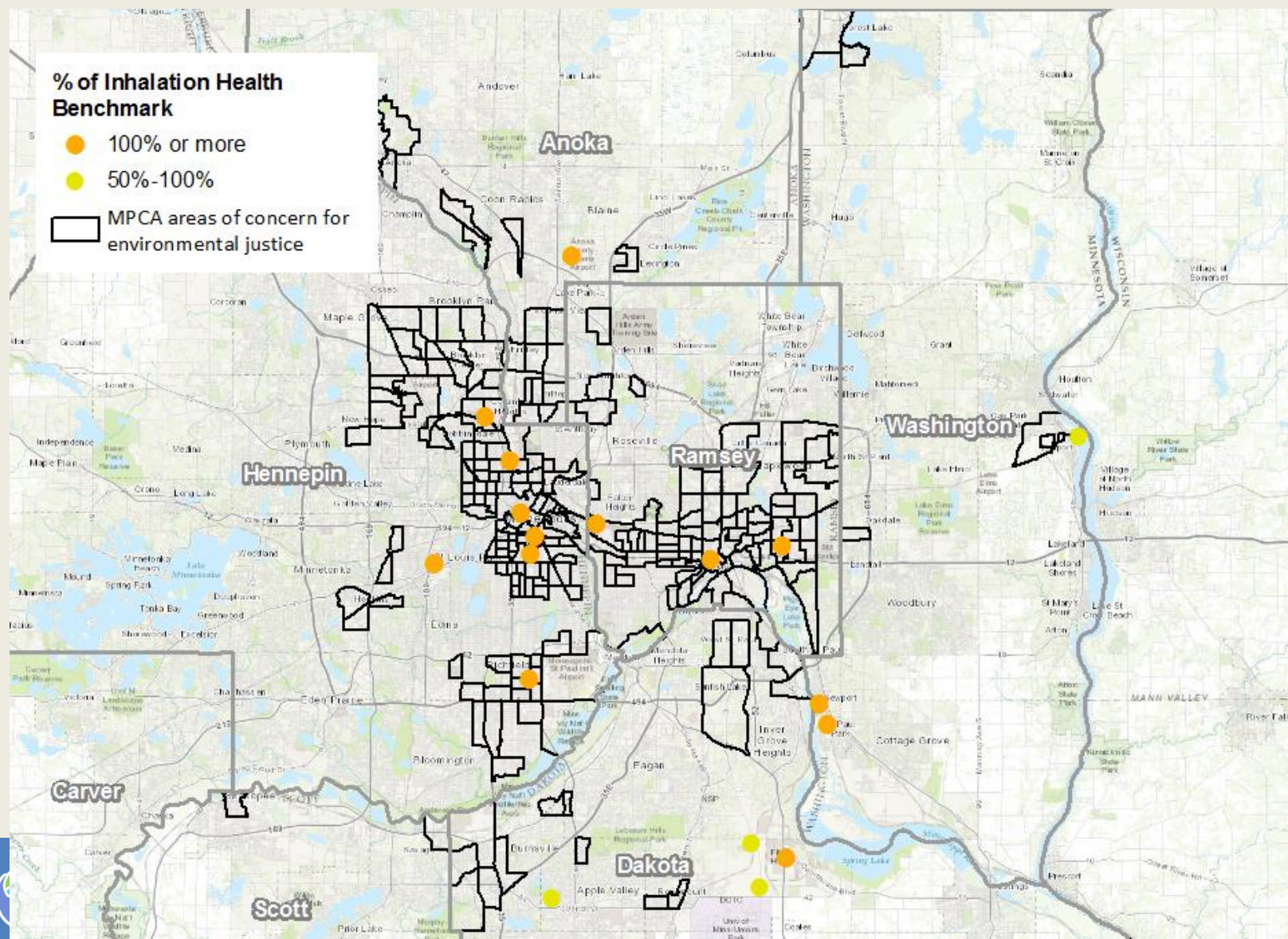
- Number of MPCA programs that have developed and incorporated EJ strategies
- EJ tools and resources developed and staff trained

☐ Meaningful involvement

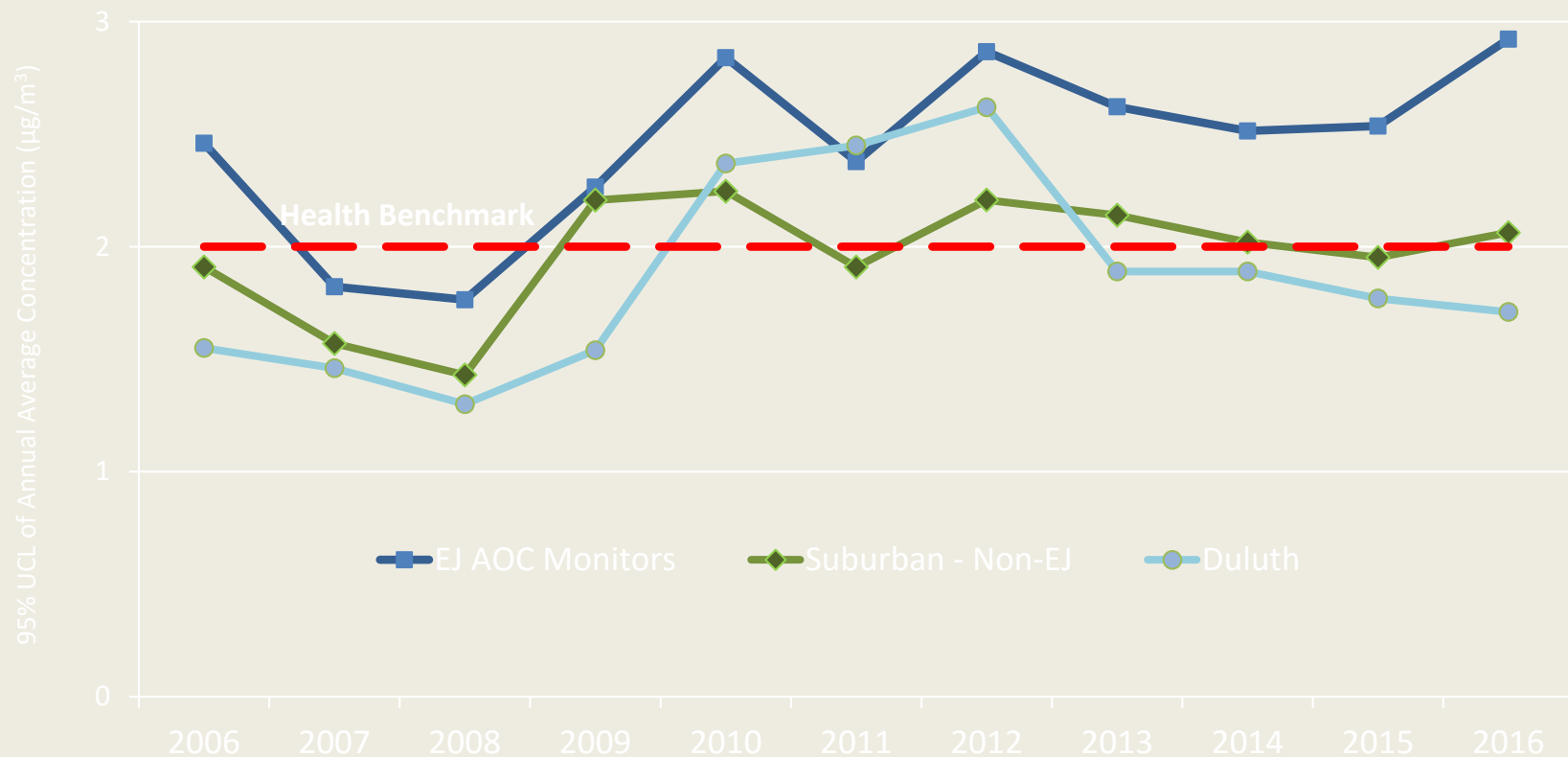
- Number and type of activities
- Documenting how community involvement was considered
- Community member, stakeholder satisfaction?



Annual Average Formaldehyde Concentration, 2016



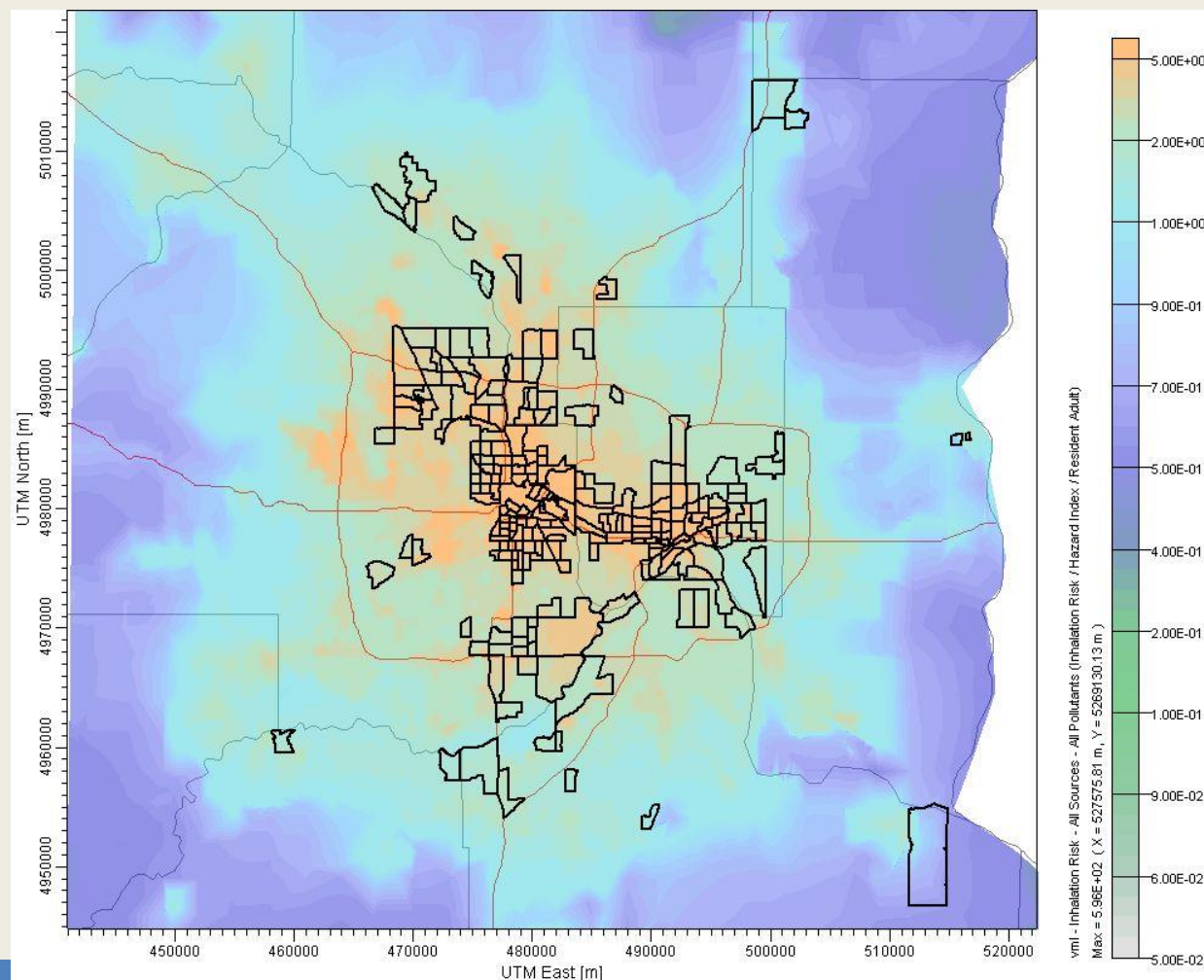
Annual average formaldehyde trends



MNRisks and Potential Areas of EJ Concern (Metro)

MNRiskS Non-Cancer Risks in Census Tracts for Enhanced Review*

*Tracts with more than 50% minority populations or more than 40% of the population with income below 185% of the federal poverty level. Current working definition, subject to change with stakeholder review



Asthma Hospitalizations and EJ Areas 2009 - 2013

Age-adjusted rates per
10,000 people

2.3 - 6.1

6.2 - 11.1

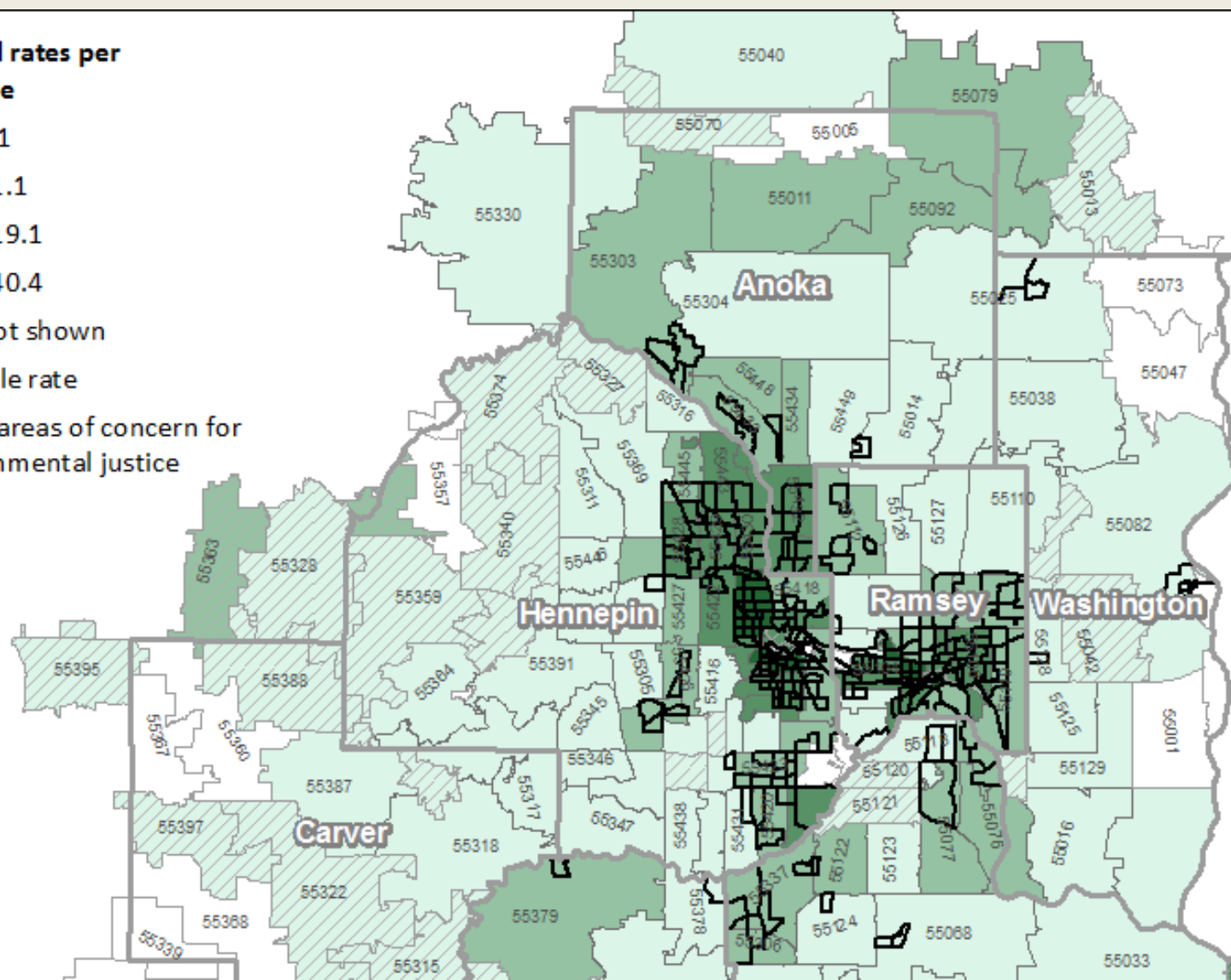
11.2 - 19.1

19.2 - 40.4

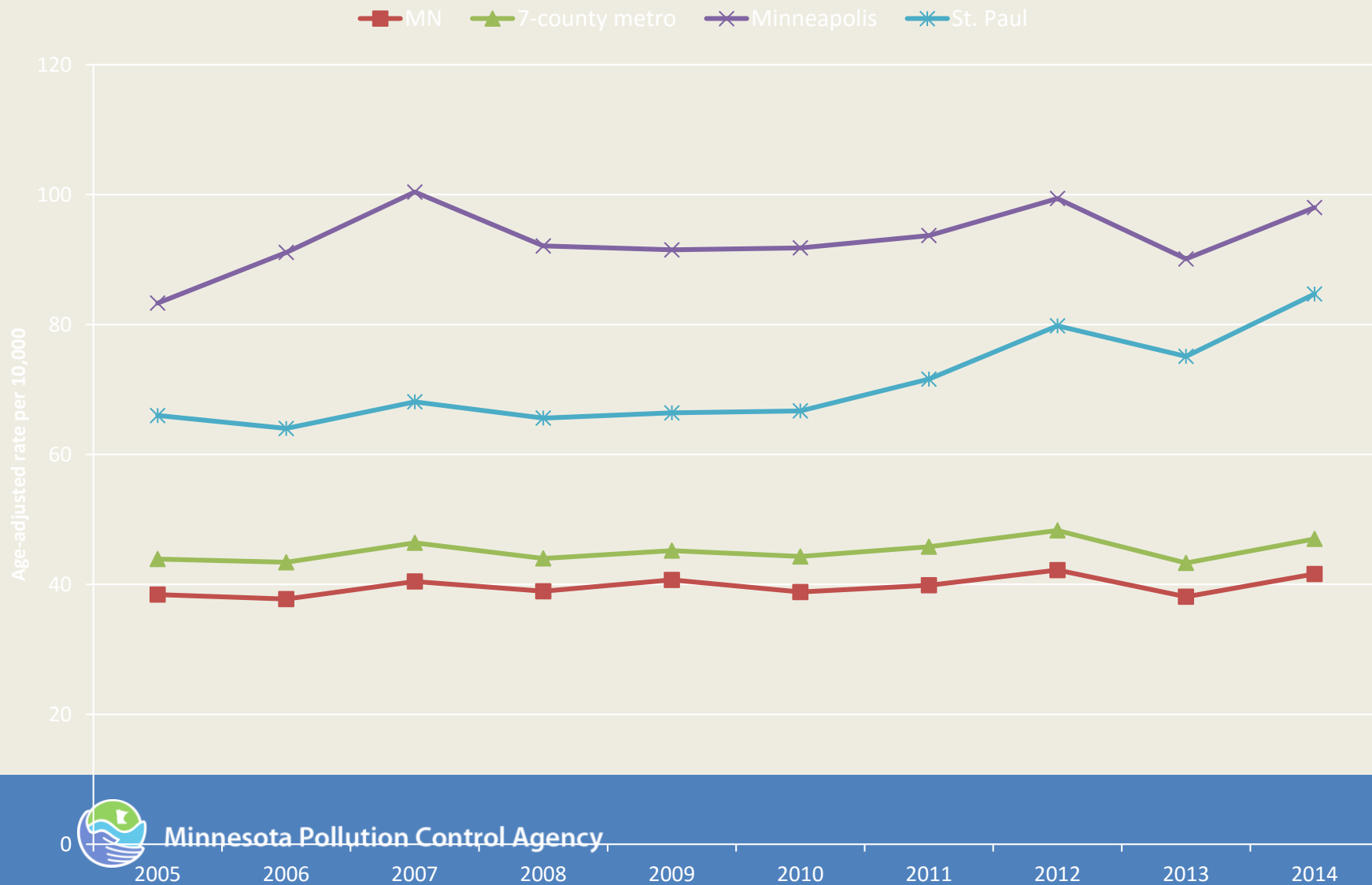
Data not shown

Unstable rate

MPCA areas of concern for
environmental justice



Age-Adjusted Asthma Emergency Department Visit Rates by Region



“Meaningful Involvement” – possible measures

- ❑ Number of MPCA programs implementing tools for targeted engagement with diverse communities
- ❑ Trends in community engagement
 - Number of non-required meetings held
 - Number of people attending meetings
 - Number of interested individuals/organizations identified
 - Number of contacts with community members outside of regulatory actions
- ❑ Satisfaction with MPCA engagement among residents in areas of concern for EJ

