



What is Cumulative Impact?

We have the right to breathe clean air!

A narrow view of our pollution exposure is putting communities at risk.

Chemicals surround us, from our everyday products to the air we breathe. Some of these chemicals are hazardous to our health. Communities facing pollution encounter many toxic chemicals from multiple sources - from the products they use in their homes and workplaces to the nearby facilities and roads that pollute the air and water.

Our current environmental laws and policies only consider a single chemical from one source at a time. This narrow approach allows regulators to approve too many permits, leading to increased pollution.

We have the right to breathe clean air! We are calling on our legislators to enact new environmental policies that better protect our air, water, and health by considering the big picture- all the pollution, all at once, before allowing more pollution into our communities.

Total Public Health Impacts

Cumulative impact policy considers a community's chemical and non-chemical stressors, environmental, social, and economic conditions alongside existing and potential health conditions.

Chemical stressors include pollutants in air, water, soil, food, & everyday products.

Non-chemical stressors include unhealthy food, unaffordable healthcare, heat stress, & poverty.

Separately, these things are a problem; together, they are dangerous!

Considering these factors together, we can get a clearer picture of the total impacts on public health and understand harmful effects of pollution.



You can look up your Michigan community environmental justice index at <https://www.michigan.gov/egle/maps-data/miejscreen>

What Changes Would a Michigan Cumulative Impact Policy Create?

Creating a Michigan Cumulative Impact Policy would help protect communities' air, water, soil, and health by limiting and preventing pollution across the state by:

- Involve community members in decision-making by requiring more community engagement before approving new facilities.
- Make state authorities assess how new facilities could worsen existing pollution issues in a community.
- Allow authorities to reject permits for new facilities or expansions in areas already heavily burdened by pollution.
- Enable authorities to add conditions, like stricter pollution controls, for existing facilities renewing their permits.

Cities like Chicago, Newark, and Minneapolis lead the way with ordinances that require cumulative impact review before issuing permits, effectively limiting pollution. These city ordinances paved the way for statewide policies shortly thereafter.

Most importantly, cumulative impact policies allow community members to oppose polluting facilities before they are built. It's much harder to shut them down or regulate them after they are already operating.

How can you get involved?

Do not expect public officials and corporate leaders to address cumulative impacts on their own. Even if they support protecting communities from pollution, it takes organizing your community and rallying leadership to overcome the opposition from toxic & polluting industries.

**Organize for Change,
join Clear the Air!**

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alerts at ClearTheAirMI.org

