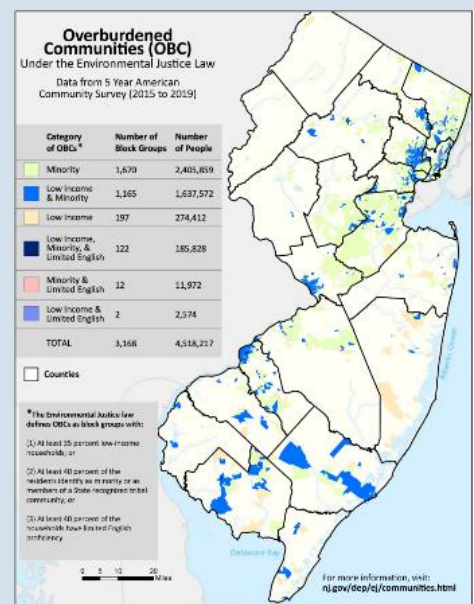


NJ Tracking and NJDEP Office of Environmental Justice Collaborate to Create NJ's Overburdened Communities Mapping Tool

What was the problem/situation?

When NJ's Environmental Justice (EJ) Law, N.J.S.A. 13:1D-157, required NJDEP to create & publish a list of the State's overburdened communities (OBCs), NJ Tracking staff were asked to conduct the needed data analyses and create online maps and a mapping tool. The newly enacted law seeks to better evaluate the additional environmental and public health impacts when reviewing certain permitting applications within communities that meet NJ's OBC definition (at least 40% minority population; 35% low-income households; or 40% limited English proficiency households).



How was Tracking involved?

New Jersey Tracking staff and partners within NJDEP were well positioned to take on this task due to prior work preparing municipal level environmental health reports, and extensive participation in statewide mapping of multiple health outcomes and environmental exposures. Tracking staff and NJDEP partners used NJ's new EJ law to define, map, publish, and notify NJ's 331 overburdened communities. Additionally, Tracking staff provided technical support for 11 rulemaking stakeholder sessions and outreach materials related to the new EJ law.

What action was taken to identify the problem?

Additional to NJDEP's [Office of Environmental Justice \(OEJ\) website](#) were created which provide the environmental justice mapping tool, background information, PDF maps of each NJ municipality, GIS layers, and technical notes for NJ's OBCs under the EJ Law.

NJDEP is currently developing rules to implement NJ's EJ law that will require evaluation of the contributions certain types of facilities will add to existing environmental and public health stressors within NJ's 331 OBCs as part of certain permit application reviews. Additionally, residents in OBC communities will be provided with opportunities for enhanced participation in the permitting process.

The availability of municipal level maps showing NJ's OBCs at the block level has allowed NJDEP to show stakeholders the precise distribution of communities that will be impacted by the new EJ law.

