

# Map Overview

## Washington Environmental Health Disparities (EHD) Map



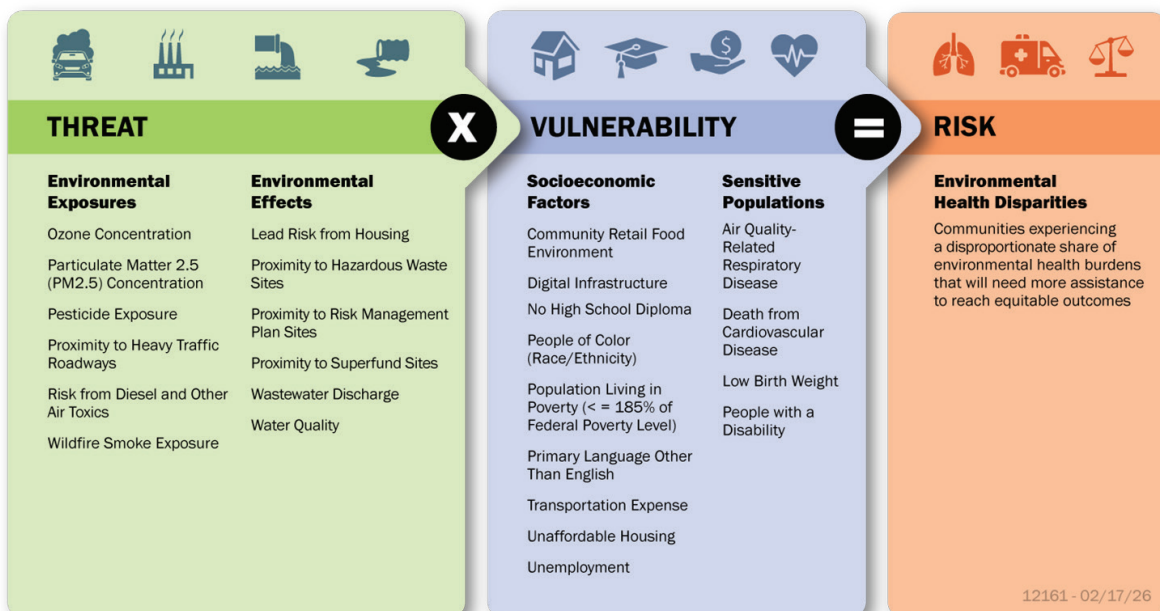
The Environmental Health Disparities (EHD) map is an interactive tool that shows where people in Washington are likely to have been exposed to the greatest risk for environmental impacts on their health. Health disparities do not come from a single cause. They are shaped by how social, environmental, and biological factors intersect with systems of oppression, including racism and colonization. **These factors can add up and create greater impacts in some communities.** The EHD map combines pollution data with information about community vulnerabilities to create a score for each area in Washington. Each area is ranked relative to or in comparison with the others. Using this approach can help us determine where more attention and resources are needed.



### Insight Through Visualization

Communities, government agencies, researchers, and others use the map to see where factors add up to affect the well-being of communities. The EHD map is referenced in the Healthy Environment for All Act (HEAL) and Climate Commitment Act (CCA) as a resource that can be used to identify “overburdened communities” and make data-driven decisions to consider the effects of proposed projects or actions.

## Threat x Vulnerability = Risk



Pollution, cost of living, and other social conditions don't happen on their own. They combine with the ongoing impacts of racism, colonization, and other injustices to affect community health.

The EHD map is one starting point for decision-making. It should be used alongside Tribal knowledge, community experience, other data sources, and meaningful engagement when shaping policies, budgets, enforcement strategies, and advocacy efforts. We recognize the language ‘overburdened communities’ as defined in the HEAL Act may not be how communities describe themselves or identify. Some communities prefer different terms, such as “minoritized,” or “invisibilized”.

## Community Ranks

The map shows overlapping environmental health impacts at the community level based on 25 measures. **We use census tracts to represent communities.** On average census tracts contain about 5,000 people but vary in size from about 2,000 to 8,000 people. Communities are compared using a 1–10 ranking scale. Areas ranked 10 are the most impacted. Areas ranked 1 are the least impacted communities.

## Developed in Partnership

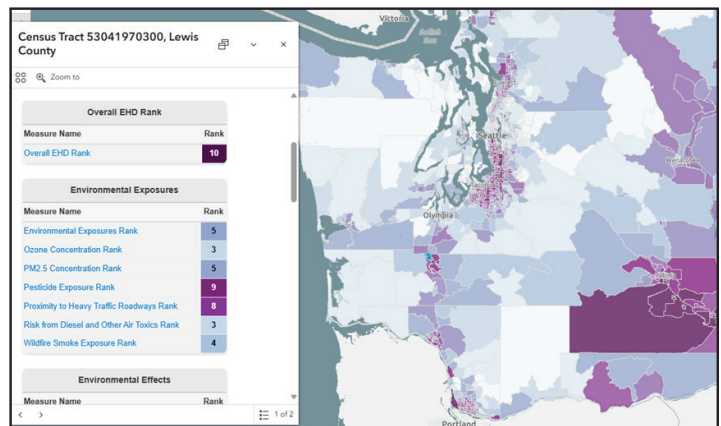
The map was the first of its kind in Washington to account for multiple disparities and recognize that the outcome of harm was not singular. From 2016–2019 community organizations, researchers, government partners, and communities collaborated to shape the map. Dozens of listening sessions informed what measures and overlays were included.

In 2021, the Healthy Environment for All Act directed Department of Health to lead maintenance and development of the map. Since then, we have heard concerns and feedback from community and Tribes. In 2023, we held Tribal consultation on the EHD map and hired engagement staff. In 2025, we held community engagement listening sessions, listening sessions, roundtables and leadership meetings. During these events, community identified themes as their collective priorities to become a part of the EHD Map. We hosted Tribal Listening Sessions to provide an update from the 2023 Tribal consultation and seek guidance on the updates.

The qualitative data gathered during recent engagement is being reviewed by the EHD map team for incorporation. The feedback has already helped build and we will continue to improve resources available to support community and Tribes.

## Moving Forward Together

The EHD map is a living tool. We will continue improving it based on Tribal and community guidance and as we support state agencies and others in using it to guide their work. Your Feedback helps us refine both the map and how we support people in using it. We are available to consult with you on how to use the map or interpret information on the map. We encourage you to tell us about how you are using the map. Contact us at [EHDMap@doh.wa.gov](mailto:EHDMap@doh.wa.gov). For more information, please refer to the [EHD map report](#).



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