

**U.S. EPA's Draft Environmental Justice Assessment of the
Chemical Waste Management Hazardous Waste Facility
in Kettleman City, California
Is Environmental Racism and Injustice**

**U.S. EPA's claim that living next to a giant hazardous, toxic and solid
waste dump does not have negative impacts on the community is
incorrect, racist, unjust and unacceptable!**

We the undersigned organizations from across the country join together in solidarity to denounce the United States Environmental Protection Agency for committing a grave act of environmental racism and injustice in the issuance of the so-called "Draft Environmental Justice Assessment for Chemical Waste Management, Inc. Kettleman Hills Facility" in Kettleman City, California.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has made a mockery of its alleged commitment to environmental justice and violated its legal mandate to uphold and promote environmental justice and oppose environmental racism by issuing a document that makes the outrageous and unfounded claim that living next to the giant hazardous, toxic and solid waste landfill in Kettleman City has no adverse impact on the low-income primarily Spanish-speaking residents.

U.S. EPA's claim that living next to the giant Chem Waste hazardous, toxic and solid waste dump does not have negative impacts on the community is incorrect, racist, unjust and unacceptable!

The EPA's claim that they found no evidence that residents experience adverse impacts from the Chem Waste Kettleman Hills Hazardous Waste facility ignores the following enormous adverse impacts and facts:

- There has never been a health survey done on Kettleman City and Avenal residents, so how can EPA claim that everything is fine and there are no health impacts?
- Kettleman City residents report many cases of cancer, reproductive illnesses and very high rates of asthma.
- Kings County and federal and state agencies have a long history of excluding Kettleman City and Avenal residents from meaningful decision making regarding the dump. For example for many years hearings on permitting issues were held in Hanford, not Kettleman City, and many of the permitting and regulatory processes conducted regarding the facility were conducted in English despite the fact that most residents are Spanish-speaking including many monolingual Spanish-speakers. Even today, most permit documents are in English-only, depriving residents of their right to be fully informed and participate in decision-making.
- Residents were excluded from decision making about whether or not to even have a hazardous waste dump in their community.

- It defies reason and science to claim that the dumping of enormous quantities of hazardous, toxic and solid waste near a community poses no adverse risks as landfills are not built to last forever.
- Dozens of trucks carrying waste every day come into Kettleman City, emitting diesel pollution and causing increased risk of traffic accidents and hazardous waste spills.
- Despite the fact that Kettleman City is an agricultural community, US EPA's assessment failed to evaluate the combined risk of pesticide exposure and toxics in the air and water. This is an especially important flaw in the EPA assessment as the agency is well aware of the cumulative and synergistic effects of many toxic chemicals.
- US EPA failed to consider prior chronic emissions and pre-existing health conditions of residents.
- US EPA fails to acknowledge that race has always been and continues to be a predictor for the placement of toxic waste in the US, and in fact all three hazardous waste landfills in California are located in low-income, Latino, Spanish-speaking communities.
- There are serious psychological effects and social stigma of living near a toxic facility.
- Residents have had to spend many hours over the years attending meetings regarding the dump and proposed incinerator that could have been spent with family, jobs and other productive and positive uses of their time.
- If there was no toxicity data for a particular chemical, EPA automatically characterized its hazard score as "0."
- Chem Waste has used income from the dumping of hazardous and toxic waste to offer funds to the community in an attempt to silence opposition. Many residents value health over donations from this toxic polluter.

We join Kettleman City residents in demanding an end to the US EPA's environmental racism, and call on the US EPA to begin complying with your mandate to uphold environmental justice and protect the health for all communities, regardless of race or income.

Signed,

Maricela Mares Alatorre

El Pueblo Para El Aire y Agua Limpio/People for Clean Air and Water
Kettleman City, California

Erica Swinney and Bradley Angel

Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice
San Francisco, CA

Luke Cole

Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment
San Francisco, CA

Dr. Paul Connett and Ellen Connett,
American Environmental Health Studies Project, Inc.
Canton, NY

Vivian Chang
Asian Pacific Environmental Network
Oakland and Richmond, CA

Tom Frantz
Association of Irrigated Residents
Members in Kern, Tulare, Fresno and Stanislaus Counties

Tessie Ester
**Bayview Hunters Point Mothers Committee for Environmental Justice
and Huntersview Tenants Committee**
San Francisco, CA

Jane Williams
California Communities Against Toxics
Rosamond, CA

Joseph K. Lyou, Ph.D.
California Environmental Rights Alliance
Los Angeles, CA

Craig Gilmore and Debbie Reyes
California Prison Moratorium Project
Los Angeles and Fresno, CA

Robina Suwol
California Safe Schools
Toluca Lake, CA

Patty Clary
Californians for Alternatives to Toxics

Penny Newman
Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice, Riverside, CA
Riverside, CA

Michael Green
Center for Environmental Health
Oakland, CA

Lois Gibbs
Center for Health, Environment and Justice
Falls Church, Virginia

Dan Swinney
Center for Labor and Community Research

Chicago, IL

Rosenda Mataka
Central California Environmental Justice Network
Members across the San Joaquin Valley, CA

Ruben Solis
Centro Por La Justicia
San Antonio, Texas

Teri Johnson
Children for a Safe Environment
Phoenix, Arizona

Gordon Mar
Chinese Progressive Association
San Francisco, CA

Jan McClellan
Citizens Against Covance
Chandler, Arizona

Dana Dillworth
Citizens' League for Environmental Action Now
Brisbane, California

Richard Clapp
Citizens for a Healthy Community
Red Bluff, CA

Teresa Deanda
Committee of the Well Being of Earlimart
Earlimart, CA

Dan Hirsch
Committee to Bridge the Gap
Los Angeles, CA

Johnny White
Community Health Initiative
Richmond, CA

Susana De Anda
Community Water Center
Visalia, California

Sylvia Swan
Concerned Residents of Lockwood Valley
Lockwood Valley, CA

Rose Braz
Critical Resistance
Oakland, CA

Roland Valentine
Desert Citizens Against Pollution
Kern County, CA

Anna Frazier
Dine CARE
Navajo Nation

Beck Cowles
Ecology Center
Berkeley, CA

Diane Takvorian
Environmental Health Coalition
National City, CA

Miriam Torres
Environmental Justice Coalition for Water
Oakland, CA

Dr. Robert Bullard
Environmental Justice Resource Center
Clark Atlanta University
Atlanta, Georgia

Bill Walker
Environmental Working Group
Oakland, CA

Eva Paterson
Equal Justice Society
San Francisco, CA

Jenny Saklar and Carolina Simunovic
Fresno Metro Ministry
Fresno, CA

Tirso Moreno
Farmworker Association of Florida
Apopka, Florida

Lea Francisco
Filipino/American Coalition for Environmental Solidarity (FACES)
Berkeley, CA

Lori Thomas
Gila River Alliance for a Clean Environment
Gila River Indian Community, Arizona

Monica Wilson
Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives
Berkeley, CA

Denny Larson
Global Community Monitor
San Francisco, CA

John Mataka
Grayson Neighborhood Council
Grayson, CA

Anna Gilmore Hall
Health Care Without Harm
Arlington, Virginia

Neil Gendel
Healthy Children Organizing Project
San Francisco, CA

Wafaa Aborashed
Healthy San Leandro Collaborative
San Leandro, CA

Tom Goldtooth
Indigenous Environmental Network

Andrea Carmen
International Indian Treaty Council

Miguel Mares Alatorre
Kids Protecting Our Planet
Kettleman City, CA

Eric Mann
Labor Community Strategy Center
and the **Bus Riders Union**
Los Angeles, CA

Anamaria Loya
La Raza Centro Legal
San Francisco, CA

Rey Leon
Latino Issues Forum
Fresno, CA

Karen Shain
Legal Services for Prisoners with Children
San Francisco

Sudeep Rao
Literacy for Environmental Justice
San Francisco, CA

David Harper
Mohave Cultural Preservation Program
Colorado River Indian Tribes, Parker, Arizona

Julian Rivas
O'odham Rights Cultural and Environmental Justice Coalition
Sells, Arizona

Ofelia Rivas
O'odham Voices Against the Wall
Sells, Arizona

Martha Dina Arguello
Physicians for Social Responsibility – Los Angeles
Los Angeles, CA

Susan Frank
Steven and Michele Kirsch Foundation
San Jose, California

Gladys Estrada
Lideres Campesinas
Pomona, CA

Tim Grabiell
Natural Resources Defense Council
Los Angeles, CA

LaDonna Williams
**People for Children's Health
& Environmental Justice**
Pinole, California

Margaret Reeves
Pesticide Action Network
San Francisco, CA

Antonio Diaz
PODER
San Francisco, CA

Sejal Choksi
San Francisco Baykeeper
San Francisco, CA

Willie & Mary Ratcliff
San Francisco Bay View National Black Newspaper

Eric Mar
Commissioner, San Francisco Board of Education
San Francisco, CA

[Pete Litster](#)
[Shundahai Network](#)
[Salt Lake City, Utah](#)

Aditi Vaidya
Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition
San Jose, CA

Richard Moore
Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice
Albuquerque, New Mexico

[Che Lopez and Genaro Rendon](#)
[Southwest Workers Union](#)
San Antonio, Texas

Linda Mackay
TriCounty Watchdogs
Frazier Park, CA

Juliet Ellis
Urban Habitat Program
Oakland, CA

Dr. Henry Clark
West County Toxics Coalition
Richmond, CA

Peggy Shepard
West Harlem Environmental Action
New York, NY

Annie Loya
Youth United for Community Action
East Palo Alto, CA