

**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 EPA 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.

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!

US 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 commercial 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 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,

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