

Environmental Justice

Resources in North Carolina

Water Testing Resources

Certain areas in NC experience dangerous levels of lead, hog waste, and other toxins that get into waterways and can cause serious adverse health problems. Testing your drinking water quality is important to identify potential toxins that you might be consuming.

- [When to Test Your Well Water and How](#)
 - Information from the NC Division of Public Health explaining and how to test your well water
- [Kinetico Free Water Testing](#)
 - Offers free water tests for residents in the Triangle
- [Culligan Man Free Water Testing](#)
 - Offers free water tests for residents in Wilmington, Cape Carteret, Elizabeth City, Morehead City, Washington, Goldsboro, New Bern, and the Outer Banks
- [North Carolina Water Consultants](#)
 - Offers free water tests for residents in Charlotte, Cornelius, Davidson, Huntersville, Matthews, Mint Hill, Pineville, Statesville, Mooresville, Troutman, Cool Springs, Mount Mourne, Mount Ulla, Belmont, Bessemer City, Cherryville, Gastonia, Lowell, Mount Holly, Dallas, Stanley, Lincolnton, Maiden, Denver, Iron Station, Lowesville, Westport, Catawba, Conover, Hickory, Newton, Claremont, Sherrills Ford, Concord, Harrisburg, Waxhaw, Weddington, Mint Hill, Indian Trail, and Lake Norman
- [Clean Water for Carolina Kids](#)
 - [Enroll your Child Care Center/Family Child Care Home to test water for lead levels](#)
 - [View publicly reported data](#)
 - You can search your childcare center by county and see if they have public data available for lead concentration in their waters
 - [Instructional Videos](#)
 - Videos on how to enroll in their clean water program, how to sample for lead in the water, understanding the results of your water tests, how to use the public data map on their website, **how to install and maintain a water filter**, how to replace a faucet, and more.

Air Quality Resources

Communities of color and low-income communities in NC have higher levels of air pollutants due to redlining ([click here for a definition of redlining](#)) and other forms of systemic racism. Air pollutants can lead to higher risks for asthma, respiratory issues, lung disease, and cancer. Understanding your exposure to air pollutants and possible solutions can protect your health.

- [NC Air Quality Portal](#)
 - This map shows the air quality index (AQI) by county; higher the AQI numbers mean higher levels of air pollution
 - [PM2.5 AQI](#): PM2.5 are small particles that stay in the air and long-term exposure lead to higher risk of birth defects in newborns, heart attack, stroke, and more
 - [Ozone AQI](#): converts the ozone concentration in the air to a scale of 0-500
 - [Action Day](#): an action day is when the AQI goes into a dangerous range; if it is an action day, one should reduce exposure by avoiding going outside for long periods of time or exercising outdoors
 - [Burn Day](#): a burn day is when outdoor burning is allowed at sanctioned outdoor burning areas
 - [Click here to see what the AQI index values mean](#)
 - 0-50 is good
 - 51-100 is moderate
 - 101-150 is unhealthy for sensitive groups
 - 151-200 is unhealthy, 201-300 is very unhealthy
 - 301 or higher is hazardous
 - [More information](#) about what the AQI means and how to protect your health when the AQI is too high
- [Understand Air Quality Hazards](#)
 - Resources that explain air quality hazards such as carbon monoxide, using generators, and more
- [How to Protect Yourself from Carbon Monoxide](#)
 - Information from NC Division of Public Health on how to protect yourself from carbon monoxide

Legal Aid Services

Here is a list of where to find legal aid and pro bono services in NC relating to environmental law. Individuals might seek legal aid to fight corporations such as Smithfield from polluting their water or to increase/improve the environmental protections sanctioned by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) among other things.

- [Land Loss Prevention Project](#)
 - Organization in Durham that provides free legal assistance to low-income landowners and limited resource family farmers

- To give an example of their services, this organization has helped minority communities fight environmental racism by filing lawsuits on land security issues
- [Recommended Legal Resources](#)
 - See other resources from other organizations that they've listed on their website.
- [Legal Aid of NC](#)
 - Statewide nonprofit law center that provides free legal services in civil matters to low-income people
 - On this site, you can apply by phone or online for legal aid
 - You can also find an office to visit in person and go through their self-help resources
 - To give an example of their services, this organization has helped victims of natural disasters with housing problems and insurance issues
- [Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy](#)
 - Offers free legal assistance both in and outside of Charlotte
 - To give an example of their services, this organization helps clients access healthcare through Medicaid

Environmental Justice Organizations

If you would like to get involved in local organizations or local chapters of national organizations that focus on Environmental Justice activism, check out these websites.

- [NC Conservation Network](#)
 - Network of environmental justice organizations across NC
 - Sign petitions, send email drafts to representatives, find out about local events
- [NC Sierra Club](#)
 - The NC chapter of Sierra Club, a national environmental justice organization
 - Learn about local environmental justice issues, get involved and find out about local events
- [Environment NC](#)
 - Statewide environmental justice organization with several campaigns including fighting for clean water and air in NC and more
 - Sign petitions, learn about local environmental issues and how they might affect you, get updates on certain environmental issues
- [Clean Air NC](#)
 - A NC environmental justice organization that focuses on air pollution
 - Learn about how air pollution might affect you and learn what you can do
- [NC Environmental Justice Network Toolbox](#)
 - A list of tools, papers, publications, and more to support EJ work

Health Education and Services

Environmental issues such as hazardous water and air quality can have serious negative health effects such as increased risk for cancer, asthma, and more. Here is a list of free health services and clinics as well as several education guides that explain how to protect yourself from certain environmental hazards.

- [Free and Discounted Health Services](#)
 - A list of resources in NC that offer free services or financial assistance for urgent care, medications, health insurance, child healthcare, and more
- [NC Association of Free and Charitable Clinics](#)
 - Clinics all over NC that offer free healthcare services, including primary care and more
- [NC Disaster Response and Recovery Guide](#)
 - A list of environmental health resources created for disaster recovery, however, many of these recommendations can be utilized at any time
 - [Mold and Moisture Cleanup](#)
 - Educational sources for how to clean mold and how mold negatively affects your health
 - [Mosquito and Insect Control](#)
 - Resources on how to protect oneself from increased pest levels after a natural disaster/storm
 - [Child Care Needs](#)
 - Best practices to keep children safe and healthy during disaster recovery
- [Environmental Health Staff in NC](#)
 - A directory of environmental health staff in NC by county
 - Environmental health staff are public health workers who specialize in how the environment impacts health
- [How to Protect Your Septic System](#)
 - Understand how your septic system works and best practices to keep your septic system safe for your health
- [Understanding NC Health Care Policy](#)
 - Includes resources that make NC healthcare policy easy to understand including news on policy, insurance facts, definitions for medical terms, etc.
- [Understanding Health Insurance](#)
 - Includes easy to read articles about health insurance and medicaid and medicare

Connect with Community

Here are a list of different Facebook pages for environmental justice organizations in NC that put on events in different NC locations. Follow their Facebook pages so that you can see what local events you can attend and people that you can connect with!

- [NC Environmental Justice Facebook Page](#)

- Follow their Facebook page to get live updates about NC environmental issues and to hear about local events that address environmental justice
- [NC Conservation Network Facebook Page](#)
 - Follow their Facebook page to learn about environmental issues in NC
- [Clean Water for NC Facebook Page](#)
 - Follow this page to hear about local events and local updates on environmental issues

Institutions with Environmental Justice Resources

These institutions in NC include schools and programs that focus on the environment and study how the environment affects people. Check out their websites to see if they are offering any resources that could be of use to you!

- Duke Environmental Law and Policy Clinic
- Duke Nicholas School of the Environment
- UNC Institute for the Environment
- UNC Gillings School of Global Health
- NC State College of Natural Resources
- The Environmental Program at Wake Forest
- NC Central College of Health and Sciences