



PUBLIC HEALTH IS WHERE YOU ARE!



PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

April 4 - 8, 2022

DAY 1: ENRICH Empowerment Expo and Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center (ELAFRC) Town Hall

East Los Angeles Services Center
133 North Sunol Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90063

Monday, April 4, 2022, 2:30 pm – 6:00 pm

Background of Problem

The East LA area, and large portions of Los Angeles County, consistently rank among the nation's communities most affected by particle and environmental pollution. East LA was exposed to harmful chemicals caused by a battery recycling facility (Exide Technologies) in the city of Vernon. The facility closed in 2015, but, during its operation, harmful toxic chemicals were released into the surrounding communities. East LA has a large Latino/a/x, lower-income, and immigrant population. Exide's disregard of its' surrounding communities' health and quality of life demonstrates how communities of color often bear the greatest burden of commercial and structurally embedded environmental hazards. Environmental dangers are a constant threat to racial and ethnic minority groups and their communities, around the world and in Los Angeles County. This is known as "environmental racism": a form of racism that disproportionately subjects Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) populations to dangerous environmental hazards.

In 2019, Wiley Sanders Truck Lines agreed to a \$3,000,000 settlement with LA County for illegally transporting Exide's battery recycling waste in 2013 – 2014. Although cleanup and awareness efforts have progressed since the State and County successfully sued Exide and Wiley Sanders, the probable long-term health consequences resulting from years of toxic exposure cannot be ignored. Solutions for these types of health disparities are rooted in "environmental justice".

DPH Mitigation

In 2017, the LA County Department of Public Health (DPH) deployed its entire workforce in an area-wide health campaign to educate residents of the Exide-impacted community about the risks of the toxic environmental exposures and where to find available services. The outreach effort reached approximately 20,000 homes and included a community survey asking residents to voice their opinions,

priorities and concerns. Residents responded consistently and overwhelmingly that they need:

- 1) increased access to healthcare and specialized services, and
- 2) enhanced provider awareness of environmental health hazards and their effect on the mental, behavioral, and physical health and well-being of children and their families.

ENRICH

DPH is launching a new two-year demonstration project called Early Needs Response to Infant and Child Health (ENRICH). ENRICH encourages healthcare providers in the area most impacted by Exide's environmental waste to screen their younger patients for developmental delays, a common consequence of environmental toxicity. ENRICH is a model of peer-to-peer support in which highly trained "Family Partners" with lived experience (children or family members with developmental delays) help families navigate access to the services they need for their children who have mild to moderate developmental delays.

ENRICH fulfills the County's and DPH's commitment to a community that has been disproportionately threatened by environmentally hazardous conditions, that is subjected to racial inequities, and that suffers from significantly lower health outcomes. These health disparities reflect acute differences in health knowledge and healthcare access that are directly linked to the social, economic and/or environmental disadvantages faced by East LA residents every day.

National Public Health Week Event

The ENRICH Empowerment Expo and Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center (ELAFRC) Town Hall will kick off Public Health Week on April 4, 2022 by launching ENRICH. The event will highlight how the community can overcome the impact of social, environmental and infrastructure hurdles and sustain





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its voice to address community-level environmental and other disparities. While families will work to close the gaps that their children with developmental delays face in ENRICH, organizations like East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, Communities for a Better Environment, First 5 LA, Help Me Grow-LA, DPH's SPA 7 Regional Health Office and the ELA Service Center will partner with community members to bring an end to the environmental injustices and racial inequities that burdens them.

Event Details

ENRICH Empowerment Expo and ELAFRC Town Hall

Venue: East Los Angeles Services Center
133 North Sunol Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90063

Event Details (cont.)

ENRICH Empowerment Expo and ELAFRC Town Hall

Theme: Racism: A Public Health Crisis

- 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm** ENRICHing Community Care: ELAFRC Town Hall
- 4:30 pm – 5:00 pm** Welcome and Opening, ENRICH and National Public Health Week
- 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm** Racial and Environmental Justice are Health Outcomes! DPH Panel Discussion

Town Hall Participants

Featuring representatives of the ENRICH partners:

- AltaMed Health Services Corporation
- Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA)
- Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center (ELAFRC)
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH)

Panel Discussion Participants

Judith Perrigo, PhD, LCSW
Assistant Professor, Social Welfare, UCLA

Idalmis Vaquero, Esq. Communities for a Better Environment (CBE)

Mikayla Guerrero
SPA 7 Youth Advisor

Alicia Chang, MD, MS
DPH Regional Health Officer, SPAs 7 & 8

Event Description

The ELAFRC Town Hall will kick off the event at 2:30 pm, featuring representatives from the principal ENRICH partners discussing the role of ENRICH in the community, how families with children who are or may be affected by developmental delays are enrolled in ENRICH, the services ENRICH will provide, and what health and quality of life outcomes can be anticipated for families in ENRICH.

At 4:30 pm, Barbara Ferrer, PhD, MPH, MEd, Director of DPH, and LA County Supervisor Hilda Solis (tentative) will formally open Public Health Week with this first of five events (one every day of the week), discussing how the environmental impact of Exide Technologies' toxic waste led to ENRICH, and the public health role in environmental and health mitigation and remediation strategies.

At 5:00, Dr. Ferrer will turn the event to a panel discussion underscoring that Racial and Environmental Justice are Health Outcomes. The four expert panelists will describe how racial inequities are structurally and culturally embedded in our communities and built environments, how fundamentally they are linked to environmental injustice in neighborhoods with limited access to health care and other services, and how that equation leads to devastating health outcomes such as low birth weight and developmental delays. The panel discussion will include dinner for people attending.

The panel is intended to bring awareness to environmental and racial justice strategies that will reduce health and other disparities in East LA. Mikayla Guerrero, DPH's youth advisor in SPA 7, will launch the community PhotoVoice project to document racial and environmental justice activities in photos and images in the Exide-impacted area.

During the event, the venue will host an Empowerment Expo Resource Fair showcasing agencies and organizations providing services and opportunities for involvement throughout the community. ELAFRC will offer child developmental delay screenings, and DPH/DHS will offer blood lead level testing to event participants.

1. Communities for a Better Environment. (2016) Communities for a Better Environment Cleans Up in Southern California. <https://www.cbecal.org/organizing/southern-california/>
2. Kaufman, J. and Hajat, A. (2021) Confronting Environmental Racism. Environmental Health Perspectives, 129(5). <https://doi.org/10.1289/EHP9511>

