

# How U.S. EPA's New Environmental Justice Initiative Impacts Manufacturing Operations

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**Environmental Justice** is a concept that has gained significant traction in recent years. It refers to the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, or national origin, in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recently announced a new Environmental Justice Initiative (EJI) that aims to address environmental justice concerns in manufacturing operations. This initiative is a key component of the EPA's broader efforts to advance environmental justice and is designed to help manufacturing facilities identify and address potential environmental justice concerns. The EJI is a multi-faceted approach that includes a number of key components, including:

1. **Conduct an Environmental Justice Assessment.** Evaluate the plant locations and any planned expansions of manufacturing operations at the company. Continuing or expanding manufacturing operations that will require environmental permitting may result in heightened review.
2. **Develop an Environmental Justice Plan.** If the Assessment confirms that there could be an Environmental Justice concern at a manufacturing facility, consider developing an Environmental Justice Plan that reviews and addresses potential concerns, including the facility's engagement with the local community. The Plan could include:
  - A budget for staffing including personnel to lead community outreach efforts.
  - Attention to hiring practices where employment of members of the local community could be improved.

- Ensure that management reflects diversity and inclusion priorities and are skilled at networking within the community.

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