

Rep. Neubauer: Wisconsin environmental equity tool development announced

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MADISON, WI – Yesterday, Gov. Tony Evers announced a series of listening sessions meant to assist the departments of Administration (DOA), Health Services (DHS), and Natural Resources (DNR), and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) in developing the Wisconsin Environmental Equity Tool. Rep. Greta Neubauer (D-Racine) shared the following statement in support:

“As communities across Wisconsin cope with the growing impacts of climate change, alongside pollution and environmental contaminants like lead and PFAS, tools like the Wisconsin Environmental Equity Tool, currently in the development process, are absolutely necessary,” Neubauer said. “The impacts of climate change and environmental contaminants are felt in all corners of the state, but they are not felt equally. This tool will help Wisconsinites and their communities to understand and address environmental health inequities, so we can build a healthier, more equitable state together.”

The Wisconsin Environmental Equity Tool will be a comprehensive environmental and public health mapping system, used to analyze and visualize data online to assess environmental and public health needs statewide. Users will be able to pinpoint Wisconsin’s most impacted communities, identify the environmental challenges, and prioritize investments to continue building healthy, resilient communities.

“Your family’s health shouldn’t depend on your zip code. Developing tools like the Wisconsin Environmental Equity Tool are a critical step toward making that vision a reality,” Neubauer concluded.

The agencies involved in developing the Wisconsin Environmental Equity Tool are holding a series of virtual listening sessions in November to gather input from communities about environmental and public health needs due to issues including climate change, pollution, poverty, and other environmental hazards.

People throughout Wisconsin are encouraged to attend and share their thoughts, so the mapping tool can reflect the real-world experiences of real people. Underserved communities, which often face the greatest environmental and health consequences, such as Tribal Nations, communities of color, and low-income families, are especially encouraged to share their experiences.

The three virtual listening sessions will be held via Zoom, alongside a toll-free phone-in option. Agency staff and environmental health experts will facilitate each session's small group discussions. **The sessions are scheduled for November 2 at 7:00 p.m.; November 4 at 4:30 p.m.; and November 6 at 10 a.m.**

Registration is encouraged, but not required. Visit wedc.org/environmental-equity to register for listening sessions and access phone and Zoom connection information, including Spanish and Hmong interpretation by request. If you are unable to attend any of the sessions, please consider submitting written comments and signing up for project news at wedc.org/environmental-equity.