

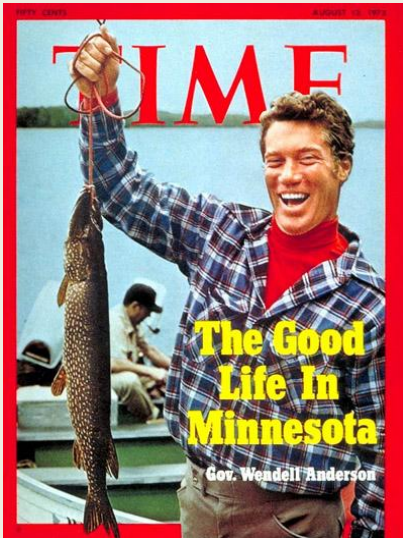
Environmental Justice Minnesota's Approach



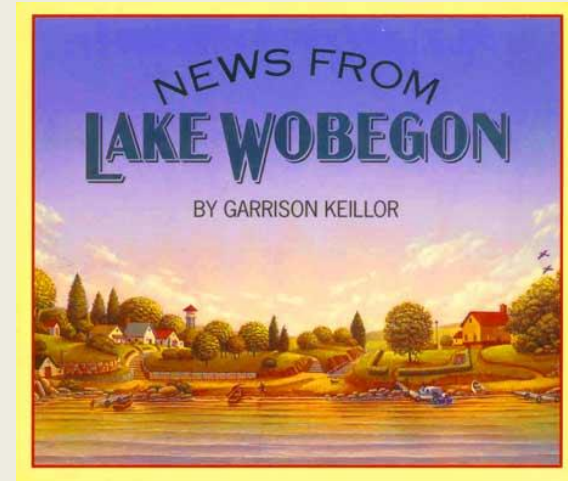
November 2, 2016
John Linc Sitne



Minnesota Pollution Control Agency



Minnesota!
Where the women are strong,
The men are good looking,
And all our health statistics
are above average –
Unless you are
a person of color or
an American Indian.



“The opportunity to be healthy is not equally available everywhere or for everyone.”

2014 Advancing Health Equity Report: MN Department of Health



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Equity is about creating opportunities for everyone to be healthy

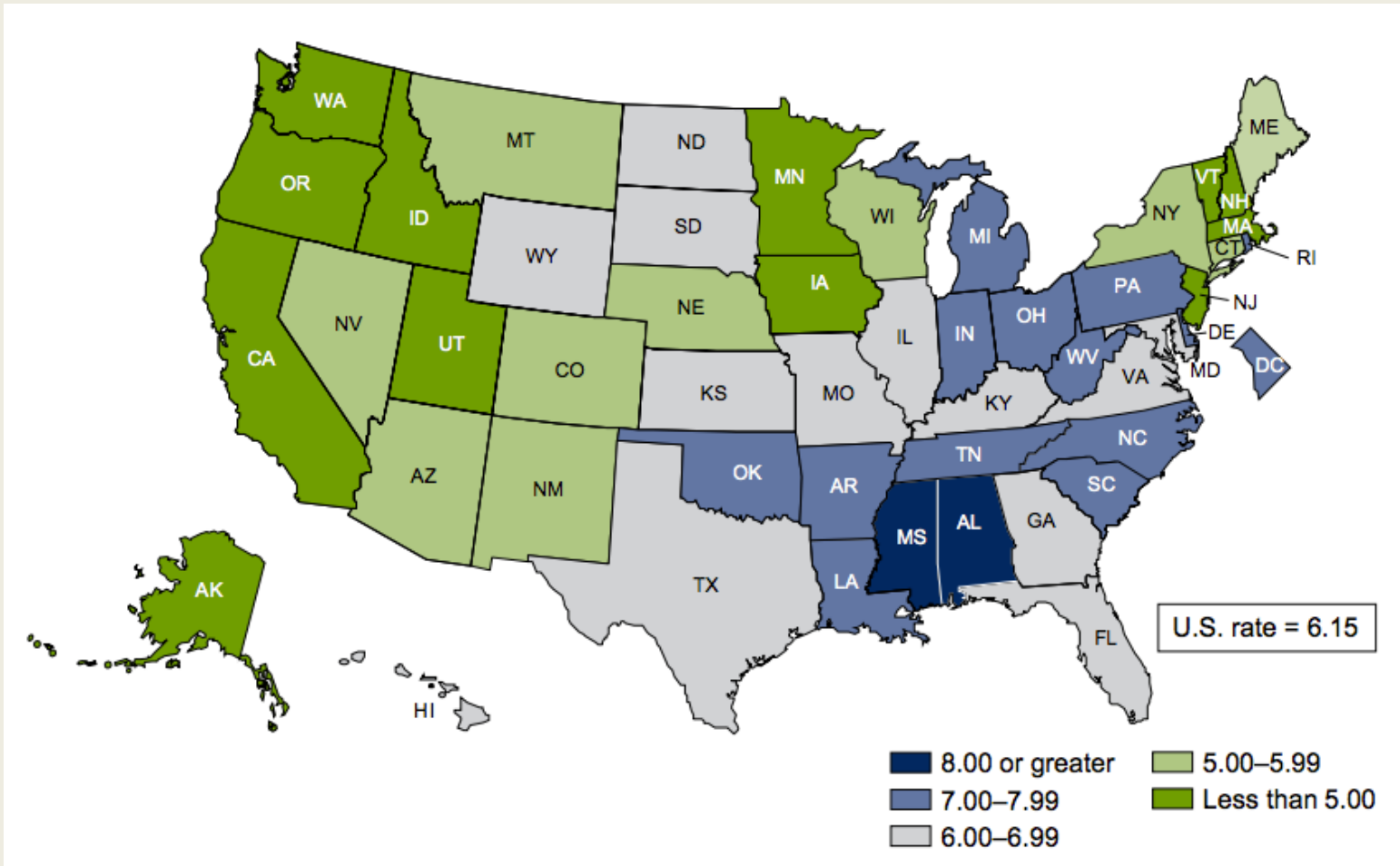


EQUALITY

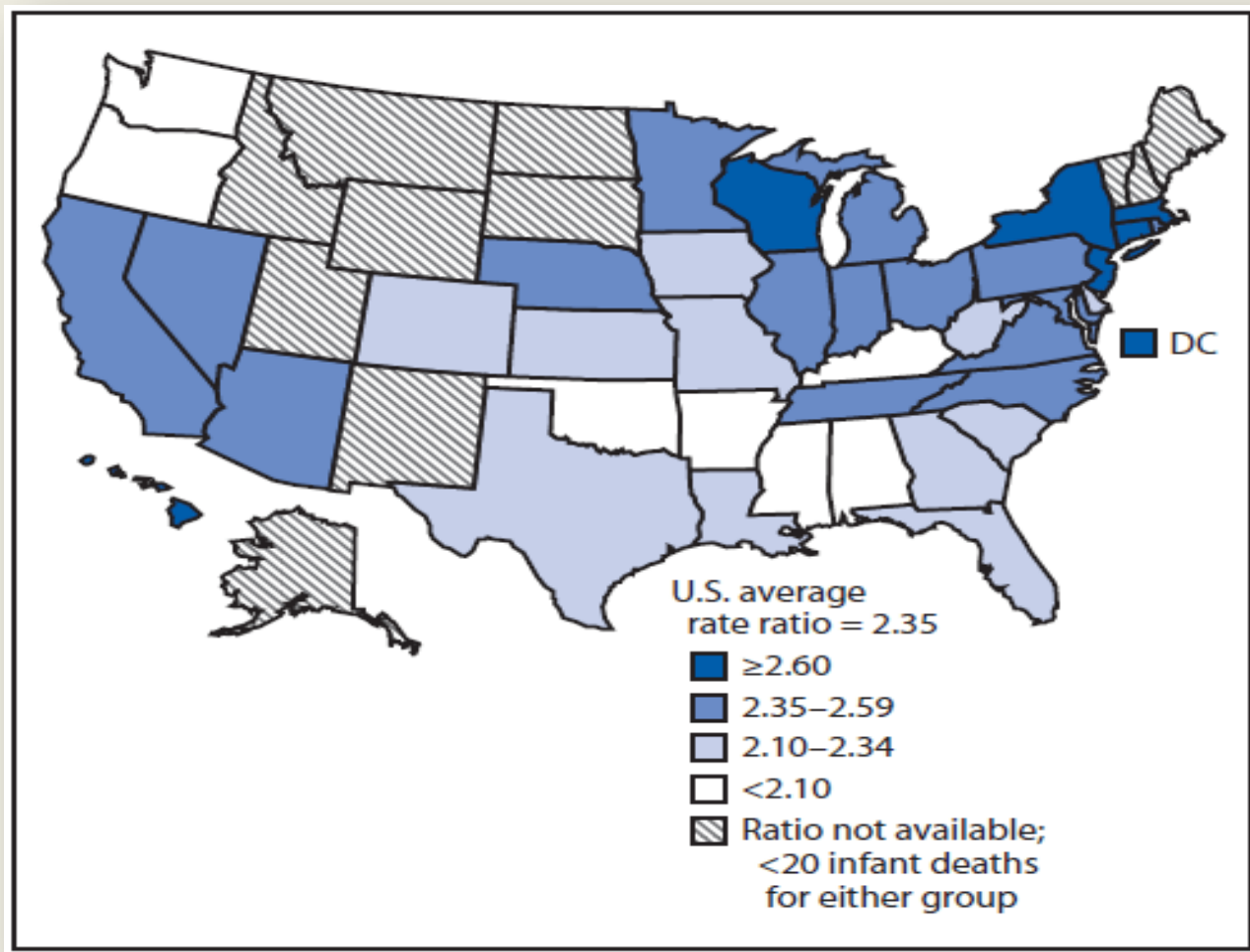


EQUITY

Overall infant mortality rates



Ratio of non-Hispanic black and non-Hispanic white infant mortality rates,* by state — United States, 2006–2008



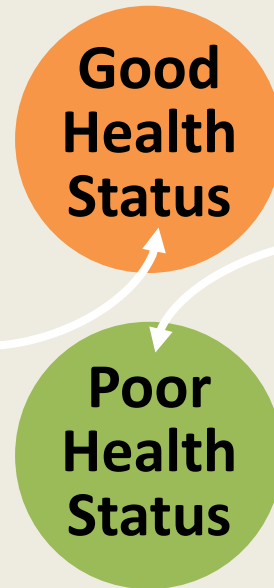


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Communities of Opportunity

Low-Opportunity Communities

- ❑ Social/economic inclusion
- ❑ Thriving small businesses and entrepreneurs
- ❑ Financial institutions
- ❑ Good transportation options and infrastructure
- ❑ Home ownership
- ❑ Better performing schools
- ❑ Sufficient healthy housing
- ❑ Grocery stores
- ❑ IT connectivity
- ❑ Strong local governance
- ❑ Parks & trails



Contributes to health disparities:

- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Asthma
- Obesity
- Injury

- ❑ Social/economic exclusion
- ❑ Few small businesses
- ❑ Payday lenders
- ❑ Few transportation options
- ❑ Rental housing/foreclosure
- ❑ Poor performing schools
- ❑ Poor and limited housing stock
- ❑ Increased pollution and contaminated drinking water
- ❑ Fast food restaurants
- ❑ Limited IT connections
- ❑ Weak local governance
- ❑ Unsafe/limited parks



And The Real Narrative of What Creates Health Inequities?



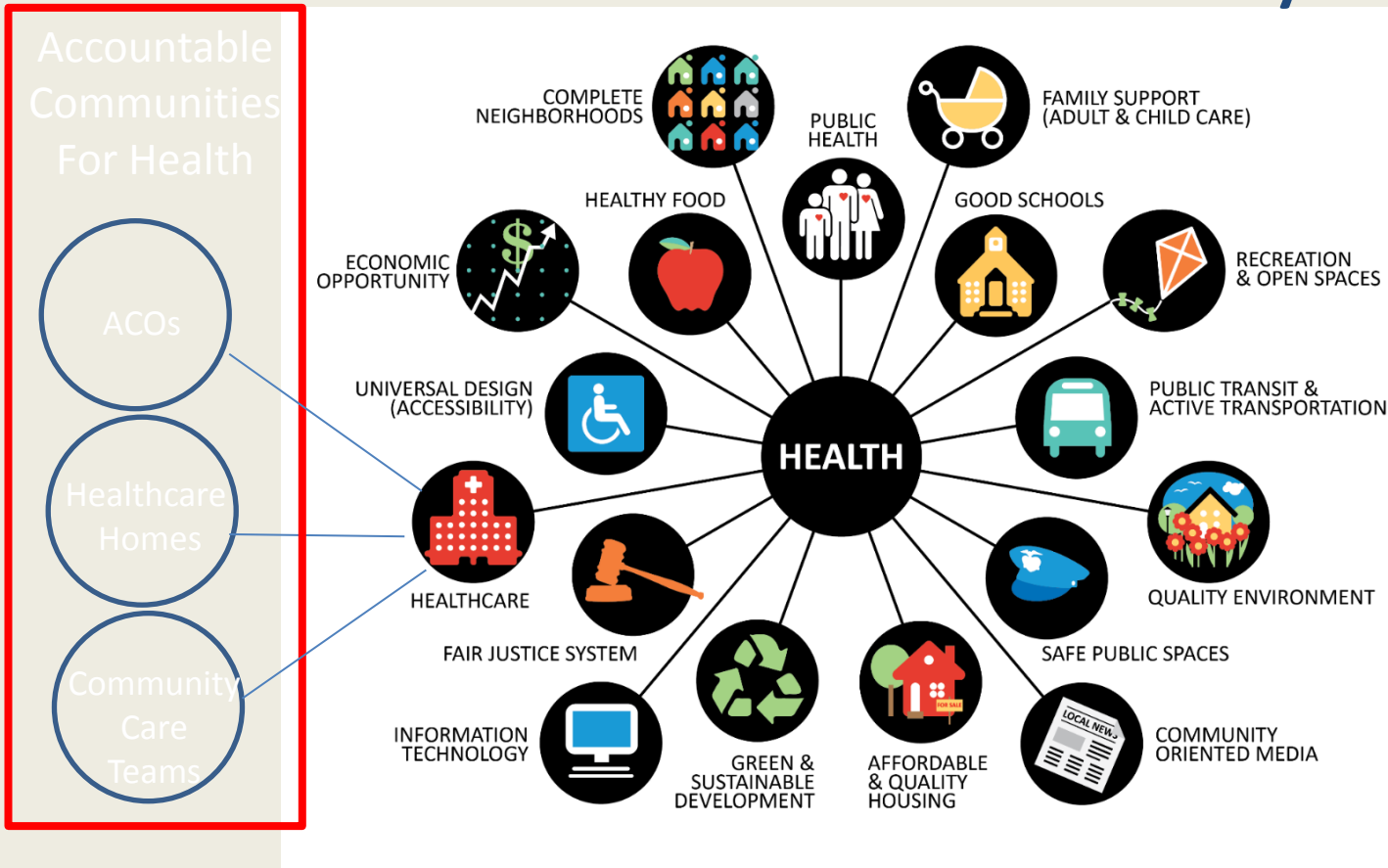
- ❑ Disparities are not just because of lack of access to health care or to poor individual choices.
- ❑ **Disparities are mostly the result of policy decisions that systematically disadvantage some populations over others.**
 - Especially, populations of color and American Indians, GLBT, immigrants, and refugees
 - Structural Racism



Strengthen the Capacity of Communities to Create Their Own Healthy Future



Health is Community



“...the community in the fullest sense is the smallest unit of health...to speak of the health of an isolated individual is a contradiction in terms.”

Wendell Berry in Health is Membership





President Clinton signing Environmental Justice Executive Order 12898, Feb. 11, 1994



Environmental Justice at MPCA

- ❑ Started work in early 1990s
- ❑ Renewed commitment in 2012
 - Increased national, local attention/concern
 - Minnesota government-wide efforts to reduce disparities
 - Strategic plan goal
- ❑ MPCA Environmental Justice Steering Team
 - Commissioner's Office, Division Directors
- ❑ Stakeholder meetings to develop approach



MPCA EJ Policy

Updated October
2012

The MPCA will, within its authority, strive for the “**fair treatment and meaningful involvement** of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.”



Environmental Justice at MPCA

- All Minnesotans can participate in decisions that affect their environment and health
 - People can influence the decision
 - Everyone's concerns are considered



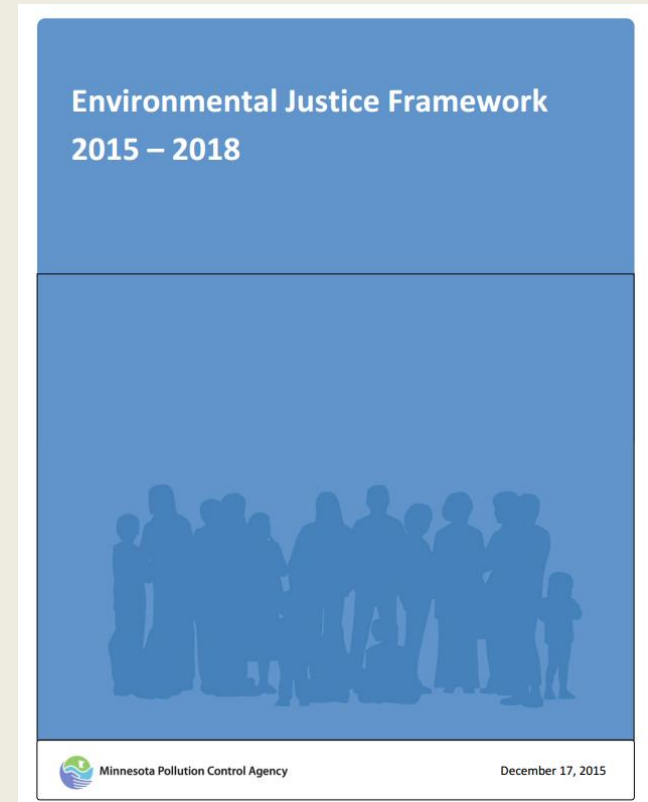
Environmental Justice at MPCA

- All people benefit from equal levels of environmental protection and service
 - Pollution does not harm one group of people more than another
 - Protecting Minnesotans most at risk



MPCA's EJ Framework

- ❑ Our comprehensive strategy for integrating environmental justice principles into our work
- ❑ Completed Dec. '15
www.pca.state.mn.us/ej
- ❑ Program-specific strategies and tools
 - Includes regulatory roles such as permitting, and non-regulatory assistance, education, grants, etc.
 - Procedures for identifying areas of concern and increased outreach
- ❑ Formed EJ stakeholder advisory group



Main framework approaches

- ❑ Identify areas where lower income Minnesotans, people of color and others may be experiencing more harm
- ❑ Change our approach and increase our work in these areas:
 - Better understand sources of pollution and risks
 - Reduce pollution, improve livability
 - Communicate more, better
 - Create EJ Advisory Group - 15 members



Outreach - past, present, future

- ❑ Working on improving outreach over the past few years, especially in air permitting
- ❑ Earlier, more frequent community engagement
 - Identify community contacts, leaders
 - Inform when application received
 - Informal meetings in advance of public meetings
 - Plain, understandable languages
 - Encourage facility-community discussions
- ❑ Provide resources for community to understand the permitting process
 - Information on where, when, and how citizen input can have the most impact



Consideration of EJ issues in permitting

- Understand the community characteristics and concerns
 - Is the facility in or near an area of concern for environmental justice (based on race and income)
 - Concerns related to facility, both related to regulated activity and other concerns.
- Evaluate impacts of proposed permit
 - Effect on ambient pollution concentrations
 - Other pollution sources in the area
 - Other air pollution health related info
 - Scale our efforts commensurate with risk



Improving regulatory outcomes

- ❑ Reduce releases beyond regulatory limits
 - More rigorous compliance demonstrations or practices
 - Pollution prevention opportunities
 - Negotiating a lower limit when warranted
- ❑ Address community concerns outside of permit
 - Re-routing/restricting vehicle traffic
 - Addressing noise/odor concerns
 - Facility aesthetics
- ❑ Connect to other resources
 - Put citizens in contact with entities that have jurisdiction over concerns outside of our control
 - Connect regulated parties with resources for implementing pollution prevention techniques



Questions?

