



P O L I C Y

Section: Administration

Subject: Environmental Equity Initiative

Approved By: DENR Secretary

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Revised:

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Environmental Equity Policy

The Environmental Equity Initiative supports the NC DENR's mission of protecting our state's precious human and natural resources. We do this by ensuring clean air, clean water, and proper and safe disposal of pollutants in a manner consistent with sustainable development. Our key focus is to address issues as they arise, establish lines of communication with industries and affected communities, and bridge the gap of misunderstanding that often becomes a significant barrier in problem resolution. By fostering meaningful participation and greater understanding, we reduce risk, share responsibility and enjoy mutual benefits. By building consensus with our two primary customers (community and industry) and assuring that we protect our silent customer (nature), we allow all parties to become true stakeholders in the environmental regulatory process.

Low income and minority communities often believe that they are burdened with a disproportionate share of our state's environmental risks. This belief in some instances, may be well founded. However, these beliefs can also create a hostile environment in which good-faith efforts to resolve disputes, address concerns, and seek consensus solutions are nearly certain to fail. The NC DENR's Environmental Equity Initiative attempts to create opportunities for successful and productive communication between the agency, local community, and neighboring industries. Providing all citizens the opportunity for meaningful input into decision-making processes is critical to effective government.

DENR Goals for Environmental Equity:

- To ensure that agency programs substantially affecting human health or the environment operate without discrimination,