

OUR CLIMATE, OUR AIR



Local air pollution and global climate change are both caused by fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and natural gas. Manufacturing and burning fossil fuels releases carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases which trap heat in our atmosphere and also creates byproducts (many of them toxic) that cause air pollution. Air pollution is a particularly serious problem in California, which is home to the top 5 U.S. cities ranked worst for both ozone and particle pollution. Poor air quality affects us all, and Latinos who live in these areas and work in occupations that keep them outdoors are particularly impacted.

LATINOS ARE AFFECTED BY POOR AIR QUALITY

Latinos are much more likely than non-Hispanic whites to live in the most polluted areas of cities with poor air quality.



24 million Latinos live in **areas of the U.S. that are most polluted by ozone smog**, including Los Angeles, Houston, and New York.



Latinos also often live in **rural areas where poor air quality is a serious problem**: the three US cities with worst particle pollution are all majority-Latino.



Latinos are at most risk from health effects from high exposure to air pollution since they represent the majority of **labor force for outdoor occupations**.



Latino children are 70% more likely to be admitted to the hospital for asthma and have **twice the asthma mortality rate**, an effect of lack of healthcare access.

CLIMATE CHANGE WORSENS AIR POLLUTION

Climate change is increasing average global temperatures, as well as the frequency of extremely hot days, drought, wildfires, and flooding events.



Increase in temperatures leads to an increase in heat-related illness and death, (especially for outdoor workers) and worsens the effects of air pollution.



This, plus a lack of access to healthcare, inadequate translation services, facilities and training, especially for migrant agricultural workers, put **Latinos at increased risk of heat-related illnesses and death**.



The **Latino mortality rate from heat-related causes is three times higher** than for non-Hispanic whites.



Climate change has dramatically worsened the **wildfire season, a major source of particle pollution** and threaten air quality as well as property.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Transitioning towards a renewable energy future requires changes at every level. These include:



Transitioning to 100% renewable energy like solar, wind, and other forms of generating zero-carbon electricity in our homes and workplaces.



Better public transportation systems: Most air pollution is caused by the transportation sector: electric clean cars, trucks and heavy machinery will help to fight climate change and air pollution and can deliver immediate and long-term benefits to us all.



“Decarbonizing” buildings: making buildings and appliances more energy-efficient and using electric stoves and heating systems that can be powered by renewables



More affordable and accessible healthcare: while reducing air pollution, we need to help those already dealing with its effects



Smarter cities: building more walkable cities with parks, green spaces and affordable housing

Improve services to help Spanish-dominant Latinos access information and better navigate healthcare.

Get involved: whether in your own city or at the national level, your voice matters. Tell your landlord, supervisor, water and energy provider, city officials and legislators that you want clean energy, access to public transportation, and better energy efficiency in your home and workplace.

SPOTLIGHT ON A LATINO CLEAN AIR LEADER:

Luis Olmedo,
Executive Director of
Comité Civico del Valle



Comité Civico del Valle (CCV) was founded by Luis' father, a farmworker immigrant from Mexico who saw the need to help disadvantaged immigrant children navigate the U.S. educational, immigration and public health systems. Under Luis' leadership, CCV has focused on environmental justice work developing new tools and programs that are being replicated by EJ communities and institutionalized by government as best practices. CCV has a long history working with California State Department of Public Health and Academia in doing Research to Action and Community Based Participatory Research and designing health interventions such as the Asthma Academy ASMA for Asthma Educators. CCV in partnership with Tracking California and University of Washington deployed the largest community operated air monitoring network that follows regulatory and scientific methods now available real-time for public to use and avoid exposure to prolonged periods of unhealthy air quality. The IVAN AIR is rapidly expanding across California EJ communities funded by AB 617 which aims to reduce air pollution in fence-line communities. Resulting from the IVAN AIR Program, CCV partnered with Tracking California to develop a Youth Environmental Health Internship Program which has been recognized at the California Legislature, TCE Youth Awards and has been invited to the Global Climate Action Summit as part of a youth delegation.



More information: www.latinocf.org/climate



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