

# The Cheverly Area Environmental Justice Action Team (EJAT) ... An Air Pollution Action-Oriented Team of the Community Advisory Board (CAB)

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## Copy of Comments Made by the Cheverly Area EJAT<sup>1</sup>

### MWAQC Environmental Justice Subcommittee Meeting

August 28, 2024 - 12:30 pm

Madame Chair, Subcommittee members, thank you for providing the opportunity to provide public comment today.

Our comments today focus on some basic questions about the timing of the EJ Action Plan that you have committed to.

We recognize that the Subcommittee asked for public input on the issue of how to define the problem.

Tad Aburn is commenting as an individual on that issue and we generally support his comments. Tad is a very experienced air pollution volunteer working with us and is the Secretary and Convenor for EJAT.

Our basic questions are provided below. All of these questions relate to the urgency of the problem.

We truly appreciate the effort that MWAQC has made over the past 30 years to clean the air. Progress has been amazing. Unfortunately, not all communities are benefitting equally. The vast majority of the region's population is breathing clean, healthy air. Unfortunately, certain communities are not breathing healthy air ... their air is actually alarmingly

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<sup>1</sup> See attached overview of EJATs mission and membership

unhealthy and placing the community residents and their children at great public health risk. The issue is urgent.

Our basic questions are:

1. What is the schedule for adopting and implementing the plan?
2. When will MWAQC and its members begin to implement the emission reduction measures in priority EJ communities that MDE is implementing in Cheverly? These emission reduction measures are already adopted ... they are in your SIP ... they are just not being implemented in a way that focuses on EJ areas.
  - The MDE techniques for reducing the workload associated with an EJ area focused effort (less full day inspections ... more advisories, educational materials, emails, phone calls, etc.) should be used by MWAQC and its members.
  - MDE should brief MWAQC on these techniques and MWAQC and its members should initiate action in the worst EJ areas in each jurisdiction ... in the next three months ... to immediately begin to reduce emissions and unacceptably high risks.
3. When will MWAQC begin to help communities build the community air monitoring networks that are now ready to be put in place?
  - The money to support the community monitoring is readily available from EPA and easy to access.
  - Local academic institutions have expressed interest in helping install, trouble-shoot and maintain the community monitors.
  - COG has staffed up and has contractors on board.
  - You have a successful, working model in the Cheverly area and an offer from the Cheverly community to help put this effort on a fast track and to have monitors installed by the end of the year.

Thank you again for providing the opportunity to provide public comment. We are anxious to help.