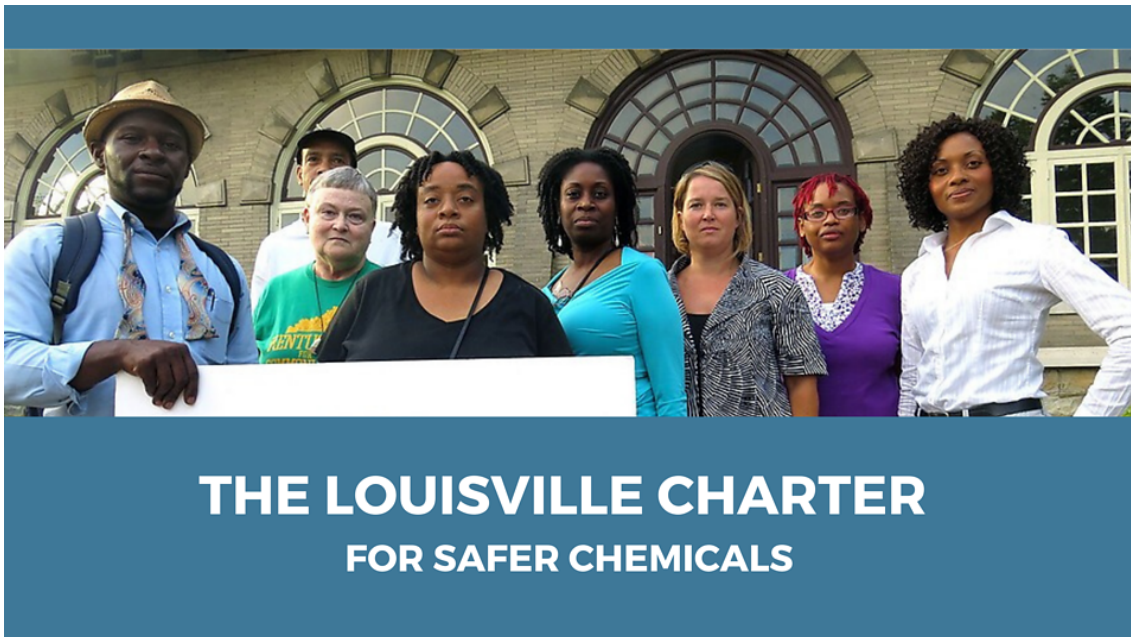


[View this email in your browser](#)



Jefferson County Vision recently joined over 100 organizations in signing onto the Louisville Charter for Safer Chemicals. The charter was initially created in 2005 after organizers assembled a broad coalition of grassroots, labor, health and environmental justice groups with the goal to advocate for policies that protect public health and the environment from exposure to harmful chemicals. The charter has served as a roadmap to fundamentally transform the chemical industry.

[Read More About the Louisville Charter](#)

Louisville, Kentucky is no stranger to air pollution. It has been home to a neighborhood infamously known as “Rubbertown”, an industrial area along the Ohio river in southwest Louisville since the 1940’s. During World War II, the area became home to many industrial plants, including American Synthetic Rubber, Dow Chemical, Borden Chemical, and DuPont Dow Elastomers. There are now eleven large chemical plants in the area, which account for 42% of air emissions in the surrounding county. After the war, a series of racially segregating policies and practices caused home values to fall and isolated and confined the Black population to the West End.

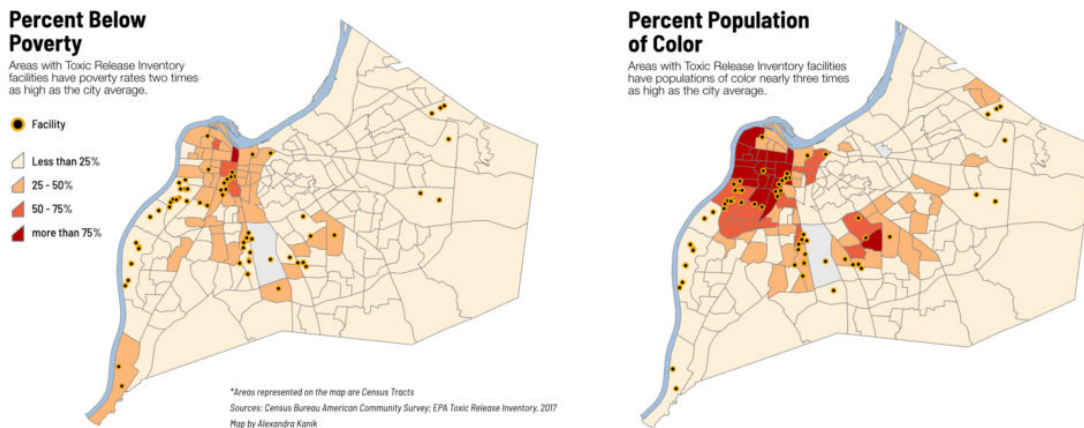


Mill Creek Coal Power Plant in Louisville. PC: The Nature Conservancy.

Over the years, many residents have complained of health problems they attributed to air pollution from the industrial facilities in Rubbertown. Studies over the years have reflected citizen concerns. In 1956, an air quality study found extremely high levels of cancer-causing chemicals in the ambient air around Rubbertown. A 2013 study showed that certain cancers, including lung and colon cancers, are more prevalent in areas near the Rubbertown neighborhood in west and southwest Louisville. Pollution in the area has also caused shortened lives. One study from the peer reviewed academic journal, *Local Environment*, says shortened lives of 10 to 13 years is mainly attributed to toxic pollutants in the air, soil and water.

Rubbertown is just one of many fence-line communities across the U.S. Many fence-line communities unknowingly live next to industrial and commercial facilities that can cause catastrophic harm through toxic

releases or explosions. Those who live in these communities are more likely to belong to a minority group and are more likely to face other social injustices, including lack of access to health care, higher rates of diseases like diabetes and asthma, and stress from poverty, unemployment, and crime.



Fed up with the injustices they faced, a coalition of residents called the West Jefferson County Community Task Force, along with the University of Louisville, began working together to push for more stringent restrictions on the city's toxic air pollutants in the early 2000's. They conducted a two-year air toxic monitoring study, which found that 17 cancer-causing pollutants were found to be unacceptably high. At the same time, another group known as the Rubbertown Emergency ACTION, was making waves. The group of local activists committed to non-violent demonstration attended city meetings, protested industry permits, and organized the community in an effort to raise awareness about the pollution. The increased publicity ultimately drove the mayor to meet with Rubbertown companies and the city established the Strategic Toxic Air Reduction program. This program established new regulations for toxic pollutants and contributed to a 73% decrease in toxic air pollution between 2005 and 2017. While there has been progress, there is still more work to be done. The toxic air pollution that remains still disproportionately affects fenceline communities in west and south Louisville.



The West Virginia primaries will be held on **May 10th, 2022**. The primaries will determine which candidates appear on the general election ballots in November for seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, the State Senate and House of Delegates, and other state, county and municipal offices. Local offices that will be on the ballot include three seats for The Jefferson County Board of Education and two seats for the Jefferson County Commission. Early in-person voting will take place April 27th to May 7th. We encourage you to register to vote if you have not already done so. The deadline to register to vote in this election is **April 19th**.

[Check Your Voter Registration Status](#)

Attending local government meetings is another important way you can be active in the community. Your presence helps to hold our officials accountable to the values and concerns of Jefferson County's citizens. "Think global, act local!"

[View This Week's Meetings](#)

Please consider a gift to support our critical work if you are able to. We greatly appreciate every donation. All proceeds benefit JCV's efforts to lead legal, political, and community action to support sustainable growth, without heavy

industry, and to empower our citizen's voices to ensure a clean, transparent government in Jefferson County.

Donate To Support Our Work



Copyright © 2022 Jefferson County Vision, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

