

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:
Kimberly Hill
313-833-3935 Ext. 41

Grace Doss
313.833.3935 x23
grace@dwej.org

Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice Takes Action to Prevent Polluted Air-Related Deaths in Detroit and Michigan

DETROIT, Mich., August 27, 2012 – On Tuesday, August 28, 2012 from 6-8 pm, doctors, environmental groups, community advocates, and concerned citizens will convene to discuss the chronic problems from soot air pollution and ways they can take action to clean-up the air in Detroit and all of Michigan. The meeting will take place at the Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation on 1211 Trumbull Street and is sponsored by Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice (DWEJ), Consortium of Hispanic Agencies, Sierra Club, the Green Door Initiative, Residents of 48217, Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision, and Clean Water Action.

“The Take Action Soot Air Pollution Event will provide an opportunity for impacted communities to learn more about the dangers of soot and their comments will be shared with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA),” said Kimberly Hill Policy Manager at DWEJ.

The goal is to encourage the EPA to place stronger health protections on air quality that save lives and create more green jobs. Event sponsors hope to gather feedback they can share with the EPA to persuade them to increase their standards.

Of particular concern to urban areas like Detroit is “PM 2.5,” an abbreviation standing for particulate matter that is 2.5 microns or less in diameter -- more commonly referred to as soot. Soot can come from power plants, industrial processes, automobile and diesel engine exhaust, and wood burning and has been conclusively linked to a wide range of human health problems ranging from asthma and bronchitis to heart disease and strokes.

The current legal limit for PM 2.5 is 15 micrograms (µg) per cubic meter of air. DWEJ and other environmental advocates suggest that a limit of 11 µg per cubic meter of air could prevent thousands more deaths than the EPA's current proposed standard.

“Recently, I met with the White House and EPA officials to urge them to set the most protective soot standard based on the latest science,” said Hill. “We believe the Standard of 11 will yield the most economic and health benefits, especially in communities that are disproportionately impacted by dirty soot air pollution, caused by heavy truck traffic and coal-fired power plants.”

Residents with all levels of understanding about the problem of soot air pollution are invited to attend the event. Attendees will hear from health experts, be provided tailored activist trainings, and have the opportunity to videotape testimonials, write comments to the EPA, and take part in other “Take Action” opportunities.

-more-

ABOUT DETROITERS WORKING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (DWEJ)

DWEJ, a voice for environmental justice in Michigan since 1994, works with communities to create cleaner, healthier and safer neighborhoods and envisions Detroit as a vibrant urban center in SE Michigan where all thrive in environmental, economic, and social health. DWEJ is dedicated to empowering urban residents to take a meaningful role in the decision-making process surrounding environmental concerns in their own communities. We are also about building connections—between jobs and a healthy environment, community development and environmental justice, community-driven policy and economic development.

###