

Premiere Video Learning Tool Gives Power Back to the Communities

Environmental Health Coalition launches Creating Healthy Neighborhoods: Community Planning to Overcome Injustice

SAN DIEGO, July 28, 2014 – Today [Environmental Health Coalition](#) (EHC), an organization fighting toxic pollution in San Diego and Tijuana, released its video learning tool to empower residents to speak up and advocate for positive changes to their communities. [Creating Healthy Neighborhoods: Community Planning to Overcome Injustice](#) is a bilingual video demonstrating the impacts of discriminatory land-use in San Diego and teaching community members how to achieve environmental justice in seven empowering steps.

This series of strategic planning techniques has led to great successes for low-income communities of color in San Diego. In Old Town National City, this process guided residents to provide input and influence policy in their community to achieve a collective vision. In 2006, residents successfully advocated for adoption of an ordinance to phase out heavy polluters from a predominately residential area in close proximity to a local elementary school. In 2010, the city unanimously approved and initiated implementation of the Westside Specific Plan, bringing affordable housing units within walking distance of public transit and vastly improving the quality of life in Westside National City.

"I had no idea we had the right to make changes in our community," says Maria Martinez, Old Town National City resident, in the video. "That we could say, 'We don't want this here because it's bad for our health.'"

[The twenty-minute video](#) compares the communities of Barrio Logan and Coronado to starkly illustrate how differences in land-use and planning affect the health, safety and quality of life for residents. The video outlines seven steps to draw a clear link between community-engaged planning and environmental justice, giving community members the tools to advocate for important neighborhood changes. It features inspiring testimonials from real residents and leaders in underprivileged San Diego communities who recognized problems, participated in EHC's training and used new tools and skills to organize others to build power and achieve healthier communities.

[Environmental Health Coalition](#) encourages community residents, social and environmental justice organizations, educators for all levels and anyone who envisions a better future for their communities to watch the video and share it with others to gain a better understanding of how community planning can create healthier, more vibrant and livable neighborhoods.

To view the trailer, [click here](#). The DVD is available to [watch online in English and Spanish](#), or viewers can [purchase a hard copy here](#). For more information on

Environmental Health Coalition's work for toxic-free communities, visit www.environmentalhealth.org.

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Environmental Health Coalition (EHC) is a nonprofit organization that empowers residents to advocate for the environmental health of their children, families and neighborhoods. For more information on EHC, please visit www.environmentalhealth.org.