



STRATEGIC PLAN: YEAR 1 REPORT



NOVEMBER 2024–DECEMBER 2025



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Introduction

Environmental justice is the principle that everyone, regardless of race or income, has the right to live, work, go to school, and play in a clean and safe environment. Climate health focuses on protecting communities from the growing physical and mental health impacts of a changing climate, such as extreme heat, wildfires, and worsening air quality.

In Los Angeles County, pollution and extreme weather present complex public health challenges for our neighborhoods. The Office of Environmental Justice and Climate Health (OEJCH) was established within the Department of Public Health to foster a healthy and sustainable environment for the residents of Los Angeles County.

OEJCH's work is guided by its mission to "assess environmental conditions and reduce exposure to health risks; and to educate the public on sources of environmental risks so that they are empowered to protect themselves, their families, and their communities."

This Year 1 Strategic Plan Report highlights OEJCH's first year of action and outlines progress across three core themes:

①



**Building
Community
Trust**

②



**Creating a data
infrastructure
for prevention**

③



**Accountable
communication for
shared responsibility**

During the first year of Strategic Plan implementation, OEJCH focused on building capacity, advancing key programs and policies, and strengthening community engagement while adapting to a number of extraordinary challenges, including the January 2025 wildfires, federal immigration enforcement actions, and ongoing uncertainty in federal funding.

- The permanent closure of Atlas Metals following continued community advocacy and coordinated interagency action, marking the end of decades of environmental and health harms affecting the Watts community and neighboring Jordan High School.
- Approval of a new ordinance by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors establishing a new maximum indoor temperature standard for rental units in unincorporated Los Angeles County to help keep tenants safe from extreme heat.
- Continued progress on several long-term initiatives, including Lead Free Homes LA and the Aliso Canyon Disaster Health Research Study.
- Establishment of new partnerships, particularly with youth climate leaders, and strengthened longstanding collaborations to ensure community voices continue to help guide OEJCH's work.

The wildfires that destroyed much of the Pacific Palisades and Eaton Canyon communities required an immediate shift from planned projects to emergency response. Following both fires, OEJCH staff were in the community providing on-the-ground support, technical assistance, and outreach, including blood and soil lead testing for impacted residents.

As a result of changes in federal priorities and funding, Los Angeles County is entering a period of uncertainty and transition that is reshaping public health, environmental protection, and community well-being. OEJCH is adapting its approach to advancing equitable, health-focused solutions that protect and empower the residents of Los Angeles County.

Office of Environmental Health and Climate Health

OEJCH works with local, state, and federal agencies to align environmental justice and climate health strategies and resources, with a focus on improving health outcomes in frontline communities.

Strategic Plan Focus Areas



To guide this work, OEJCH developed a five-year **Strategic Plan** with five focus areas, all of which were informed by extensive stakeholder engagement. The Plan, which was finalized following a public comment period and released in October 2024, serves as a guide for developing and implementing health-centered solutions that aim to reduce environmental harm, strengthen community resilience, and promote equity across Los Angeles County.

Learn more:

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh/docs/about/oejch-strategic-plan-en.pdf>

Five Key Focus Areas

Community Engagement

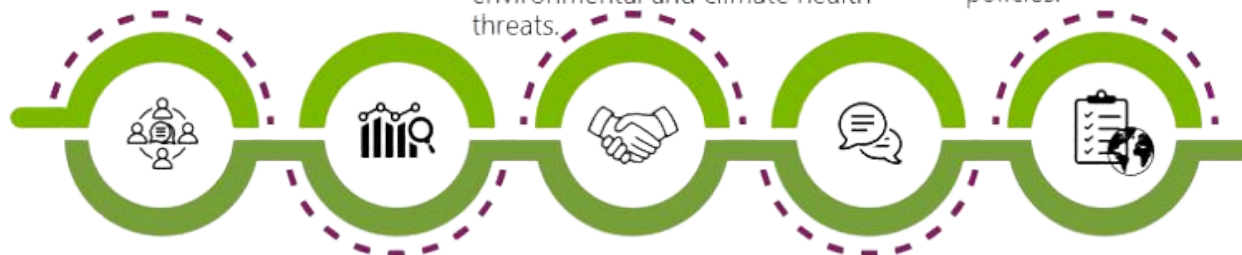
Nurture community relationships to ensure interactive communication and develop community informed solutions.

Interagency Coordination

Cultivate collaboration between public, private, and community partners to develop solutions to environmental and climate health threats.

Policy

Track, inform, and develop impactful environmental justice and climate health policies.



Data

Collect, interpret, and share accessible, actionable environmental justice and climate health data and information with partners and the public to highlight emerging issues and trend analyses to actively inform policies and

Accountability and Communication

Develop and foster communications to keep the community and partners informed of the roles, responsibilities, and progress of the OEJCH.



Accomplishments

In the first year of Strategic Plan implementation, the Office advanced several initiatives to address the cumulative burdens of environmental justice and climate health impacts in Los Angeles County. Cumulative burdens refer to the buildup of multiple environmental and social factors over time that increase health risks. For example, vulnerable populations and low-income communities are often exposed to higher levels of pollution and other environmental stressors. Over time, this repeated exposure can worsen health outcomes and contribute to a lower quality of life compared with other communities.

The five focus areas of OEJCH intersect to address the complex and interconnected issues of environmental justice and climate health. The following actions were identified as Year 1 priorities based on the OEJCH Strategic Plan, existing efforts, and ongoing project initiatives led by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

Figure 1 provides a snapshot of the environmental justice and climate health issues addressed in Year 1. The sections that follow provide additional detail on each topic and the efforts undertaken to address the environmental challenges in Los Angeles County (See Figure 1 on the next page).

Figure 1: OEJCH Accomplishments (2025–2026)



	Focus Area 1 Community Engagement	Focus Area 2 Interagency Coordination	Focus Area 3 Policy	Focus Area 4 Data	Focus Area 5 Accountability & Communication
Lead Exposure Prevention	- Wildfire Community-Blood and Soil Lead Testing - Lead paint hazard cleanup - Multilingual Education	Wildfire Response Efforts		Publicly Available Soil and Blood Lead Testing Dashboards	Reports and Dashboards supported follow-up with wildfire impacted communities
Extreme Heat & Climate Impacts	- LARC Heat Grant Outreach and Education - School Heat Toolkit Dissemination - Heat Ambassadors Training	- LARC Heat Grant - County Heat Action Plan - Indoor Maximum Temperature Ordinance	Established a Maximum Indoor Temperature Ordinance		
Oil & Gas	Community Partnership on the Closure and Well Plugging of AllenCo Energy in University Park	Convened with State, Regional, and Local Regulators to Address Oil and Gas Operations Community Health and Safety	Board Motion Adoption: Just Transition and Phase Out of Urban Oil Drilling		
Hazardous & Toxic Sites	- Fish Contamination Education Collaborative Grant - Provide Education to Workers about Silicosis	Coordinate with regulators and partners on the following sites: Atlas Metals, Del Amo Alley, Exide, and PV Superfund			
Air Pollution	- Participation in Clean Air Groups - Supported LA El Symposium	Serves on AB 617 Steering Committees	Update Guidance on Air Pollution and Housing Development Near Freeways	Development of Oil & Gas Facilities and Industrial Sites Map	
Additional Strategic Plan Progress	- Enhanced Youth Engagement - Hosted DPH Fall Nursing Summit - Managed Community Hotline - Wildfire Response			- Created Data Resource Catalog - Established Climate Data Workgroup	- Implement OEJCH Communication Plan - Distributed Key Correspondence with Partners - Expanded Public Facing Materials - Developed Annual Progress Report

Lead Exposure Prevention

Lead exposure remains a preventable environmental health threat, particularly in homes built before 1978, when lead-based paint was commonly used. As lead-based paint deteriorates, paint chips and dust can contaminate the surrounding soil, especially near building foundations, drip lines, and high-traffic play areas. Lead can also be present in soil because of the historical use of leaded gasoline, industrial emissions, and past land uses. Even low levels of lead exposure can cause lifelong developmental harm in children.

Initiatives

- Oversaw the countywide Lead Free Homes LA lead paint hazard remediation program.
- Provided free blood lead and soil lead testing following the Eaton and Palisades wildfires.



Accomplishments

- Provided more than **2,000 blood lead tests**, including tests for more than 200 children. No elevated blood lead levels were found among children. Public Health Nurses conducted direct follow-up with the 11 adults whose test results showed slightly elevated blood lead levels.

Figure II: Blood Lead Testing Results (as of June 30, 2026)

Source	Total Tested	Children Tested	Adults Tested	Results < 3.5 µg/dL	Results ≥ 3.5 µg/dL
Quest Lab Visit	748	104	644	744	4
Community Event	1,357	114	1,243	1,350	7
Total	2,105	218	1,887	2,094	11

Accomplishments (continued)

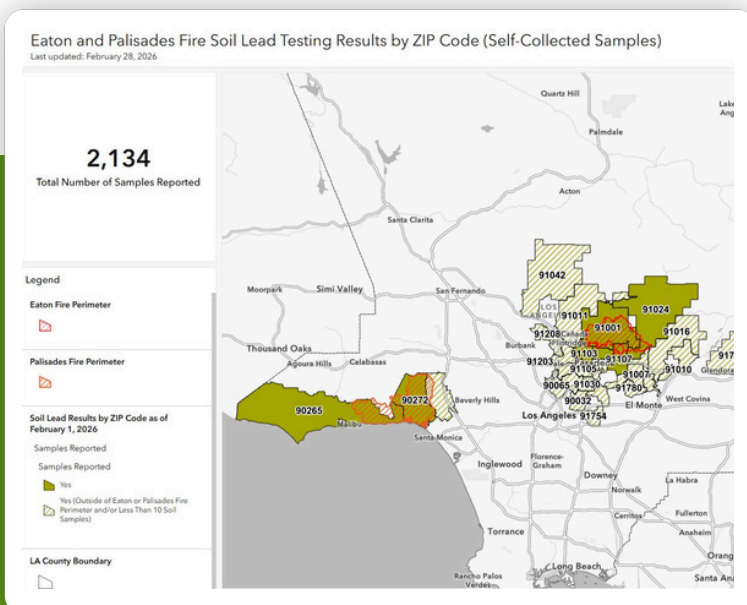
- Screened more than 2,000 soil samples from the Eaton and Palisades wildfire-impacted communities for lead and contributed to the development of an interactive **dashboard** to communicate aggregate soil lead testing results by Zip Code.
- Provided residents with clear, accessible information and guidance to reduce risk and safeguard their health.
- Expanded multilingual educational materials to increase awareness of lead hazards and prevention strategies.
- To date, the **Lead Free Homes LA** Program has repaired lead paint hazards in more than 1,300 homes across Los Angeles County.

Strategic Plan Focus Areas

- **Focus Area 1:**
Community Engagement
- **Focus Area 2:**
Interagency Coordination
- **Focus Area 4:**
Data
- **Focus Area 5:**
Accountability and Communication



The image on the left shows a pre-1951 house with chipping lead-based paint during the preparation process before repairs. The image on the right shows the completed repairs and freshly painted surfaces.



Extreme Heat and Climate Impacts

Climate change is making extreme heat events worse, which may increase the risk of heat-related illness (HRI) and death, especially among older adults, outdoor workers, unhoused populations, and people living or working in the Antelope, San Fernando, and San Gabriel Valleys, where the average number of extreme heat days could increase by **131% by 2050**¹. The growing frequency, intensity, and length of heat waves highlight the need for strategies to adapt to the changing climate and prevent heat-related health impacts.

Initiatives

- Established a new policy creating a [maximum indoor temperature ordinance](#) in unincorporated Los Angeles County to ensure tenants have the right to live in rental units where indoor temperatures do not exceed 82 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Led [LARC-HEAT](#) (Los Angeles Regional Collaborative-Heat Education, Ambassadors, and Training), a grant-funded program that provides Community Health Worker outreach and education to prevent HRI.
- Developed and distributed educational materials for teachers and school administrators.
- Researched and analyzed patterns of extreme heat and HRI across the County to better understand the health impacts of climate change.
- Participated in interdepartmental teams focused on sustainability, heat action planning, and tree canopy coverage throughout Los Angeles County.
- Advanced development of a climate and health dashboard, which launched in May 2026.

¹ Sun, Fengpeng, Daniel B. Walton, and Alex Hall. "A Hybrid Dynamical-Statistical Downscaling Technique. Part

² End-of-Century Warming Projections Predict a New Climate State in the Los Angeles Region". *Journal of Climate* 28.12 (2015): 4618-4636. <https://doi.org/10.1175/JCLI-D-14-00197.1> Web.

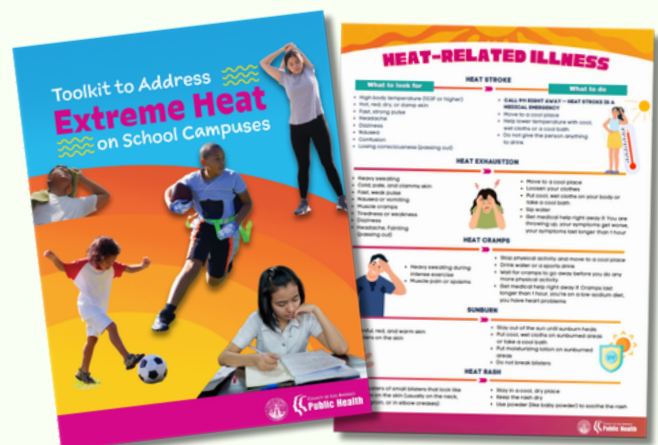
Accomplishments

- Adopted an ordinance establishing a maximum indoor temperature standard of 82 degrees Fahrenheit in rental units in unincorporated Los Angeles County (effective September 2025; enforcement begins January 2027).
- Delivered HRI prevention resources and education at 30 community outreach events.
- Partnered with community organizations to train more than 120 Heat Ambassadors.
- Published an [Extreme Heat Data Brief](#).
- Participated in the Los Angeles County Heat Action Plan (CHAP) Workgroup and Steering Committee.
- Coordinated Public Health's participation in revising the Our County Sustainability Plan.
- Created handouts summarizing key content from the school heat toolkit and partnered with the Los Angeles County Office of Education to promote use of the toolkit.
- Partnered with the Public Health Office of Planning Integration and Engagement to develop presentation materials for use by education professionals.



Strategic Plan Focus Areas

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- **Focus Area 3:**
Policy
- **Focus Area 4:**
Data



Learn more about: [Extreme Heat Toolkit](#)

Oil and Gas

Oil and gas extraction occurs across Los Angeles County, with many of the largest operations concentrated in neighborhoods historically impacted by redlining and industrial zoning and affecting predominantly Black and Brown communities.

People living near active or inactive oil and gas wells face higher risks from pollution ([Johnston, et al., 2021](#)), including loud noise, unpleasant odors, toxic air emissions, and chemical spills. Some of these wells are located less than 50 feet from people's homes.



Willowbrook Tour of Oil and Gas Wells: Willowbrook, a community with a population that is 78% and 18% Black (United States Census Reporter, 2023).

Initiatives

- Initiated the process to implement a Community Health and Safety Plan (CHSP) to increase access to data and emergency preparedness alerts for communities near oil facilities.
- Oversaw the UCLA Aliso Canyon Health Study Team, the group responsible for the Aliso Canyon Disaster Health Research Study, which examines the short- and long-term health effects of the 2015–2016 gas blowout in the Porter Ranch community.
- Served as liaison to the Baldwin Hills Community Advisory Panel and the second Health Assessment and Environmental Justice Study.
- Coordinated a work group of multiple regulatory agencies to ensure protection of public health and safety and community access to regulators during the shutdown of the AllenCo Energy oil and gas operation in University Park.

Accomplishments

- Developed a regulatory gap analysis with health-centered recommendations for spill reporting, Community Health and Safety Plan requirements, and community notification systems for oil and gas operators in unincorporated Los Angeles County. Three peer-reviewed studies were published by the UCLA Aliso Canyon Health Study Team through the DPH-funded [Aliso Canyon Disaster Health Research Study](#), highlighting the first analyses on the impacts of the Aliso Canyon gas blowout.
- Facilitated the release of the second [Baldwin Hills Health Assessment and Environmental Justice Study Final Report](#), which analyzed health impacts in residential areas near oil fields and examined the effects of wind direction.
- Conducted community outreach and held monthly meetings bringing together state, regional, and local regulators and community members to coordinate responses to concerns, develop a Community Health and Safety Plan to protect resident health and safety, and provide updates regarding heavy industrial work occurring in the neighborhood.



— Strategic Plan Focus Areas —

- **Focus Area 1:**
Community Engagement
- **Focus Area 2:**
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- **Focus Area 3:**
Policy
- **Focus Area 4:**
Data

Hazardous and Toxic Sites

Facilities that handle hazardous materials and sites with historic contamination can create risks to nearby communities. Chemicals from these sites can contaminate the air, water, and soil and cause health problems, including cancer, birth defects, and cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. These sites can also create health risks from the accidental release of hazardous substances through spills, fires, or explosions.

Initiatives

- Continued multi-agency partnerships focused on addressing exposures from hazardous and toxic sites.
- Worked with regulatory agencies to ensure land use and environmental laws are enforced.
- Strengthened coordination across regulatory agencies and built community capacity around land use and environmental enforcement.
- Expanded and strengthened community education efforts about contamination risks.

Accomplishments

- Permanently closed the Atlas Metals site following felony hazardous waste violations and continued monitoring of cleanup and restitution activities.
- Gathered regulatory partners to address Del Amo Alley enforcement and land use concerns.
- Advanced Fish Contamination Education Collaborative (FCEC) activities, including updated pier signage and health care provider outreach, with funding from the **US EPA Palos Verdes Shelf Superfund program.**
- Supported silicosis worker protection efforts in partnership with the Public Health Office of Worker Health and Safety.



Sign at one of the piers providing guidance on fish species that community members should avoid eating if caught.

— Strategic Plan Focus Areas —

- **Focus Area 1:**
Community Engagement
- **Focus Area 2:**
Interagency Coordination

Air Pollution

Los Angeles County continues to face persistent air pollution from transportation routes, industrial facilities, port operations, and wildfire smoke. Air pollution can contribute to new health impacts or exacerbate existing health conditions, such as asthma and heart disease.

Initiatives

- Built community members' capacity to understand sources of pollution exposure, environmental regulatory agencies, and their enforcement roles.
- Provide public health recommendations and guidance to minimize the health effects of air pollution.
- Participated in regional workgroups advancing targeted pollution reduction strategies.
- Strengthened collaboration across organizations to address industrial impacts.

Accomplishments

- Developed an interactive mapping tool showing oil and gas operations, industrial facilities, and waste site locations across Los Angeles County.
- Elevated community concerns about cumulative pollution burdens through the four Los Angeles County AB 617 Community Steering Committees. AB 617 priority communities are selected for air monitoring, emissions reduction planning, public participation, and funding for community-based organizations to address air pollution. These actions and initiatives are coordinated through the Steering Committees.
- Increased awareness and use of the [Public Health Recommendations to Minimize the Health Effects of Air Pollution Associated with Development Near Freeways and High-Volume Roads](#). Partnered with the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) to brief the Board of Supervisors on key factors to consider when selecting sites for new affordable housing. These recommendations were incorporated into the LACDA funding process to ensure public health protections are considered when selecting project locations.
- Created a [new fact sheet on air quality regulations](#).
- Supported the annual Los Angeles Environmental Justice Network Enforcement workshops, *Uniting Around Health and Community Capacity Building*. Served as event planners and presenters at the conference.



Strategic Plan Focus Areas

- **Focus Area 1:**
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- **Focus Area 2:**
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- **Focus Area 3:**
Policy
- **Focus Area 4:**
Data

Additional Strategic Plan Progress

The following section highlights additional efforts OEJCH has undertaken to build community trust, create a data infrastructure, and advance environmental justice and climate health equity for environmentally impacted communities.

Strategic Plan Focus Area 1: Community Engagement

Accomplishments:

- Partnered with youth leaders through the Youth Climate Commission and Public Health Youth Advisory Council.
- Produced 12 multilingual, publicly available educational materials on indoor maximum heat, air pollution, and heat illness in Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, and provided multilingual translations for meetings.
- Maintained a community hotline for environmental health concerns.
- Conducted targeted wildfire response question-and-answer sessions for survivors and supported the Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) with staffing.
- Hosted a DPH Fall Nursing Summit for nurses and Public Health Investigators to train public health staff on current environmental justice and climate health issues and resources.

Strategic Plan Focus Area 4: Data

Accomplishments:

- Established a Climate Health Data Workgroup to identify common issues across Public Health programs, reduce duplication of efforts, collaborate on data reports, ensure alignment in how climate health data are developed, used, and interpreted, and develop solutions to data challenges that work across users.
- Completed a comprehensive data resource catalog for individuals, community members, and stakeholders to use when making environmental and climate health decisions. Resources will be made publicly available on the newly launched [OEJCH website](#).

Strategic Plan Focus Area 5: Accountability and Communication

Accomplishments:

- Implemented a communications plan for OEJCH to inform stakeholders and the public about developments and progress.
- Added public-facing materials to the OEJCH website to increase awareness of initiatives across the Department, among stakeholders and within community partners.
- Improved transparency and stakeholder engagement by sharing updates and key correspondence through partner group listservs.
- Developed and published an annual progress report on Strategic Plan focus areas, initiatives, and accomplishments.



Looking Ahead

- OEJCH remains committed to advancing environmental justice and climate equity by strengthening protections for communities most impacted by pollution and climate change. While funding and resources may be more limited in the coming years, these constraints can also create opportunities to deepen existing partnerships, expand collaboration, and leverage collective expertise across agencies, community organizations, and academic partners. At the same time, OEJCH will continue building on the foundation established in 2025 and advancing the work already underway.
- In the year ahead, OEJCH will launch a new public-facing environmental data mapping tool to improve transparency and community access to information, roll out a redesigned website to better connect residents with information and resources, and advance health-protective policies for communities living near oil and gas operations and industrial sources of pollution. Through these efforts, OEJCH will continue working to ensure that all residents of Los Angeles County can live in healthier, safer environments.