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## WORDS FROM THE EDITOR



▲ Dr. Shantella Y. Sherman (Photo by India Kea)

# The Intersectionality of Environmental Racism & Eugenics

By Dr. Shantella Y. Sherman  
WI Special Editions Editor

Whether the world tracks the health of its natural resources through loss, damage, minimized impact or newly designed innovations to replenish, one constant and unfortunate stream of data flows from the impact environmental contamination has on communities of color. In fact, as various nations grapple with COVID-19, scientists and medical communities have begun to chart the estimated disparity in the disease's exacerbation and death among African Americans. This disparity, caused in large part, by exposure to environmental contaminants including poor living conditions where exposure to lead and other toxins routinely compromise lung health, historically makes a case for racial inferiority.

Historians like Tera W. Hunter have explored the theory of the "sickly Negro" that posited Blacks as inherently predisposed to contract deadly diseases like syphilis, tuberculosis, AIDS, and perhaps, COVID19.

It was believed that to control "black" pathogens and prevent pandemic outbreaks, segregation had to be strictly enforced. In the process, segregation buttressed beliefs in dangerous Black bodies, as city planners strategically situated Black neighborhoods amid tracks set aside for sewage runoff and the release of air and soil pollutants.

Bartow Elmore writes of the introduction of environmental racism in city planning as early as 1865 with the introduction of segregated, Jim Crow neighborhoods.

"No longer could wastewater drain from black communities into white neighborhoods, nor could the city use precious water supplies to hydrate black urbanites at the expense of whites. The success of the Jim Crow experiment depended on the complete separating of the black and white races," Elmore discusses in the journal article *Hydrology and Residential Segregation in the Postwar South: An Environmental History of Atlanta 1865-1895*. "Natural resources that flowed indiscriminately between disparate communities had to be controlled by municipal agencies. For Jim Crow engineers, controlling nature provided a means to reify the boundaries between black and white worlds."

Diseases growing out of exposure to environmental toxins rarely factored into race-based studies of disease, including those that amounted to decades-long research on asthma and tuberculosis.

"My family worked as farmers and it was nothing for the owners of fields to have the crops sprayed with chemicals while we worked," Northeast resident Charles Grady told the Informer. "We would go low and cover our faces, but it did little good. Many of us developed asthma – not because we were Black or poor, but because our lungs were being poisoned. It is easy to believe that Black people are genetically inferior when the numbers show we are sickly; but we are sick as a condition of other people's hatred."

Grady, 87, whose family worked fields in Virginia, South Carolina and Mississippi, said eugenics or scientific racism often places Blacks as the source of pestilence and disease without regard for environmental racism, including being denied access, underfunding facilities in Black neighborhoods, and diverting resources to "more deserving" Americans.

"The same types of lung issues followed members of my family to St. Louis when they arrived in Carr Square – which the city called 'Lung Block' because of the rates of tuberculosis. Instead of St. Louis health department blaming the lung issues on the factory toxins nearby, they blamed it on diseased black bodies migrating from the South," Grady said. As a matter of precaution, the city would eventually require quarantine and vaccination of all Blacks coming into St. Louis.

As the Washington Informer commemorates 50 years of Earth Day – a celebration that marks decades of active engagement to protect and improve the world's natural resources – we do so shining a spotlight on the amazing job Black advocates have done in pushing the inclusion of environmental racism and environmental justice onto global agendas – as well as Black people to the dais to speak on behalf of their own communities.



▲ St. Louis tenements, like this one in the North Central area, became plagued by tuberculosis after developers rented units of the condemned property to newly arriving migrants from Southern states. / Photo of St. Louis tenements, courtesy of the Missouri Historical Society

Read, Learn, Enjoy!



# Forging Inclusion and Access in Environmental Protection

By Shantella Y. Sherman  
Special Editions Editor

*A few of the nation's most influential environmentalists spoke to the Washington Informer to discuss Earth Day, continuing efforts to end racial and environmental injustice, and new innovations in making the world healthier. Here are a few insightful points from that dialogue (See the complete interview at [www.washingtoninformer.com](http://www.washingtoninformer.com))*

**WI:** Many in the DMV, being surrounded by concrete and fences, tend to overlook the expanse of natural beauty throughout the region. What are some of the programs that Audubon Naturalist Society offer to engage with young people and make them aware of their surroundings?

**Caroline Brewer, Chair of the Taking Nature Black Conference and Audubon Naturalist Society Director of Marketing and Communications:** An environmental observer calls Americans today an “indoor species.” Whatever lack of awareness and appreciation there is, undoubtedly, is a function of a society that is overwhelmed with connections to electronic devices - computers, smart phones, and televisions. It’s a function of the fact that schools are more heavily focused on testing than on teaching and learning in ways that give young people hands-on experiences and opportunities to explore outdoors. I’m a former classroom teacher and my urban students were always eager and grateful to get outdoors and explore the natural world. The Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS) understands this hunger that young people have to engage with nature and has been feeding it for more than 50 years. In fact, when ANS first moved into its current headquarters in Chevy Chase, Maryland in 1969, children from DC Public Schools were some of the first to visit and explore the nature sanctuary.

Since then, we have grown our environmental education efforts to include sending science and nature educators to schools in DC, Maryland, and Virginia to provide year-round, hands-on science and environmental education. In addition, we provide 10 weeks of nature summer camp at our sanctuary and chil-

dren from the DMV visit our Chevy Chase and Loudon County, Virginia sanctuaries for field trips through our meadows, forests, and gardens. Some 14,000 children learn about birds, bees, mammals, trees, wildflowers, how to grow vegetables, fruit, herbs, separate recycling and compost and just about everything in between. Students from elementary to high school learn about water chemistry and aquatic life in our streams and rivers through our programs. We also have a nature preschool and with the opportunities now afforded for internships and networking to college students through Taking Nature Black and Naturally Latinos, some of the most comprehensive and career-inspiring environmental education available to young people in this region is provided by our organization.

**WI:** In February, the Taking Nature Black conference underscored many of the issues surrounding the intersectionality of environmental and criminal justice, including the intentional polluting of Black and Brown neighborhoods. Why do you think there are few, if any, criminal enforcement of dumping and polluting, given its damage proves both human and environmental?

**Eliza Cava, Audubon Naturalist Society Conservation Director:** One answer is that environmental enforcement is often driven by requests—and a community that is wary of over-policing of its people may be less likely to request policing about dumping and other harms.

Another piece is that even when requests are made for environmental enforcement, there could be a resource disparity. For example, in Maryland, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has ultimate responsibility for a lot of environmental enforcement, but they delegate much of that to the local counties and other jurisdictions. MDE does not have enough staff to respond to many enforcement requests. If the local jurisdiction is also understaffed because they have a relatively lower tax base, they will be less able to respond.

Industries have always made the claim that they are job creators and contributors to tax bases, so many local governments are wary of enforce-

ing fines or other punitive measures on them and instead work towards education or voluntary compliance. The EPA should be the backstop of this and require more enforcement, but especially under this federal administration those backstops are being blasted away. Since so many polluting companies are disproportionately sited in Black and Brown communities (due to disparities in land values, zoning, and structural racism in the political system and land use patterns), those communities end up bearing the brunt of the slow pace of improvement. So, the kind of enforcement system in place can make all the difference on the level and consistency of enforcement.

**WI:** A number of years ago, the District began working to clean up walking paths and nature trails in all wards to promote family-centered good health and the existence of the trails. Do you believe that D.C.’s trails are still largely hidden in plain view?

**Ari Eisenstadt, D.C. Conservation Advocate:** Significant work has been done by our environmental partners and nature-oriented organizations to connect trails all over the city, and this is definitely bearing fruit in terms of accessibility. However, there is still much work to be done to provide trail connections from Wards 7 and 8 to the rest of the city, particularly because there are few safe connections across the Anacostia River. There are some rather contentious plans in the works for bridges and trails across the river. Depending on the eventual outcome, these may help provide additional access.

Trails in Rock Creek Park, Oxon Run Parkway, Kingman and Heritage Islands, and the Anacostia River Trail do get tons of community use, and many of the speakers at Taking Nature Black, such as 2020 Regional Environmental Champion Akiima Price, are working hard to increase the connections between people and their local parks. There are still some gaps left between the presence of trails and green space and their use, particularly in Shepherd Parkway. This almost 200-acre site is entirely wooded and owned by the National Park Service, but still has no interior trails.

There is a redevelopment plan in the works, which could outfit the park with trails, depending on community feedback. Some people have expressed safety concerns about frequenting heavily wooded parks, however, which is a major obstacle to more use of the District’s parkland. Another serious concern among the environmental community is the presence of invasive plants (plants that can take over an area, choking the life out of the native plants that feed and sustain wildlife, and are difficult to remove and control), particularly vines, which threaten the survival of much of the city’s wooded parkland, and create visibility barriers along trails that make them less accessible.

**WI:** Is there a prescribed manner for demanding space at state-wide and national tables on environmental issues?

**Caroline Brewer, Chair of the Taking Nature Black Conference and Director of Marketing and Communications:** As to pressing for a space at other tables, that’s not where our planning committee is coming from. We have operated

with an understanding that as representatives of environmental organizations, and as leaders of our own, are equal to leaders and representatives of others. In fact, there are three key principles of the 17 principles of Environmental Justice, adopted in October 1991 by the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit that have been guiding principles of our work with the conference, although not written anywhere, except our in our minds and hearts.

**Those principles are:**

1) Environmental Justice affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction,

2) Environmental Justice affirms the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples; and

3) Environmental Justice demands the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision-making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.

**SS**



▲ Caroline Brewer, Chair of the Taking Nature Black Conference and Audubon Naturalist Society with Outdoor Afro Member Raymond Smith. (Photo by Don Baker)



▲ The Taking Nature Black Conference, designed to give African Americans in the environmental field a space to share ideas, network, and support one another saw close to 700 participants at its recent gathering. (Photo by Don Baker)

# Tips for Saving Energy While Staying Put



## Submitted by Pepco

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home orders in our region, many residents are spending more time than ever at home. Between working from home and children who are home from school, customers are using more energy during the day. The following tips can help you manage your energy costs during the coronavirus pandemic.

- **Adjust your thermostat.** Set your thermostat a few degrees lower when heating and higher when cooling to reduce energy use.
- **Use appliances wisely.** Wash full loads of laundry in cold water and run appliances that produce heat, like clothes dryers and dishwashers, at night.
- **Replace light bulbs.** Switching to LED light bulbs can reduce your lighting costs by 70 percent or more.
- **Turn off lights.** Do a quick walk through of your home and ensure all lights are turned off.
- **Unplug chargers and electronics.** Even when an appliance or electric device is not in use, it is using energy when plugged in.
- **Switch up your dinner plans.** To cut down on energy use, grill outside, use a crock pot instead of using your oven, or choose a cold meal option.
- **Try low power mode.** Switch your devices to low power mode to not only save energy, but also to help equipment run cooler and last longer.
- **Get smart with power strips.** Using smart power strips and surge protectors helps save energy and helps shut down multiple items quickly.
- **Wash clothes in warm or cold water.** Be sure to rinse laundry in cold water and clean the lint screen after each load and check the exhaust regularly. A lint screen in need of cleaning and a clogged exhaust can lengthen drying time and increase the amount of energy used.
- **Turn off the stove.** Get in the habit of turning off the elements or surface units on your electric stove several minutes before completing the allotted cooking time. The heating element will stay hot long enough to finish the cooking without wasting electricity.
- **Set your refrigerator's temperature to 38°F.** In most households, the refrigerator is the one thing that is always on—24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Did you know that in the average home, the refrigerator consumes the most energy of all kitchen appliances? Make sure your refrigerator is not too cold to minimize the annual costs of running the appliance.
- **Run full dishwasher loads.** Your dishwasher uses a great deal of energy, especially for heating water. There are several steps you can take starting today—with no investment—to reduce your bills associated with dish washing.
- **Learn more.** Visit [pepco.com/MyAccount](http://pepco.com/MyAccount) to explore additional ways to save money and energy and sign up for helpful billing options, such as budget billing, which averages payments over a 12-month period to help customers manage their monthly energy bill.

SS

**A COMMITMENT THAT GROWS EVERY DAY**

Powering a cleaner and brighter future for our customers and communities is a vital part of our everyday work. We proudly support The Washington Informer and join in their commitment to promoting education for Washingtonians on environmental stewardship and conservation.

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# Know What's Below – Call 811

Submitted by Pepco

Not only is April Earth Month, it's also National Safe Digging Month. Pepco is joining District One Call – the one-call notification center for the District of Columbia and Maryland – to remind residents, businesses and contractors that safe digging prevents damage to critical underground energy services and helps keep communities safe.

During our current health crisis, we're spending more time than ever at home. If you're planning to use this time to take on a new spring DIY project that involves digging – like planting a new flowerbed or trees, building a new walkway or deck, or replacing your mailbox – you must call 811 a few days before beginning to learn the approximate location of underground utility equipment.

Getting started is easy. Here are a few simple steps to follow if you're planning a digging project this spring:

- Always call 811 a few days before digging, regardless of the depth or your familiarity with the property.
- Professional tip: call on a Monday or Tuesday for work that's planned for an upcoming weekend. Providing enough time for lines to be marked will help your project go smoothly.
- Professional locators will visit your dig site to mark the approximate location of underground utility lines with spray paint, flags, or both.
- Confirm that all lines have been marked. If a contractor has been hired, also confirm they called 811. You should never allow work to begin if lines aren't marked.
- Once your site has been marked, it's safe to begin digging around the marked areas. If your project is near utility line markings, consider moving the location of your project.
- To learn more, visit [call811.com](http://call811.com).

We always want you to be safe, so be sure to call 811 to know what's below before your next digging project. **SS**



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# OPC's Water Services Division One Year Old and Making a Sustainable Difference

By **Sandra Mattavous-Frye**  
People's Counsel for the District of Columbia

The Office of the People's Counsel for the District of Columbia (OPC) is pleased to contribute to the Washington Informer's Sustainability and Energy Supplement in honor of the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day, for the third consecutive year. As this 2020 edition focuses on the relationship between health and sustainability, we contend that having clean, affordable and reliable water services sustains life. That premise is especially relevant in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

I welcome this opportunity to highlight OPC's role as the statutory advocate for DC Water consumers, one year after the formation of the agency's Water Services Division (WSD). Our mantra is: "OPC is Your Utility Lawyer." And 45 years since OPC was created as an independent agency of the DC government, our mission remains to Educate, Advocate and Protect consumers of electric, natural gas, and local telephone services. Now, OPC is Your Water Utility Lawyer.

For years, DC Water ratepayers expressed concern that they did not have a seat at the table when the DC Water Board set rates. As water bills skyrocketed, and consumers demanded to be heard, the DC Council passed the DC Water Consumer Protection Amendment Act of 2018. After it became effective on April 11, 2019, WSD became the voice of DC Water consumers.

The Division's first task was to Educate the community. Following the example of the agency's impactful "OPC in Your Neighborhood" initiative, WSD staff took to DC streets of all eight wards, attending dozens of Advisory Neighborhood Commission meetings, community fairs, block parties, and farmers markets, touching thousands of residents of all ages. Our goal was to make consumers aware that OPC is ready and able to address concerns about increasingly high water bills.

OPC also created various educational materials, including fact sheets on how to file a complaint

and how to conserve water. The Office hit the radio airwaves, and launched an "OPC Can Help" campaign with posters in English and Spanish displayed on Metro trains and buses. We added a water page on [opc-dc.gov](http://opc-dc.gov) and a feature in the Office's monthly newsletter.

Under the legislation, OPC worked with the District Department of the Energy and Environment (DOEE) and DC Water to develop a Consumer Bill of Rights. It delineates the rights and responsibilities of DC Water and its customers. OPC created a simple guide to the document and both are posted on [opc-dc.gov](http://opc-dc.gov).

Under our mission to Advocate, OPC is empowered to represent ratepayers at proceedings that affect all water consumers. Unlike the other utilities, DC Water is not subject to oversight by the DC Public Service Commission. Instead, DC Water is self-regulating subject only to oversight by its own board of directors, which sets and approves its rates. Even with this construct, OPC has been successful in advocating for ratepayers.

In 2019, OPC played an active role in two key DC Water rulemakings. The first was the proceeding that proposed an adjustment to the controversial Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC). Impervious areas are surfaces like driveways, parking lots, and other paved areas that hold water. Since 2009, DC Water has implemented CRIAC to recover the costs of the Clean Rivers Project, a \$2.7 billion dollar federal program to reduce combined sewer overflow into District waterways. You are paying CRIAC through your bill.

In the CRIAC rate adjustment, OPC filed extensive comments and testified at a Water Board public hearing. OPC's overarching theme was the lack of transparency and public participation in the process. As a result of OPC's advocacy, DC Water has increased openness and opportunities for consumer participation.

A second rulemaking involved the Customer Assistance Program II (CAP2) for fiscal year 2020. OPC supported the extension of

CAP2 and advocated for a sustainable funding source for the program. OPC's advocacy paid off—DC Water has extended CAP2 and is proposing to make it permanent. Next, OPC will aggressively advocate for reasonable rates when DC Water proposes rates for the current and upcoming fiscal years.

Under our mission to Protect, OPC has represented individual customers to resolve complaints—with payment problems, disconnections, and billing disputes at the top of the list.

Since the inception of the Water Services Division, WSD has addressed more than 400 complaints, saving consumers tens of thousands of dollars. These savings have led to real relief for real people. For example, in separate investigations of leaky pipes, two

property owners received a combined \$12,000 in bill credits as a result of OPC's vigilance.

Our victories for consumers are propelled by a dedicated staff utilizing effective customer service tools that facilitate timely response to calls for help.

Moving forward, we will continue to Advocate, Educate and Protect, with the goal of sustaining health and life for the residents of the District of Columbia.

Happy Earth Day! **SS**



## Who We Are

The Office of the People's Counsel is an independent agency of the District of Columbia government. By law, OPC is the advocate for District consumers of water, natural gas, electric, and telephone services. The Office's mandate is to advocate for the provision of safe and reliable utility service at rates that are just, reasonable and nondiscriminatory; to assist individual consumers in disputes with utility companies; and to provide technical assistance and consumer education to the community and stakeholders. OPC carries out its mission through the work of the following divisions.

**The Climate and Sustainability Policy Division** works to ensure that OPC is effectively incorporating District of Columbia sustainability and climate goals into all aspects of our education, outreach and advocacy. People's Counsel Sandra Mattavous-Frye launched this new Division to ensure climate action policy considerations are an integral part of OPC's operations at a time when climate change threatens the future of our world as we know it.

**The Litigation Services Division** represents consumers in legal matters involving utility companies before the DC Public Service Commission, federal regulatory agencies and the DC Court of Appeals; and engages in diverse energy, telecommunications, technical and market monitoring functions.

**The Consumer Services Division** provides education and outreach to consumers on utility and energy issues; assists in the resolution of consumer complaints; and provides technical assistance to lay advocates seeking to participate in the regulatory process.

**The Water Services Division** serves as a voice for water consumers by investigating complaints related to DC Water services, rates, and billing; represents ratepayers at DC Water administrative hearings and rulemaking proceedings, as well as the DC Court of Appeals; and educates water consumers about their legal rights and responsibilities.

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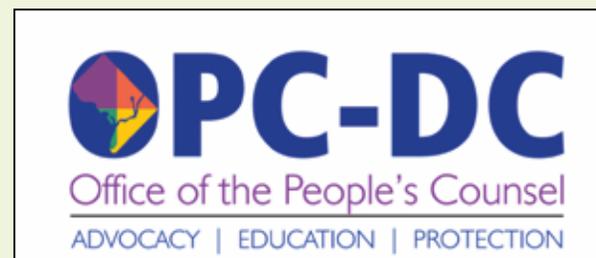
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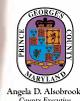
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# We're Doing Our Part, Are You?

Sustainability is about much more than just “being green.” It involves managing and protecting earth’s natural resources, ecosystems, climate, and atmosphere. By practicing sustainability today, we can preserve precious resources for years and generations to come. Practicing sustainability starts close to home. We all have a responsibility to protect Prince George’s County’s natural beauty. Keeping our County clean makes it a healthier, safer place to live and raise our children, increases property values, and boosts our local and regional economy. Over the past year, my office, in partnership with Department of the Environment and Department of Public Works & Transportation has made some visible and significant progress toward beautifying our County.

- We launched our Beautification Initiative and anti-littering advertising campaign that encourages County residents and visitors to adopt behaviors that will keep the County clean and green;
- We collected more than 3.2 million pounds of litter and illegal signs;
- We resurfaced over 20 miles of County roadways, filled over 40,000 potholes, and replaced one million square feet of sidewalk;
- We installed 29 Bigbelly dual solar trash and recycling stations at bus stops throughout the County, and these stations have collected 54,978 pounds of trash;
- We strengthened law enforcement on illegal dumping with the installation of cameras to monitor illegal dumping hotspots throughout the County and introduced new penalties; and
- With the assistance of the County Council and fellow Prince Georgians, we passed legislation to ban plastic straws—a move that will go a long way toward eliminating microplastics that end up in our food and harm our waterways and marine animals.

While getting the word out about the County’s Beautification Initiative and our actions to beautify the County is critical to getting the public involved, it isn’t a quick fix. Changing behaviors takes continuous and consistent effort. To help us reach our goal, here are some easy actions you can incorporate into your daily routine that will help make our earth, our County, and our communities more sustainable.

- 1. Think twice before shopping.** Every product we buy has an environmental impact, from the materials used to create it to the pollution emitted during manufacturing to the packaging that ends up in landfills. Before you buy, ask yourself if you really need it. If you do, consider buying gently used instead of new, and look for minimal packaging.
- 2. Go plastic free. Plastic never goes away.** Every year thousands of marine animals are killed after ingesting plastic or getting tangled up in it. You can cut down on plastic waste by using reusable shopping bags, water bottles, and straws.
- 3. Use green cleaning products.** Many household products contain ingredients that are harmful to the environment. For instance, phosphates in many cleaners, detergents and soaps can cause algal blooms that can kill fish and aquatic plants when washed into waterways. Most retailers sell natural, environmentally safe cleaning products. When shopping, look at the labels and make the switch to natural products.
- 4. Prevent waste around your home by:**
  - Purchasing only those items that you need.
  - Buying high-quality, long-lasting products.
  - Using cloth towels, napkins, and rags instead of disposable paper products and avoiding using disposable cups, plates and cutlery.
  - Returning unwanted clothes hangers to the dry cleaners for reuse.
  - Donating clothes and household items you no longer use to charity.

These are just a few examples of what you can do to make our earth greener, cleaner, healthier, and more beautiful. Together, we hold the key to a sustainable future—and by working together, we can make sure that future generations will enjoy the resources our earth provides.

Yours in service,  
Angela Alsobrooks

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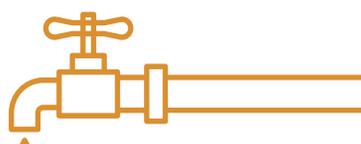


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**EDUCATE**

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The **less water you use**, the less runoff and wastewater that eventually ends up in the ocean.



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Volunteer for cleanups in your community. You can get involved in protecting your watershed too!



**REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE**

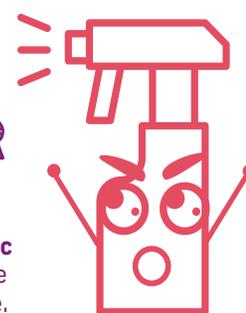
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**PLANT A TREE**  
Trees provide food and oxygen. They help save energy, clean the air, and help combat climate change.

Don't send chemicals into our **WATERWAYS**

Choose nontoxic chemicals in the home and office.



**SHOP WISELY**

Buy less plastic and bring a reusable shopping bag.



Sourced from oceanservice.noaa.gov

# Committed to Our Customers; Committed to Our Environment

By John O'Brien  
Executive Vice President  
Strategy and Public Affairs

In the movie “The Martian,” Matt Damon’s astronaut character looked around at his predicament and declared that he would have to ‘science’ his way out of it. Likewise, Washington Gas’ approach to addressing climate change has always been based on the leading science, for both understanding and determining our actions.

In 2011, we committed to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from our fleet, facilities and distribution system. By 2016, we had reduced our own emissions 74 percent and the emissions intensity associated with the delivery of each unit of natural gas by 20%. We then pledged further reductions, in line with the global consensus in the Paris Agreement to make our fleet and facilities carbon neutral and to further reduce emissions intensity to 38% by 2025. Our annual measurements since then, which are all verified by an independent auditor, show us on track to meet those commitments.

When AltaGas and Washington Gas merged in 2018, we made a commitment to develop and share a long-range climate business plan that would demonstrate how Washington Gas could help the District meet its ambitious climate goals. After months of study, collaboration with experts and exploration

of new and emerging opportunities to reduce emissions, we presented the plan to the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia on March 16, 2020. It is available for public review on their website at [dcpsc.org](http://dcpsc.org) as well as the Washington Gas website at [washingtongas.com](http://washingtongas.com). We also plan to host regular public meetings in the future to share our progress and gather stakeholder input.

The Plan covers everything from fuel sourcing to distribution all the way through to customer end use, and it supports the District goals with Washington Gas doing its share; reducing emissions associated with natural gas 50% by 2032 and being carbon neutral by 2050. The Plan supports customer energy choice and presents a framework of options and specific tactics that combine to achieve the targeted emissions reductions.

While some people may think that it is impossible to meet these climate goals while continuing to use natural gas, the science shows it not only is possible, but that it is highly beneficial to the District. Natural gas costs less and is critical to maintaining the reliability and resiliency of the District’s energy delivery system. While we propose changing the mix of the gas we deliver to include carbon neutral renewable natural gases—including biogas and green hydrogen—this change will be undetectable to our customers who will still be able

to continue to use their existing equipment and appliances.

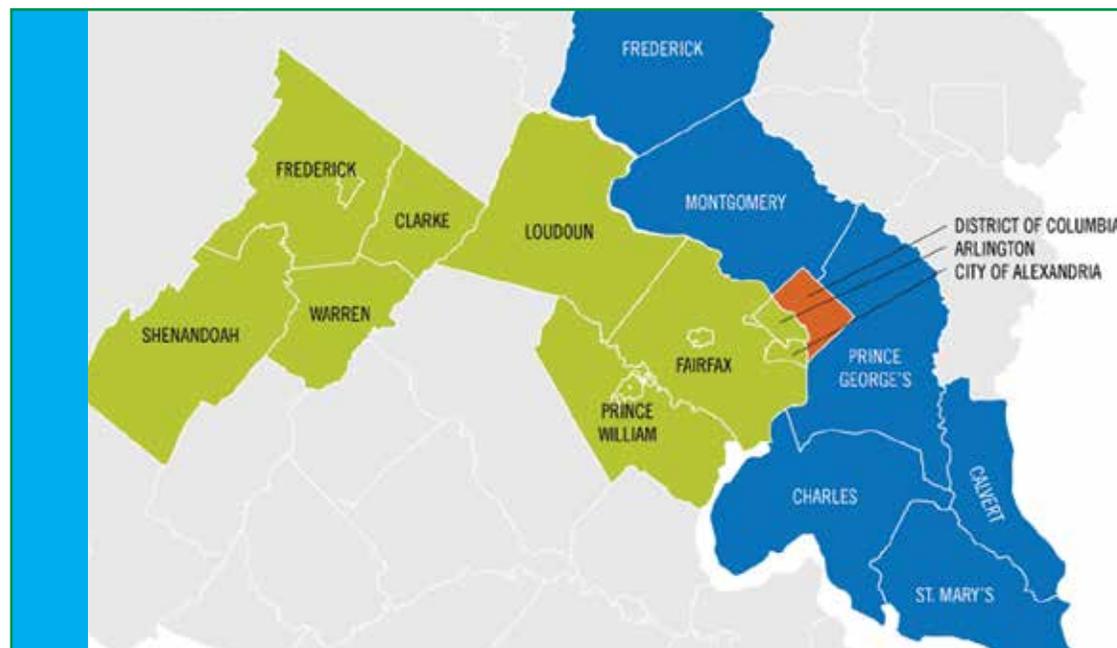
By using new materials and technologies, we can and will reduce emissions from our distribution system. Lastly, incredibly high-efficient appliances and equipment are in development (some are already available) so that when people want or need to change out a stove, water heater or heating/cooling system, they can take advantage of the energy cost savings those new technologies provide.

We are also looking at encouraging conservation of energy through energy efficiency programs that add to—but do not compete with—those available from the DC Sustainable Energy Utility.

Washington Gas has evolved over the more than 170 years that we have provided energy to District residents, businesses, agencies and organizations. There is no better symbol of how far we have come than how we have served our very first customer. We started out in 1848 using gas to light the Capitol Dome. Today a modern, highly efficient Combined Heat and Power (CHP) installation provides both heat (for warmth) and electricity (to light that landmark dome with high-intensity discharge (HID) fixtures. And, tomorrow, that same plant may be running on renewable natural gas, making it carbon neutral or even possibly carbon negative. **SS**

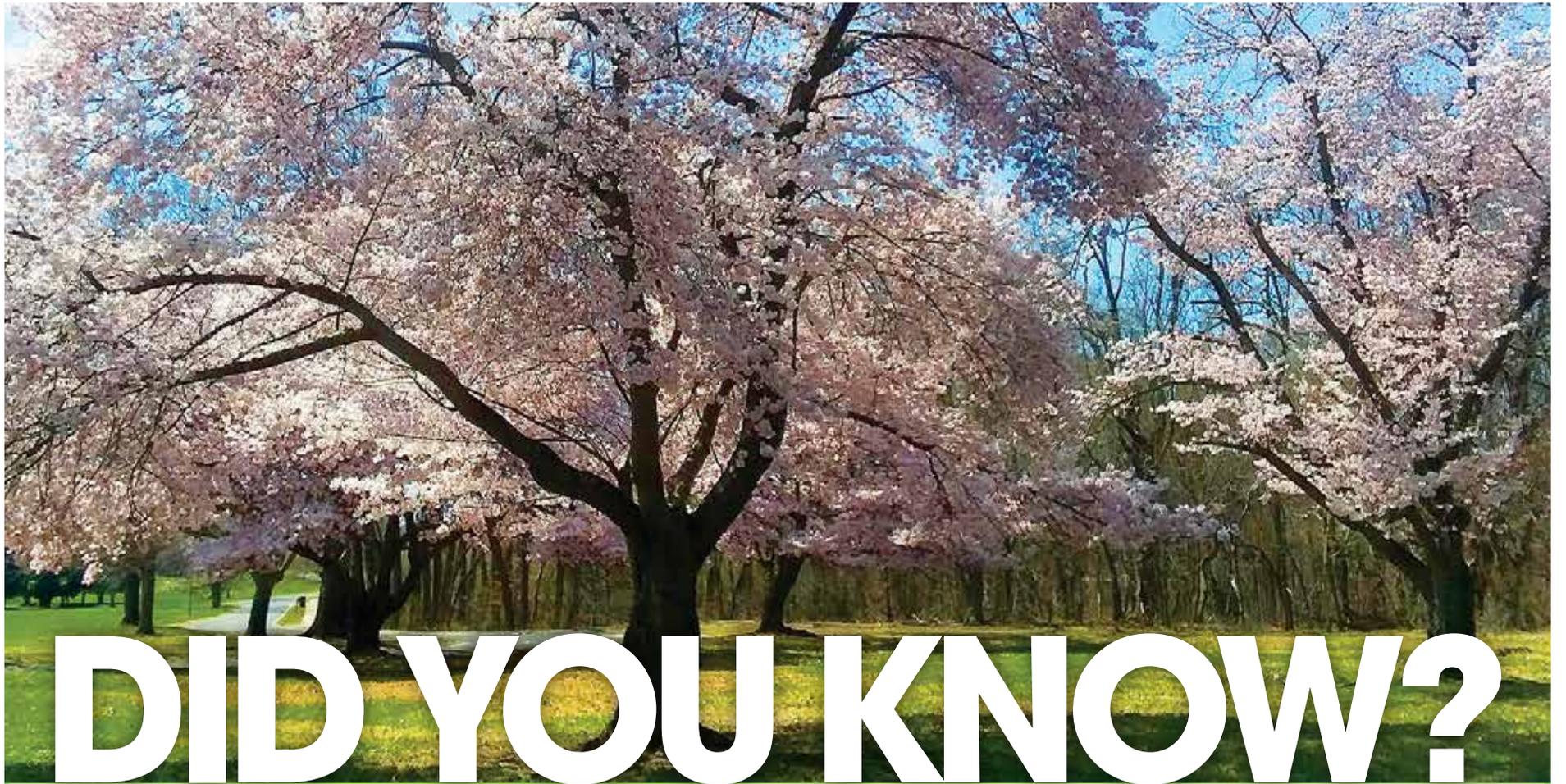


*“When AltaGas and Washington Gas merged in 2018, we made a commitment to develop and share a long-range climate business plan that would demonstrate how Washington Gas could help the District meet its ambitious climate goals.”*



## Supporting Customers During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Washington Gas’ commitment to sustainability goes beyond the environment. We have committed to help our customers who may be experiencing financial difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have made contributions to non-profit groups that are providing critical safety net services. We have waived late fees and suspended disconnections during this time. We are also taking necessary precautions to ensure the well-being of our employees, customers and the communities we serve by following all safety protocols and practicing safe social distancing. We also continue to provide funding to help customers pay their energy bills through WAFF (the Washington Area Fuel Fund). Visit [WAFFHelp.Org](http://WAFFHelp.Org) for more information.



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We are committed to reducing our environmental footprints as well as those of our customers environmental footprints. Since 2008, we have reduced emissions from our fleet and facilities by 76 percent and reduced fugitive emission intensity by 24 percent — both ahead of our 2025 targets. In addition, our clean, efficient energy solutions help customers reduce energy use and costs as well as their own environmental footprints.



# Tips for Celebrating & Saving the Planet

By Lee Ross  
WI Staff Writer

- 1. Skip the Elevator / Escalator** – By side-stepping elevators and escalators, we save electricity and get a quick cardio workout in the process. This is a great way of getting in shape alongside the planet.
- 2. Limit Fuel Use** – The Washington, D.C.-metropolitan region’s efforts to increase the use of bicycles and trails by limiting the use of fuel powered vehicles is not only achievable, but is quickly becoming the wave of the future. In addition to hiring bicycles, electric mopeds, and scooters, consider using a rideshare service (Uber or Lyft) or taking public transportation.
- 3. Consider Natural Products** – Each year, millions of people are hospitalized or perish from acute inhalation injury which occurs when chemicals found in household cleaning products – including bleach – cause inflammation in the lungs. Despite labels on most household cleaners that advise against using in closed-in spaces or inhaling directly, they contradictorily include fragrances that invite you to breathe them in. The reality is that natural, tried-and-true items like lemons, vinegar, and baking soda, do the same work without the toxins.
- 4. Turn Off** – The digital age and all the great technology that has come with it, have also created a vacuous use of electricity. For instance, how many of us use our laptops while watching television, with the lights aglow all around us – and with our mobile phones on and at the ready? Consider turning off electronic devices not actively in use or using the energy saver setting on everyday devices. This will not only save on electricity, but will also, lower electric bills.
- 5. Let Go of Paper Mailings** – Some of us are die-hard paper lovers – and will always prefer physical newspapers and magazines to their digitized versions; however, consider eliminating paper bills, notices, and announcements from your life. Most banks, and other businesses allow you to receive mail directly into your inbox, saving trees and limiting the amount of paper waste from mailers.
- 6. Go Back to Eden** – Indoor plants offer a wealth of benefits by purifying the air inside homes and offices. Consider purchasing plants like English Ivy, Elephant Ear Philodendron, Lady Palm and Bamboo Palm to cut traces of formaldehyde and other toxins from the air.
- 7. Use What You Have** – Years ago, a broken heel on a shoe went to the cobbler or shoe repair shop, rather than the trash. Too often today, we throw away what could be repaired or passed along to others with a need for them. Consider giving your clothes a new life by donating to charity or consignment shops. And for the fashionistas among you, work with friends to invent new styles by raiding each others’ closets.
- 8. Time Showers** – While many of us love a great shower, they can become taxing on water systems. Use a timer for showers to reduce the amount of water used getting fresh and clean. **SS**

▲ *Indoor plants like the Elephant Ear Philodendron cut toxins from homes and offices. / Courtesy photo*

# Healing the Land and Empowering People in the Woods of Ward 8

By Nathan Harrington

Down the hill from the Congress Heights Metro Station and the Giant on Alabama Avenue is a magical place hidden in plain sight. Along Mississippi Avenue east of 13th Street, open fields and woods give the impression of having suddenly left the city behind.

Because there are no signs, few realize that this is the 126-acre National Park called Oxon Run Parkway. Because there are no trails, not many take the short walk through the woods to the stream, with its deep pools full of fish darting about, and extensive sandbars and islands carved out by meandering currents. Crossing the stream, you'll find yourself in a rare magnolia bog ecosystem, surrounded by ferns and mosses. Nearby are the ghostly ruins of a WWII era shooting range, all that remains of former Camp Simms military reservation. Further south, near Southern Avenue, is a pristine upland area of beech trees and mountain laurel.

A mile to the west, Shepherd Parkway, another National Park Service property, runs along the steep hillsides that rise from 295 for two miles and 197 acres. These woods feature towering stands of old-growth oak, poplar and sweetgum, two bald eagles nests, and views across the city. In 2019 eight acres of woods were cut down as part of the new 295-Malcolm X Avenue Interchange project.

If these parklands were in Northwest DC, Montgomery County or Northern Virginia, they would probably be clean, well-marked, and traversed by well-maintained hiking trails. It's hard to imagine any part of Rock Creek Park being destroyed to make way for a road.

Instead, the same neglect and discrimination that have made poverty and violence all too common in neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River have taken a toll on the land there.

Decades of illegal dumping and littering have left the ground in many places covered with millions

of pounds of household trash, furniture, construction materials, tires, car parts, electronics and appliances. All this trash doesn't just spoil the forests' beauty value; it contaminates the soil, poisons foraging wildlife, and flows from stormwater to rivers.

Further weakening the ecosystem, invasive plants introduced from other parts of the world have overwhelmed native ones and choked out thousands of native trees. In some areas, all that remains of the forest are meadows covered with a single invasive vine.

This disparity in the condition of wild parklands fits the pattern of environmental racism, in which negative environmental impacts fall heaviest on the poor and people of color.

The Ward 8 Woods Conservancy was established in 2018 to increase the health, beauty, and public enjoyment of the more than 500 acres of forest in Ward 8, which also include Ft. Stanton Park and the land along Suitland Parkway.

A crew of four Park Stewards, Ward 8 residents who face barriers to employment, work four days a week to realize these goals. Robert Carpenter, the lead Park Steward, is a Ward 8 native and returning citizen. "I have a background that got me turned away from a lot of jobs, but there was no discrimination with Ward 8 Woods. I like giving back to the community I've been living in all my life" he says.

In 18 months of work, the crew and volunteers have removed more than 100 tons of trash from the woods, cut invasive vines from more than 600 trees, and shared information about our work with over 2,000 Ward 8 residents. To help reduce the amount of litter generated, they've been passing out reusable grocery bags.

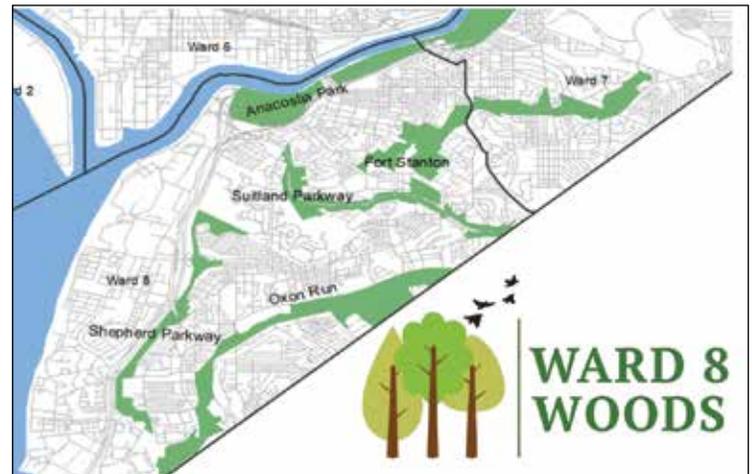
In February 2020 Ward 8 Woods took a first step in its long term vision of making these parks accessible and inviting with a network of hiking trails by adopting the existing George Washington Carver Nature Trail. Created by staff of the Anacostia Communi-

ty Museum in the 1990s but unmaintained and unused in recent years, the trail is an easy half mile loop through the beautiful woods directly behind the museum. A grand reopening is scheduled for this summer.

Residents can support Ward 8 Woods in three ways:

1. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram @ward8woods
2. Volunteer! For details visit [ward8woods.org/volunteer](http://ward8woods.org/volunteer)
3. Donate at [ward8woods.org/donate](http://ward8woods.org/donate)

*Nathan Harrington, is founder and Executive Director of the Ward 8 Woods Conservancy. He has been a Congress Heights resident since 2009. SS*





## WARD 8 WOODS

The Ward 8 Woods Conservancy is a grassroots nonprofit organization founded in 2018 to increase the health, beauty, and public enjoyment of the more than 500 acres of forested parkland in Ward 8.

Join us as we remove trash and invasive plants, construct hiking trails, and create opportunities for residents find health, healing, and inspiration in nature!

[ward8woods.org](http://ward8woods.org)




@ward8woods

# Timeline 1970 - 2020 How Far We've Come

By Lee Ross  
WI Staff Writer

The first Earth Day in 1970 mobilized millions of Americans for the protection of the planet. On April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans — 10 percent of the U.S. population at the time — took to the streets, college campuses and hundreds of cities to protest environmental injustices and demand a new way forward for our planet.

Earth Day founder Gaylord Nelson, who served as a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin at the time, reportedly came up with the idea for a national day to focus on the environment after seeing first-hand the devastation caused by a massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, California, in 1969. Inspired by the student anti-war movement, Nelson used the fervor of civil rights and anti-war protests to engage with those interested in also protecting the water, air, and soil environments.

“Ecology is a big science, a big concept, not a cop-out. It is concerned with the total eco-system—not just with how we dispose of our tin cans, bottles and sewage. Environment is all of America and its problems. It is rats in the ghetto. It is a hungry child in a land of affluence. It is housing that is not worthy of the name; neighborhoods not fit to inhabit,” Nelson said during his Earth Day speech in 1970. “Environment is a problem perpetuated by the expenditure of \$17 billion a year on the Vietnam War, instead of on our decaying, crowded, congested, polluted urban areas that are inhuman traps for millions of people.”

Nelson’s passion for improving the environment and raising awareness, led to the passage of landmark environmental laws in the United States, including the Clean Air, Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts. Many countries soon adopted similar laws, and in 2016, the United Nations chose Earth Day as the day to sign the Paris Climate Agreement into force.

Today, one of the event’s organizers, Denis Hayes, said that despite the many advances, things have become even more critical.

“Despite that amazing success and decades of environmental progress, we find ourselves facing an even more dire, almost existential, set of global environmental challenges, from loss of biodiversity to climate change to plastic pollution, that call for action at all levels of government,” said Hayes, who serves as the Earth Day Network’s Board Chair Emeritus.

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## Earth Day History

1970

The first Earth Day mobilizes 20 million Americans to call for increased protections for our planet

1990

Earth Day goes global, mobilizing 200 million people in 141 countries

2000

Earth Day leverages the power of digital media to build millions of local conversations across more than 180 countries

2010

Earth Day Network launches A Billion Acts of Green® and The Canopy Project. Earth Day 2010 engages 75,000 global partners in 192 countries

2020

Earth Day will mark 50 years with global activations that aim to mobilize a billion people worldwide for transformative action for our planet



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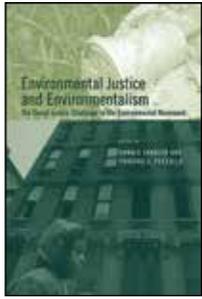
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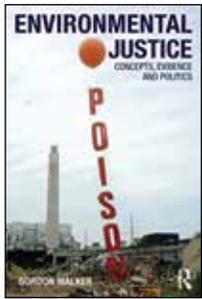
# Recent & Recommended Books on Environmental Justice

Compiled by Lee Ross  
WI Staff Writer



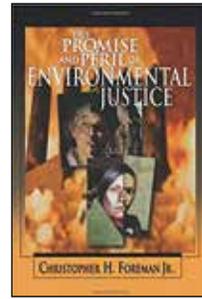
**Environmental Justice and Environmentalism: The Social Justice Challenge to the Environmental Movement**  
by Ronald Sandler and Phaedra C. Pezzullo

Although the environmental movement and the environmental justice movement would seem to be natural allies, their relationship over the years has often been characterized by conflict and division. The environmental justice movement has charged the mainstream environmental movement with racism and elitism and has criticized its activist agenda on the grounds that it values wilderness over people. In ten original essays, contributors from a variety of disciplines consider such topics as the relationship between the two movements' ethical commitments and activist goals, instances of successful cooperation in U.S. contexts, and the challenges posed to both movements by globalization and climate change.



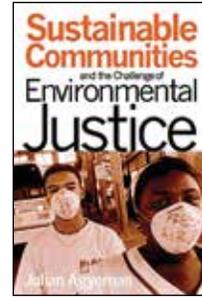
**Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics**  
by Gordon Walker

Environmental justice has increasingly become part of the language of environmental activism, political debate, academic research and policy making around the world. It raises questions about how the environment impacts on different people's lives. This book explores the diversity of ways in which environment and social difference are intertwined and how the justice of their interrelationship matters. It has a distinctive international perspective, tracing how the discourse of environmental justice has moved around the world and across scales to include global concerns, and examining research, activism and policy development in the US, the UK, South Africa and other countries. The widening scope and diversity of what has been positioned within an environmental justice 'frame' is also reflected in chapters that focus on waste, air quality, flooding, urban greenspace and climate change.



**The Promise and Peril of Environmental Justice**  
by Christopher H. Foreman

Are we environmentally victimizing, perhaps even poisoning, our minority and low-income citizens? Proponents of "environmental justice" assert that environmental decision-making pays insufficient heed to the interests of those citizens, disproportionately burdens their neighborhoods with hazardous toxins, and perpetuates an insidious "environmental racism." In the first book-length critique of environmental justice advocacy, Christopher Foreman argues that it has cleared significant political hurdles but displays substantial limitations and drawbacks. Activism has yielded a presidential executive order, management reforms at the Environmental Protection Agency, and numerous local political victories. Yet the environmental justice movement is structurally and ideologically unable to generate a focused policy agenda.



**Sustainable Communities and the Challenge of Environmental Justice**  
by Julian Agyeman

Popularized in the movies Erin Brockovich and A Civil Action, "environmental justice" refers to any local response to a threat against community health. In this book, Julian Agyeman argues that environmental justice and the sustainable communities' movement are compatible in practical ways. Yet sustainability, which focuses on meeting our needs today while not compromising the ability of our successors to meet their needs, has not always partnered with the challenges of environmental justice.

Sustainable Communities and the Challenge of Environmental Justice explores the ideological differences between these two groups and shows how they can work together. Agyeman provides concrete examples of potential model organizations that employ the types of strategies he advocates. This book is vital to the efforts of community organizers, policymakers, and everyone interested in a better environment and community health. **SS**

We are here. Here for residents. Here for small business. Here for Earth Day. Here for DC. **Here to help.**



While we are closely monitoring the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation, the DCSEU remains operational, with most staff teleworking to help customers use less energy and save money. We know this is a very difficult time for DC businesses, institutions, nonprofits, and residents alike and we are here to help. For updates on the District's response to COVID-19 visit [coronavirus.dc.gov](https://coronavirus.dc.gov).

[DCSEU.com](https://DCSEU.com) (202) 479-2222 [info@dcseu.com](mailto:info@dcseu.com)



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# COVID-19 & Air Pollution

By Lee Ross  
WI Staff Writer

“I don’t believe I have seen the sky so clearly – lit with stars as far as the eye could see – since I was in South Africa many years ago,” San Marcos, Calif. resident Epifania Shawls recalls after

the first week of quarantine began in the area. “Without the planes, trains, and automobiles, factories, or even cigarette smoke, there was no smog the waters are blue again. It looked to me like a lot of California has been through an environmental makeover.” Shawls’ excitement echoes that of

Americans across the nation who have seen the quick transformation in air quality since the onset of the Covid-19 epidemic. With various industries, travel networks, and corporations at a standstill, a drastic drop in carbon emissions occurred. Emissions have fallen, according to

research produced by bodies including the Queen Mary University of London, at least for now in countries where public health measures, including quarantines, have kept personal vehicles off the road and public transport to a bare minimum. One estimation places emissions from public transportation with contributing to 72 percent of pollution and 11 percent of the transport sector’s greenhouse gas emissions. In New York, the restriction has led to a 50 percent drop in levels of pollution from this same time last year.

may also be associated with long-term harm that is more subtle,” the report said. “People are usually unaware of how long-term exposure affects their health or worsens their medical problems over time. Polluted air gains access to the body through the respiratory tract but has systemic effects that can damage other organs.”

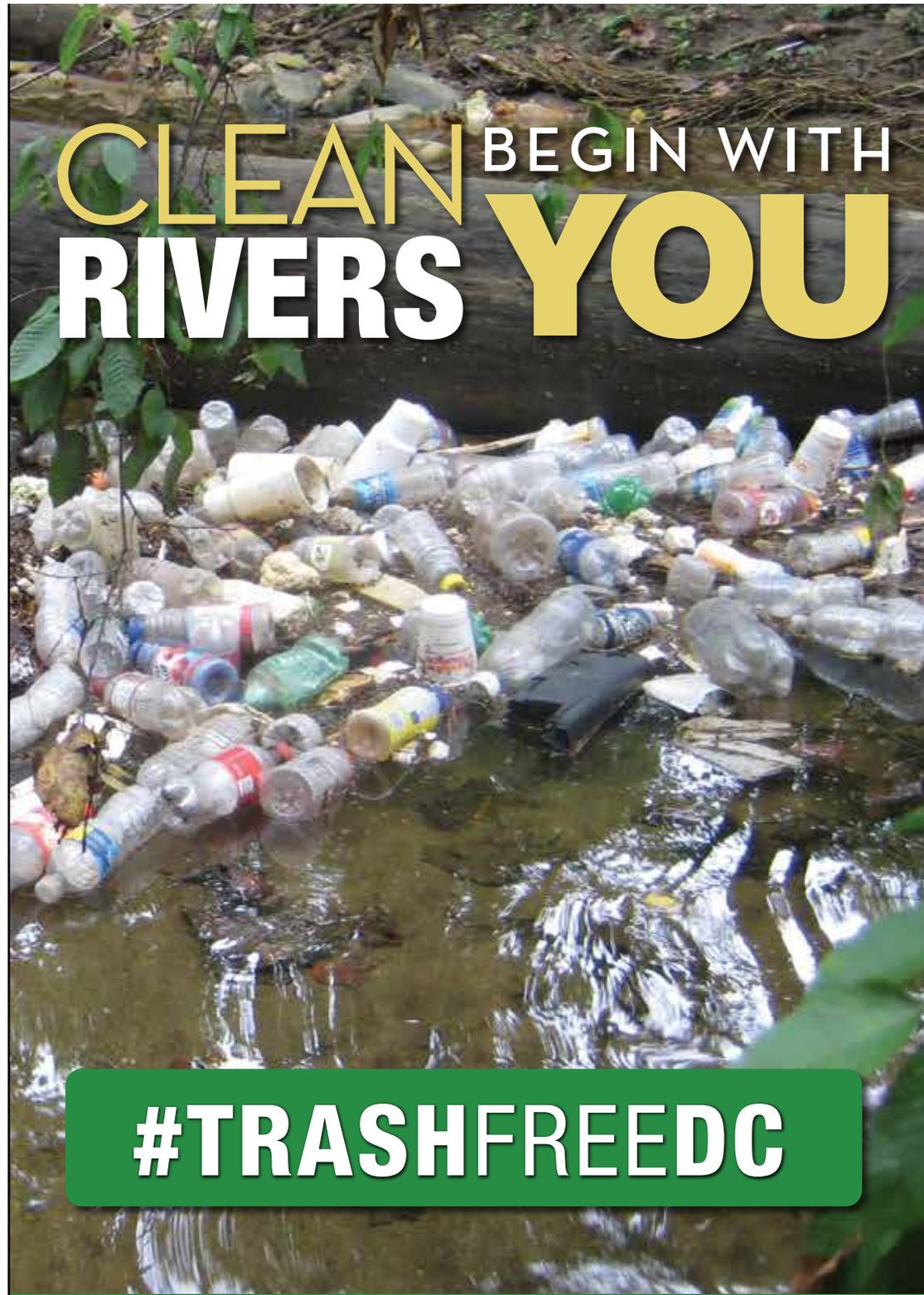
In the case of Covid-19, some researchers believe the increase in particle pollution levels before the epidemic has contributed to a 15 percent increase in death rates.

“It is well known that pollution impairs the first line of defense of upper airways, namely cilia, thus a subject living in an area with high levels of pollutant is more prone to develop chronic respiratory conditions and [is more vulnerable] to any infective agent,” the study revealed.

It also suggested that “dirty air” significantly increased the likelihood that people in polluted areas die from the coronavirus than those living in cleaner areas.

“This information can help us prepare by encouraging populations [with high pollution exposure] to take extra precautions and allocate extra resources to reduce the risk of poor outcomes from Covid-19,” Xiao Wu, one of the research contributors writes. “It is likely that Covid-19 will be a part of our lives for quite a long time, despite our hope for a vaccine or treatment. In light of this, we should consider additional measures to protect ourselves from pollution exposure to reduce the Covid-19 death toll.”

Read full Chest research journal article here: [https://journal.chestnet.org/article/S0012-3692\(18\)32723-5/pdf](https://journal.chestnet.org/article/S0012-3692(18)32723-5/pdf) **SS**



▲ Air pollution may be at the center of the alarming number of Covid-19 deaths across the globe. (Courtesy photo)

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# Remembering the Flint Water Poisoning on Earth Day

By **Barrington M. Salmon**  
WI Contributing Writer

For more than a year, state officials, beginning with Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder, dawdled and stonewalled as complaints from frustrated and concerned Flint, Michigan residents mounted. Residents complained about the foul taste and color of their drinking water but the governor's former spokesman, state and city officials and others, dismissive of the chorus of complaints, continued to insist that the water was safe to drink. Now we know that a decision by Snyder – and Darnell Earley, the emergency manager he appointed – to switch water sources has had long-term consequences for the health of Flint's 100,000 residents.

The governor and his emergency manager engineered the switch of drinking water from the clean freshwater of Lake Huron to dirty and corrosive Flint River. The move, initiated in April 2014, was supposed to save \$5 million. The order came from Gov. Snyder but a decision by state water officials to opt out of using corrosion inhibitors which would have cost a mere \$50 a day, produced a man-made public health disaster that has affected the lives and health of many of Flint's residents, particularly children.

Flint pediatrician Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, who has been described as the proverbial canary in the coal mine, took the unusual step of sharing the results of her exhaustive study at a press conference. She found that the proportion of children under five in Flint with elevated lead levels in their blood nearly doubled following city's switch to Flint River water.

The mother of two and director of Hurley Medical Center's Pediatric Residency Program, Hanna-Attisha told CNN, "We had an ethical, professional, moral responsibility to alert our community (to) what was going on. ... Our mouths were ajar, and we couldn't believe that in 2016 now, in the middle of the Great Lakes, we couldn't guarantee a population access to good drinking water."

Hanna-Attisha found that children in Flint who were tested exhibited elevated blood-lead levels which jumped from 2.1 percent

in the 20 months prior to Sept. 15, 2013, to 4 percent between Jan. 1 and Sept. 15, 2015. In certain ZIP codes, she said, the change was even more dramatic and troubling, spiking from 2.5 percent to 6.3 percent in children who were tested. The changes correspond closely to the timing Emergency Manager Earley authorized the switch.

Flint residents are dealing with the fallout from a lead poisoning tragedy that could affect them and their children for decades. Problems associated with exposure to lead are irreversible. Lead is a potent neurotoxin which can cause memory loss, irreversible brain damage, impaired development, cognitive dysfunction, speech impediments and other serious chronic conditions, particularly in children.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, even marginal lead exposure can cause behavioral and cognitive problems, including an increased tendency to exhibit violent behavior. Moreover, children affected by lead poisoning are seven times more likely to end up as a high school drop out of school and six times more likely to become involved in the juvenile justice system than those not exposed to lead. Moreover, the impact of lead exposure is irreversible.

To those who assume that the Flint poisoning represents a deviation, green supporters, climate experts and environmental justice activists point out that environmental racism and policy decisions made by federal, state and local lawmakers created a country dotted with thousands of other Flints,



▲ Corroded pipes in and around Flint, Michigan, led to one of the most volatile, man-made environmental health disasters in the nation's history. (Courtesy photo)



▲ Flint residence have faced years of contaminated water that poured from faucets brown and smelly. (Courtesy photo)

with black and brown communities intentionally poisoned by lead and other toxins.

There has sprung up a vibrant and spirited opposition to environmental racism and support for climate change.

"Fifty percent of people of color live within two miles of areas of pollution," said Beverly Wright, executive director of Dillard University's Deep South Center for Environmental Justice. "There need to be buffers. We need a special distribution of polluting facilities. The people least responsible are the most affected."

Wright said those involved in environmental justice have a tough job fighting against corporations, utilities and government officials who are intent on decimating the environment. The professor said race is a predominant indicator that determines the exposure some

communities receive to assorted toxins, chemicals and pollutants.

Leslie Fields, director of the Sierra Club's Environmental and Community Partnership Programs, agreed.

"Climate change is a threat multiplier for the Black community," she said "Our children have asthma, miss school, fall behind and end up in the school-to-prison pipeline. African Americans are disproportionately affected by climate change and are demanding action. Air pollution and climate change don't just greatly impact health, they stifle our ability to grow economically."

According to Fields, the Sierra Club is monitoring the cumulative impacts. Climate change is manifested in illness from exposure to pollutants that drive climate change, physical displacement of individuals and families in the face of rising sea levels, catastrophic or destructive storms, economic and food insecurity, and malnutrition."

Investigative Journalist Curt Guyette, whose work help expose the Michigan state government's poisoning of Flint's drinking water, writes that much of the problem with the deterioration of the water infrastructure can be attributed to a change in policy on the part of the federal government, which reduced funding for water and wastewater systems by 80 percent between 1977 and 2014.

"As a result of those cuts, consumers have been forced to bear most of the burden of paying for

the repair and replacement of aging water infrastructure, causing rates to soar," he said in a 2015 article titled, "In Flint, Michigan, Overpriced Water is Causing People's Skin to Erupt in Rashes and Hair to Fall Out." "One particularly stunning survey of 100 municipalities by USA Today in 2012 found that water prices had doubled in more than a quarter of the cities since 2000, and even tripled in several others."

And they're going to continue to climb, he explained.

Experts estimate that it will take about \$1 trillion dollars, with half of that used to replace existing infrastructure, and the other half allotted to install new infrastructure to serve population growth and areas that currently aren't receiving water.

With the federal government filling in only a fraction of the gaps, municipal systems' solution of choice has been to dump rising infrastructure costs on customers by raising prices, Guyette continues, but cities have also been exploring other options, including privatizing their water systems and switching over to cheaper water sources, as Flint had done.

"Rarely, however, have the changes offered much benefit; frequently, they have made the situation worse," he said.

The City of Flint has excavated 25,400 service lines in its effort to replace all lead service lines. Fewer than 5,000 are left to check, according to contractors.

Testing has continued to show that water quality has stabilized, and residents are encouraged to get their water tested. Water filters also are available as a more convenient option for Flint households. Filters, replacement cartridges, and water tests are free and delivered to your front door.

Nestlé Waters North America has been providing 100,000 bottles of free water each week to the residents of Flint since May 2018. The water is distributed from three help centers in the city, with more than 9.7 million bottles donated to date. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, Nestlé has increased its donation of bottled water to the Flint with donations earmarked specifically for home delivery to those who are most vulnerable to the deadly virus. **SS**



## Washington Area Fuel Fund (WAFF)

# HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS

Washington Gas and The Salvation Army created the Washington Area Fuel Fund (WAFF) to **help families in need pay their heating bills.**

- ✓ Utility assistance is available **regardless of the type of fuel** used to heat a home.
- ✓ You **do not have to be customers** to receive assistance.
- ✓ A family of four earning up to \$75,050 could be eligible.

**ANYONE** seeking to **RECEIVE FUNDS** through WAFF can fill out the application at [SalvationArmyNCA.org/gethelp](http://SalvationArmyNCA.org/gethelp) through May 31.



For additional information on protecting yourself and your family from lead exposure, contact or visit:

- The National Lead Information Center 1-800-424-LEAD (424-5323)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline 1-800-426-4791
- EPA Lead Program Web site [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead)
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Web site [www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Web site [www.hud.gov/offices/lead](http://www.hud.gov/offices/lead)

## Simple Steps You Can Take to Protect Your Family from Lead Hazards

### WI Staff Report

If you think your home has high levels of lead, the Environmental Protection Agency advises taking the following steps:



**Make sure your children eat healthy, low-fat foods high in iron, calcium, and vitamin C.**

**Get your children tested for lead, even if they seem healthy.**

**Always wash your hands before eating.**

Get your home tested for lead if it was built before 1978. Call 1-800-424-LEAD for more information.

**Wash children's hands, bottles, pacifiers, and toys.**

**Do not use imported pottery to store or serve food.**

Let tap water run for one minute before using.



**Use only cold water for making your baby's formula, drinking, and cooking.**

Regularly clean floors, windowsills, and other surfaces using wet methods that control dust.

Wipe or remove shoes before entering your house.



If you rent, it is your landlord's job to keep paint in good shape. Report peeling or chipping paint to your landlord and call your health department if the paint is not repaired safely.



**Take precautions to avoid exposure to lead dust when remodeling or renovating.**

**Don't try to remove paint yourself!**



# Protecting Our Future

## Sustainability Highlights: 2019

By being locally great and nationally strong, we are able to make a meaningful difference for our people, planet, products, and communities.



### PEOPLE

Supporting employees to reach their full potential



More than **60 women** in Albertsons Companies were recognized for their leadership by industry publications



More than **60,000** of our associates celebrated 15 years years of service, and more than **43,000** celebrated over 20 years of service



Over **241,000** employees have completed Diversity and Inclusion Training

### PLANET

Minimizing our impact on the planet



Recycled more than **25 million pounds of plastic film** and **780 million pounds of cardboard** from our facilities



**1,400+** energy efficiency projects completed in 475+ stores and warehouses



Announced Plastics and Packaging Pledge which includes **100% of our Own Brands packaging will be recyclable, reusable, or compostable by 2025**

### PRODUCTS

Meeting the demands of an evolving marketplace



Won the EPA Safer Choice Partner of the Year Award for the third year



Expanded Open Nature® brand with **compostable and bamboo products**, and added **certified plant-based, organic** frozen foods and meatless proteins to our Own Brands portfolio



100% of our Own Brands **Waterfront BISTRO®** and **Open Nature®** seafood is sourced to meet our Responsible Seafood Policy, achieving our commitment three years ahead of our 2022 goal

### COMMUNITY

Supporting causes that impact our customers' lives



Our stores **donated more than 100 million pounds of food**, making us a Visionary Partner for Feeding America®



Partnered with **146 local organizations and food banks** in 35 states to provide hunger relief



Enabled **70 million breakfasts to kids in need** in 2019 through **Hunger Is®**, and more than 100 million breakfasts since the program began

# A COMMITMENT THAT GROWS EVERY DAY

Powering a cleaner and brighter future for our customers and communities is a vital part of our everyday work. We proudly support The Washington Informer and join in their commitment to promoting education for Washingtonians on environmental stewardship and conservation.

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