



I am a health advocate who did not know the role or presence of the Port
 Worked in Baltimore for 25 years in Community Health
 Founded MdEHN because of the role Environment plays in shaping individual and
 community health
 Poverty is the greatest risk factor for poor health status
 A basic premise therefore: a healthy community must have a healthy economy as
 well as a healthy environment

Four thoughts to share this morning:

- Importance for all of us of stepping into the Middle Ground between sectors
- Don't leave port neighboring communities to extremes
- Tell the port story ahead of the crisis, whenever you can
- Look for intermediaries to help



INTERPRETING SCIENCE & STATISTICS: ENGAGING PUBLIC HEALTH EXPERTS

Started MdEHN 5 years ago – to bring Public health experts into the conversation about:

- Specific land use decisions
- Regional economic development
- Environmental regulations

Get PH experts to address health consequences and risks, based on science

Our Network: academics, researchers, PH officials, politicians, clinicians (docs & RNs), health educators, community leaders

Our Goal: get science to help us find better ways to protect people from pollution



THE MIDDLE GROUND WITH IMPACT

Value of stepping into the middle ground between industry and communities
Also, middle ground between communities and government,
Between environment and health sectors

- We must resist using health as scare tactics (some environmental activists)
- But acknowledge that the health issues are scary

Baltimore's asthma rate – twice the national average

Balto's local air quality not meeting federal standards (even tho' MD has improved overall)



Environmental health science is much scarier than we ever really acknowledge

- Pregnant women living near highways – poorer birth outcomes
- Kids living near highways – more asthma
- World Health Org says air pollution is a carcinogen

And an additional concern: the stress of living in poverty increases your risk of cancer, respiratory illness, cardiovascular disease

Same exposure – more disease if you are living in poverty

More cardiovascular risk, respiratory illness, cancer

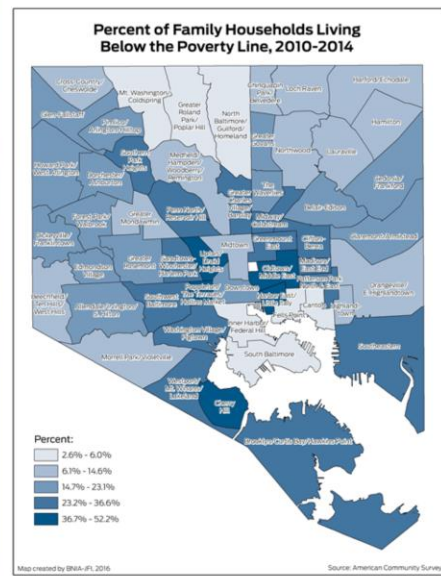
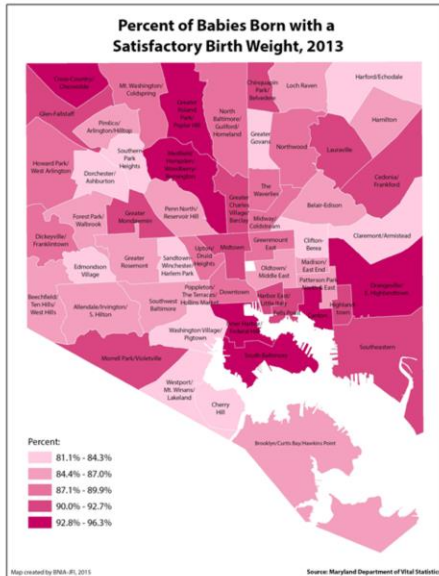


COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Do communities reap the benefits of the “economic engine” of ports?
This is Baltimore’s Curtis bay – coal piles and truck traffic next to playground

Neighboring communities shoulder greater burdens
But jobs and economic benefits may not be theirs.
No access to the waterfront?

What is our standard for “Community Benefit” when new industrial or commercial development is being negotiated?



Maps tell the story of disparities across many measures

- Good stuff concentrated in higher income neighborhoods
- Bad stuff concentrated too

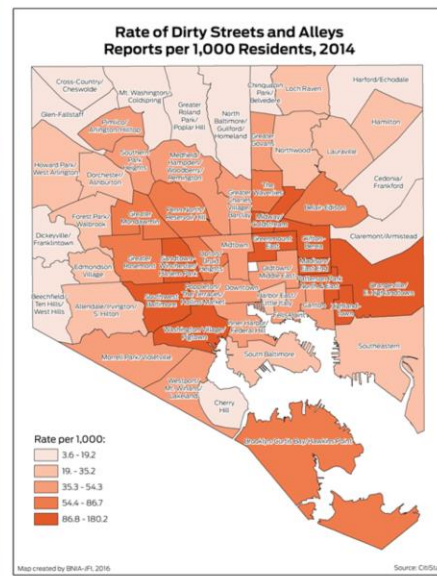
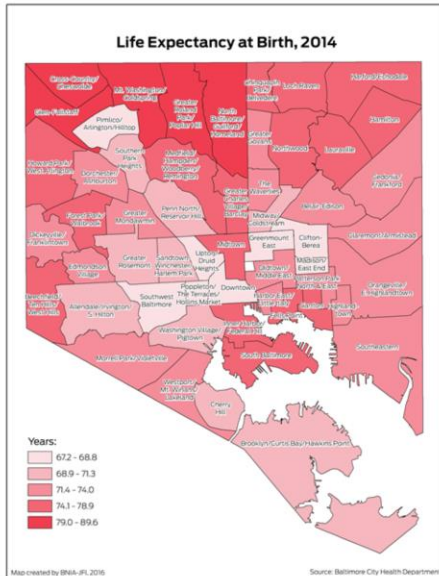
Birth outcomes poorer in the Outer Harbor area of Curtis Bay

- Low birthweight is the first indicator of lifelong health status

Inner Harbor is posh and wealth is protective of health, even when breathing the same air

Poverty higher, health status lower in Outer Harbor

Color coding may differ from one map to the next, but Curtis Bay is always on the low end of whatever measure of health or quality of life



Dirty Streets – a nuisance

But Life Expectancy – a 20 year difference – shocks us every time we hear it

Not the fault of ports or industry or highway planners or anyone.

Cumulative effect of personal choices, poverty, and pollution

As we see these patterns emerge, we have a collective responsibility to address them



COMMUNITIES TUGGED TOWARDS EXTREMES

Repeat: Ports and Port businesses are not to blame

But **communities are tugged to extreme positions**

People raise their voices when they feel they are not being heard

If you are not telling the port story, others will

- Steve's presentation – some examples

Baltimore's protests – sometimes very valid, sometimes based on misinformation

- Incinerator in Curtis Bay, an intermodal rail facility, and now a rail tunnel expansion
- Some protests are built on misperceptions
- Some are simply built on not having been at the table when decisions were made

BRANDYWINE COMMUNITY SUES THE STATE OF MARYLAND: CITING A VIOLATION OF TITLE VI OF THE 1964 CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

From the Maryland Public Service
Commission Decision to Approve the
Mattawoman Gas Plant:

"If a proposed plant to be sited in Brandywine meets all legal requirements (at all government levels), the fact that other plants are located nearby is not a legal restriction to another one being built.

This is true even though the negative impacts of a plant fall most severely upon Brandywine while the benefits are distributed across a much larger geographic area."



Community Frustration builds when they read this ruling

- This is not a Port related case

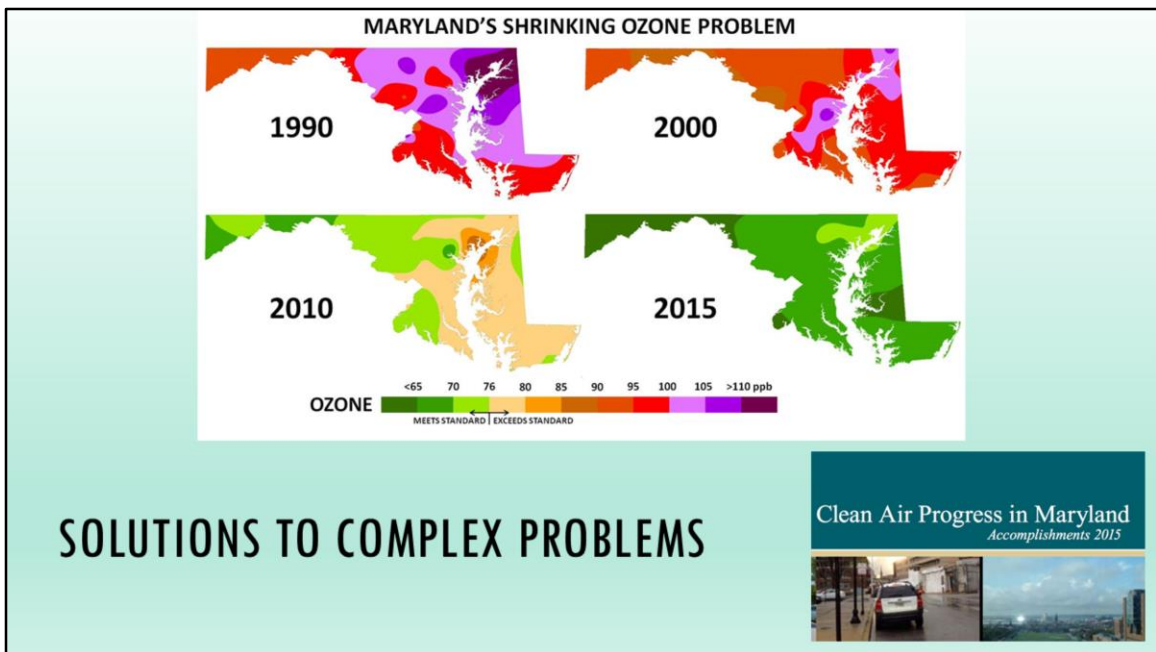
The Maryland PSC is acknowledging the failure of the regulatory regime to protect this community

Brandywine is 75% black and already has two power plants, concrete crushing businesses, and surface mining

Here we are up against the limits of what government can solve

Note: the Curtis Bay incinerator was sited near schools

PSC had ruled an exception to the law specifically designed to say no incineration within 1 mile of schools



Government regulations can make significant improvements.

Maryland's ozone problem shrinking

But with change in EPA ozone standard, maybe this progression will rewind?

Communities feel confused when they read of Clean Air Progress but are faced with different local conditions



THE RESPONSE OF OVERBURDENED COMMUNITIES

A reasonable response from communities:

- We want Fair Development
- Destiny Watford – young leader in Curtis Bay - students fighting the incinerator being put within a mile of their schools
- Destiny received last year's Goldman Prize – international prize for environmental action

Is “Fair Development” resonant with “Social License to Operate”?

At the very least, it is an opportunity to draw back from the extreme positions

Begin by **telling the Port story – preferably outside of times of crisis or conflict**



SHARING THE PORT STORY

MPA and PoB doing this now with tours, newsletter, outreach

- Tours are a way of telling the story in an engaging way
- What's behind your walls is fascinating

Tours attract stakeholders and intermediaries, even if not community leaders right away

Use tours to **identify intermediaries**

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES INSTALLED & PLANNED



MARYLAND PORT ADMINISTRATION

A page from the MPA Green Port newsletter

Comes out bi-monthly – gives me a visual tool for showing Port as partner

The diversity of actions: storm water, bio-diversity, emissions reductions

You look at this page – you want to know which one near me?



To short-circuit the extreme response, the sense of being threatened, we need to **reclaim the middle ground**

Use messages that emphasize science and common ground

Convene before the crisis -- or after (may be really hard then, but not impossible)

Other tools:

- Health Impact Assessment
- Diesel Roundtable – out of a failed attempt to enact environmental justice legislation



Without community engagement,
neighboring communities are left to the
extremes



Tell your story ahead of the crisis



Look for intermediaries who can help you



Step into the middle ground - expect to
feel a bit uncomfortable

Four Take Away Messages:

1. If you don't engage, you leave your neighboring communities to the extremes, to be preyed on by their fears
2. Tell your story ahead of crisis, use a variety of methods
3. Look for intermediaries who can help make the connections
4. Step into middle ground – expect to be a bit uncomfortable there, but do it anyway



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES:
BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNICATING
ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS



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