Environmental Justice is Racial Justice.

Equitable development: General Iron’s impact on environmentally overburdened on Chicago’s Southeast side

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Chicago’s southeast side

- Home to generations of steel workers-residents who built downtown Chicago.
- The area is already environmentally overburdened.
- The 10th ward has 8 landfills, many of them toxic.
- A number of current and proposed projects are toxic & impact the health of nearby residents (e.g. General Iron & Confined Disposal Facility (CDF)).
Map of South Works Site

Legend
- Industrial Corridors
- Cumulative impacts score by Blockgroup:
  - 2, lowest burden
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
  - 6
  - 7
  - 8
  - 9
  - 10, highest burden

Lincoln Yards
Finkl Steel
General Iron
79th St
95th St

*Sources: The cumulative impacts score incorporates all indicators used in the US EPA's ESCREEN tool, as described in the accompanying methodology. The environmental indicators are: air toxics cancer risk, air toxics respiratory hazard, ozone, diesel fuel, PM 2.5, traffic potential lead paint exposure, proximity to superfund sites, proximity to hazardous waste management facilities, proximity to facilities with potential chemical accidents, and toxic releases into waterways. The population indicators are: household income, minority status, high school education, linguistic isolation, population under 5, and population over 64. The industrial corridor and street maps are provided by the City of Chicago and ESRI, respectively.
Environmentally Overburdened

Chicago’s southeast side has 3 of the top 5 air polluting companies:

**#1: Finkl Steel**- #1 air polluter in Cook County- relocated to the SE side, after being displaced by the Lincoln Yards development. Also, a southside house caught on fire, after an explosion at Finkl.

-CBS2, 04-17-19


**#2 Arcelormittal (Riverdale)**

**#4 Ford Motor Company**

Source: Pagdanganan, Mikee. "Hazardous Air Pollutants, Cook County 2018." DePaul University Steans Center, Geography Department. (Nov. 26, 2019) Pg. 2
Hazardous Air Pollutants, Cook County 2018

Source: Pagdanganan, Mikee. "Hazardous Air Pollutants, Cook County 2018." DePaul University Steans Center, Geography Department. (Nov. 26, 2019)
The southeast side is already environmentally overburdened, exposed to numerous contaminants, and have high cancer and asthma rates.

Air pollution, environmental burdens, & cancer and asthma rates as well as divestment are concentrated in African American and Latino communities.
Asthma rates for nearby, impacted community areas: Chicago’s asthma rate for 2017 was 9.1.
Comparatively, South Chicago has an asthma rate of 14.4. South Deering has an asthma rate of 20.7. Hegewisch and East Side data were not available.

Source: Chicago Health Data. “Asthma: Adults who have been diagnosed with asthma.” Chicago Health Atlas. Website accessed: 08/01/19. https://www.chicagohealthatlas.org/indicators/asthma
Cancer death rates for nearby, impacted community areas:
Chicago’s cancer death rate for 2017 was 179.2.
Comparatively, South Chicago has a cancer death rate of 229.0. South Deering has a cancer death rate of 220.5. East Side and Hegewisch had cancer death rates of 189.0 and 197.9 respectively.

Air Quality and Health Index, Chicago 2020

The Air Quality + Health Index combines community-level data on air pollution, health, and social factors to identify the areas in our city that are most vulnerable to the effects of air pollution. Census block groups in green are less vulnerable, while block groups in red are more vulnerable.

Lincoln Yards

General Iron
48% of children in Chicago are living in LOW CHILD OPPORTUNITY AREAS

COMMUNITY AREAS with lowest child opportunity
- Austin
- West Garfield Park
- North Lawndale
- South Lawndale
- Englewood
- Englewood West
- Washington Park
- West Pullman
- Riverdale
- South Deering
- East Side
- Hegewisch
- Brighton Park
- New City
- Fuller Park

1 in 2 African American and Hispanic children live in low child opportunity areas compared to 1 in 50 white children

The Child Opportunity Index measures community characteristics that influence a child’s health and development. These features are organized into three overarching domains of opportunity: educational, health and environmental, and social and economic. All of these factors are combined into a relative composite measure of overall opportunity for children living within a particular community.

Components of the Child Opportunity Index
- Educational
  - Adult educational attainment
  - Student (school) poverty rate
  - Reading proficiency rate
  - Math proficiency rate
  - Early childhood education neighborhood participation patterns
  - High school graduation rate
- Proximity to high-quality early childhood education centers
- Proximity to early childhood education centers of any type

Health & Environmental
- Retail healthy food index
- Proximity to toxic waste release sites
- Volume of nearby toxic release
- Proximity to parks and open spaces
- Housing vacancy rates
- Proximity to health care facilities

Social & Economic
- Neighborhood foreclosure rate
- Poverty rate
- Unemployment rate
- Public assistance rate
- Proximity to employment

Lincoln Yards

General Iron
Equitable Development: SE Side- Health Impacts

Pollution and Covid-19

- The same southeast side communities that are environmentally overburdened, are the same communities more negatively impacted by Covid-19.
- Companies, like RMG, who pollute our air, land, and water, make the population less able to fight and survive when health challenges come up, like Covid-19, which disproportionately affect people with pre-existing conditions (like asthma, cancer, heart disease).
Commentary: COVID-19 Racial Disparities
Alexis Grant and Jeni Hebert-Beirne, PhD, SPH Collaboratory for Health Justice | Posted on April 23, 2020

Risk scores by zip code
As of April 6, 2020
Locations of COVID-19 fatalities represented by green dots

While we may all be in this pandemic together, public health professionals knew, communities of color would bare a disproportionate burden of the effects of COVID-19. To track the effects of systemic racism, public health experts examine data on infection and hospitalizations by race/ethnicity. On Monday, April 6, we finally saw these figures for Chicago, and they were not surprising.

Source: https://publichealth.uic.edu/news-stories/commentary-covid-19-racial-disparities/
Lincoln Yards, 60614

General Iron, 60617
CHICAGO COVID-19: Mortality Rates by Zip code

COVID-19 Mortality Rate per 100,000 population by zip code among Chicago residents N=4,206* through January 6, 2021

Note: *The map includes 4,206 of the 4,255 COVID-19 deaths confirmed by laboratory testing and zip codes with mortality rates shown.
*Rates for zip codes with very small underlying populations or where population extend outside the city are not shown.
Data Source: Illinois National Electronic Disease Surveillance System, Cook County Medical Examiner’s Office, IDPH Vital Records
There are deaths from COVID-19 that remain unreported or under investigation that are not reflected on this map.

Lincoln Yards, 60614

General Iron, 60617
Lincoln Park residents have been complaining for years about the environmental impacts of General Iron, esp. air & noise pollution.

- The company has had a number of EPA violations.
- It would greatly increase truck traffic and significantly increase air pollutant emissions from diesel trucks.
  - From 200 trucks to 1400 trucks a week on local roads.

Both companies (RMG & General Iron) had fatalities last 2 years, raising questions on worker safety conditions.
We are tired of being the dumping ground for the City.

We are fighting environmental racism.
  - (See previous maps for disparities, along racial/ethnic lines).

We urge the City of Chicago to deny the RMG Recycling Permit.