

Environmental Justice: Virginia Department of Environmental Quality Draft Guidance Memorandum Addressing the Permitting Process



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

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The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (“DEQ”) issued a draft document titled:

Guidance Memo No. 23-XXXX-Environmental Justice in the Permitting Process (“Guidance”)

DEQ states that the Guidance is designed to create procedures to accomplish the goals set forth in the previously enacted Virginia Environmental Justice Act. The legislation’s objectives include the promotion of environmental justice and assuring fair treatment and meaningful involvement with a focus on environmental justice and fence line communities during the State’s permitting processes.

The Guidance includes:

- Outlines of the permit evaluation process for all DEQ permitting actions
- Establishes a method for further evaluations of permits of particular concerned environmental justice and fence line communities
- Establishes a Public Engagement matrix to guide the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of community members in the full scope of the DEQ permitting processes
- Provides for the evaluation of any potential disproportional impacts in environmental justice community through cumulative modeling

A copy of the Guidance can be downloaded [here](#).