



Environmental Justice Action Forum

Thursday, November 30, 2023

Mebane Arts and Community Center
633 Corregidor Street, Mebane, NC 27302

Eastern Time

8:00 a.m. **Check-in**
Coffee and refreshments compliments of WERA

8:30 a.m. **Welcome**

- **Joan Packenham, Ph.D.**, *National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)*
- **Trevor Archer, Ph.D.**, *NIEHS*
- **Omega Wilson**, *West End Revitalization Association (WERA)*
- **Crystal Cavalier-Keck, Ed.D.**, *Occaneechi Tribal Member, Honoring the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation Indian Tribe*

Ground Rules for the Day

- **Joseph “Chip” Hughes, Jr.**, *Facilitator, NIEHS Contractor: MDB, Inc.*

8:50 a.m. **Session 1: Describing the Problem — Local/County Perspective**

This session will identify and define EJ issues regarding the Western Electric/Tarheel Army Missile Plant as experienced and described by local community residents and county office staff members. The speakers will discuss exposures, and the health risks and concerns associated with the pollution and toxic substances that have contaminated the groundwater, air, and soil in the area. The speakers will describe the need to prioritize EJ issues in people of color communities to avoid continued disproportionate and long-lasting health effects.

MODERATOR: Joan Packenham, Ph.D., *NIEHS*

Background and Virtual Tour of the Western Electric/Tarheel Army Missile Plant Site

- **Omega Wilson**, *WERA*

9:10 a.m. **Current Data and Overview of the Problem**

Thirty Years Later: An Urgent Need for Western Electric Site Environmental Remediation

- Reverend Donna Vanhook, *Alamance County Soil & Water Conservation District*

The “New” Trifecta: Health, Equity, and Environmental Justice

- Arlinda Ellison, D.H.Sc., *Alamance County Health Department*

Failure to Prioritize Environmental Health in Black, Indigenous, People of Color Communities

- Crystal Cavalier-Keck, Ed.D., and Jason Crazy Bear Keck, *7 Directions of Service*

Exposures and Visual Concerns

- Omega Wilson, *WERA*
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9:50 a.m. **Session 1: Facilitated Table Discussion**

10:10 a.m. **Facilitated Q&A**

10:30 a.m. **Break**

10:45 a.m. **Session 2: Framing the Issue — State Engagement**

This session will provide an overview of the history of the Western Electric/Tarheel Army Missile Plant and how state agencies and offices have engaged to address the EJ issues associated with the site. Presentations and discussions will focus on tools and executive orders available to address EJ issues in NC and some of the limitations they may pose. Efforts to collect health effect information associated with chemicals and exposures of communities at and near the site will be presented.

MODERATOR: Liam O’Fallon, *NIEHS*

- Nathan Edwards, *U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Southeast Division*
 - Maya Hoon and Sue Murphy, *North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NC DEQ)*
 - Virginia Guidry, Ph.D., *North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS)*
 - Joshua Lowman, *NC DHHS*
 - Lisa Sorg, *NC Newsline*
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11:45 a.m. **Session 2: Facilitated Table Discussion**

12:05 p.m. **Facilitated Q&A Panel**

12:25 p.m. **Lunch**

Box lunches compliments of WERA

1:00 p.m. **Session 3: Federal Agency Engagement**

This session will provide a broad overview of how to collaboratively work together concerning EJ issues and other environmental related executive orders from the White House. For example, how have similar issues been addressed across the nation and other states (laws, EJ issues, policy) and how can we bring our tools to the table to collaboratively work towards a solution?

MODERATOR: Sharon Beard, *NIEHS*

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Environmental Justice Updates from the White House Council on Environmental Quality

- Jalonne White-Newsome, Ph.D., *Federal Chief Environmental Justice Officer, White House Council on Environmental Quality*

1:15 p.m. **Advancing an “All-of-Government” Approach**

- **Rick Woychik, Ph.D., NIEHS**
- **Robin Morris Collin, J.D., U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**
- **Sharunda Buchanan, Ph.D., U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Environmental Justice**

2:15 p.m. **Session 3: Facilitated Table Discussion**

2:35 p.m. **Facilitated Q&A Panel**

2:55 p.m. **Break**

3:10 p.m. **Session 4: Roles, Responsibilities, and Next Steps**

The purpose of this facilitated panel discussion is to understand how federal, state, and local agencies and organizations will work with community groups in NC to achieve EJ and health equity in response to the EJ Executive Order and the Justice40 Initiative. Conversations could focus on which agencies do facility/site clean-up and which agencies address health problems.

MODERATOR: Darlene Dixon, D.V.M., Ph.D., NIEHS

- **Peter Bishop, City of Burlington**
- **Sheila Lewis, U.S. EPA**
- **Trevor Archer, Ph.D., NIEHS**
- **Crystal Cavalier-Keck, Ed.D., Occaneechi Tribal Member**
- **Nathan Edwards, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers**
- **Arlinda Ellison, D.H.Sc., Alamance County Health Department**
- **Virginia Guidry, Ph.D., NC DHHS**
- **Rev. Donna Vanhook, Alamance County Soil & Water Conservation District**
- **Ayo Wilson, WERA**
- **Brenda Wilson, WERA**
- **Omega Wilson, WERA**

4:10 p.m. **Session 4: Facilitated Table Discussion**

4:30 p.m. **Facilitated Q&A Panel**

4:50 p.m. **Wrap-up**

- **Sharon Beard, NIEHS**

5:00 p.m. **Adjourn**

