



Disproportionately Impacted Community Determination

Operator Guidance

Purpose of this Guidance

The State of Colorado adopted a statutory definition of disproportionately impacted (DI) community with the signing of HB23-1233 in May 2023 [§ 24-4-109(2)(b)(II), C.R.S. (2024)]. Appendix A, below, provides a summary of the statutory definition. This definition applies to all state agencies, including the Energy and Carbon Management Commission (ECMC). On December 15, 2024, ECMC revised its 100 Series definition of DI community to adopt the statutory definition. Rulemaking at ECMC and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), the development of multiple electronic DI community informational tools, and the updating of DI community datasets in the last two years has created some confusion about how and where to find accurate information about Colorado's DI communities. The purpose of this guidance is to provide clarity to ECMC operators on how to comply with ECMC rules related to DI communities using the tools created and managed by CDPHE.

Background

In response to the creation of a statewide statutory definition of DI community, CDPHE established **Colorado EnviroScreen**¹. Colorado EnviroScreen ("EnviroScreen") is an online environmental justice mapping tool that uses US Census data to identify communities across Colorado impacted by various environmental, social and economic stressors. A community's EnviroScreen score is a percentile score that combines population characteristics and environmental burdens included in the EnviroScreen mapping tool to illustrate how communities are cumulatively impacted by various stressors. Per statute, having an EnviroScreen score at or above 80 qualifies a community as a DI community.

¹ Colorado EnviroScreen may be accessed at <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/enviroscreen>

EnviroScreen 1.0 was launched by CDPHE in May 2023. In November 2024, CDPHE updated EnviroScreen to version 2.0, which uses updated census data. Concurrent with the release of EnviroScreen 2.0, CDPHE also launched a new online tool, the DI Community Map².

CDPHE's **DI Community map** ("DI mapping tool") provides a GIS-based mapping platform showing areas that meet the various criteria set forth in the statutory definition of disproportionately impacted communities, including those with an EnviroScreen percentile score at or above 80.

Using CDPHE's DI mapping tool (or ECMC's corresponding DI community interactive GIS map layers) is the easiest way to identify where DI communities are across Colorado and which statutory prong(s) make them qualify as such. Operators do not need to use EnviroScreen's wider and more granular dataset to identify a DI community.

For more information about these two environmental justice tools please visit CDPHE's website³.

Determining if a Location is in a DI Community

1. Operators will use CDPHE's DI mapping tool, not Colorado EnviroScreen, to determine if a proposed or existing location is within a DI community. Identical map information is provided on ECMC's interactive GIS mapping tool, which may be useful for operators who wish to see DI community designations as well as additional ECMC map data and GIS layers such as existing oil and gas locations and high priority habitat.
2. All Oil and Gas Development Plan (OGDP) Form 2As submitted after December 15, 2024, should use the "November 2024" DI community mapping layers, until those datasets are updated according to statute.

² CDPHE's DI Community Map may be accessed at <https://www.cohealthmaps.dphe.state.co.us/DICommunity/>

³ CDPHE's DI community tool information (EnviroScreen 2.0 and DI Community Map) may be accessed at <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/ej/learn>. CDPHE's EnviroScreen FAQ may be accessed at https://docs.google.com/document/d/1McNHLiznLm2FEyad2vKxbY6AwMZHD4qRs_dewr9zhlc/edit?tab=t.0#heading=h.r3oyjau0wn6r

FAQ

1. If I'm not supposed to use EnviroScreen to determine if my location is in a DI community, what do I use EnviroScreen for?
 - a. As compared to the DI mapping tool, EnviroScreen has a much wider dataset of 35 indicators that include more granular data on environmental exposures, climate vulnerability, health indicators, vulnerable populations, and additional demographics, that collectively roll up into a single EnviroScreen score. Additionally, EnviroScreen has scoring for group and individual indicators that further refine the unique characteristics of each community. ECMC has multiple Rules that require operators to provide, analyze, and utilize EnviroScreen data (see Appendix B for a list and summary of these rules). Operators will use EnviroScreen to comply with those Rules.
2. Which version of EnviroScreen am I supposed to use?
 - a. ECMC's 100-series definition of EnviroScreen incorporates by reference CDPHE's EnviroScreen 1.0, which is now out of date. Rulemaking in the summer of 2025 will result in an updated reference to EnviroScreen 2.0 in ECMC's Rules effective Jan. 1, 2026. Operators should use the version of EnviroScreen incorporated into the rule at the time of their application submittal. Since the statutory definition of DI community includes the use of the most recent EnviroScreen data available, it is a recommended best practice for operators to also provide data from EnviroScreen 2.0 for OGD Form 2As submitted after December 15, 2024.

Appendix A: Statutory Definition of Disproportionately Impacted Community

ECMC adopted the State's statutory definition of DI community in the 2024 Cumulative Impacts and Enhances Systems and Practices (CI/ESP) rulemaking; those rules went into effect December 15, 2024. The State's definition identifies DI communities as those communities that meet **any one or more of the following criteria**⁴:

⁴ C.R.S. 24-4-109(b)(II).

1. Low-income communities: greater than 40% of the population are below 200% of the federal poverty level [subsection (2)(b)(II)(A)]
2. Housing cost-burdened communities: greater than 50% of the population spend more than 30% of income on housing [subsection (2)(b)(II)(B)]
3. Communities of color: greater than 40% of the population identify as anything other than non-Hispanic white [subsection (2)(b)(II)(C)]
4. Linguistically isolated communities: greater than 20% of the population are isolated by language barriers (limited English-speaking proficiency) [subsection (2)(b)(II)(D)]
5. Historically marginalized communities: those communities recognized as having a history of environmental racism created through redlining or other prejudicial practices that continue to experience present-day environmental health disparities [subsection (2)(b)(II)(E)]⁵
6. Communities with environmental and socioeconomic impacts: those communities identified by a statewide agency as having various stressors, vulnerabilities, and burdens that contribute to persistent environmental health disparities [subsection (2)(b)(II)(F)]. These include:
 - a. Communities with an EnviroScreen score at or above the 80th percentile [subsection (5)(a)]
 - b. Communities that qualify as disadvantaged (“Justice 40”) under the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)⁶ developed by the federal Council on Environmental Quality [subsection (5)(b)]
7. Mobile home communities: those areas that meet the Department of Local Affairs’ definition of a mobile home park [subsection (2)(b)(II)(G)]
8. Tribal lands: the Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute reservations [subsection (2)(b)(II)(H)]

⁵ This component of the DI community definition requires that “A statewide agency determines, after a community presents evidence of being and requests to be classified as a disproportionately impacted community, that the population is disproportionately impacted based on evidence, presented in a relevant statewide agency decision-making process...” As of the date of this guidance, ECMC has not made such a determination for any community.

⁶ CEJST was removed from federal websites in 2025, but as an archived application is generally accessible with simple internet searches.

Appendix B: ECMC Rules Requiring EnviroScreen Data

ECMC Rules that require the use of EnviroScreen, as opposed to the DI community mapping tool, are summarized for simplicity here. Please see the full text of ECMC's rules for compliance assurance.

Rule 315.b.(2).C.iv - In the cumulative impacts analysis (CIA), under the rule subsection regarding impacts from other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable development in Area of Evaluation, operators will provide a copy of the most recent Colorado EnviroScreen data for the oil and gas location.

Rule 315.b.(2).D.iv - In the CIA, under the rule subsection regarding measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse cumulative impacts, when the working pad surface of a location is within ½ mile of a residential building unit (RBU), high occupancy building unit (HOBUE), school facility, or child care center within a DI community, operators will provide:

- a. (subpart aa) - a table illustrating the EnviroScreen score, group component scores, and individual component scores for the proposed location
- b. (subpart bb) - an explanation of how the operator utilized the EnviroScreen score, group and individual component scores, to determine the best management practices (BMPs) and/or enhanced systems and practices (ESPs) for the proposed location
- c. (subpart cc) - identification of the proposed BMPs and/or ESPs to be used at the location within the impacted community that address the issues that exist as reflected by the EnviroScreen score, group and individual component scores, as well as a narrative describing how the identified practices will mitigate, minimize, or avoid the impacted community

Rule 604.b.(4).B - For proposed locations within 2,000 feet of a RBU or HOBUE within a DI community where the operator seeks a Commission finding of substantial equivalence, the operator must demonstrate that they have:

- a. (subpart cc) - analyzed the EnviroScreen score, group and individual component scores and employed BMPs and/or ESPs sufficient to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts to any identified vulnerabilities of the community

Appendix C: Document Control and Change Log

Table 1 Document Control and Change Log

Document Control	
Created Date	August 2025
Last Updated	n/a
Document Owner	ECMC Deputy Director of Policy
Change Date	Description of Changes