

CBO Memorandum

To: Chair and Members of the Environmental Justice Council
From: Griselda Paredes/Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living (EOCIL)
Date: April 4, 2024
Regarding: Agenda Item 6- LUBGWMA CBO Panel/Database

Dear Members of the Chair and the Environmental Justice Council,

I am here to discuss the challenges faced by the LUBGWMA program. As a Community-Based Organization (CBO), we were tasked with supporting and creating awareness among our community about the contaminated waters in the county affected. Our primary goal was to test the well waters and ensure their safety. However, we have been facing some difficulties in carrying out our tasks and feel as if we have failed our community.

One of the main reasons behind our inability to achieve our objectives is the lack of a sufficient database. We have been given late updates on test results, and we have not been receiving updates on the areas that have been covered (tested). Despite our canvassing, outreach, and door-to-door efforts, we are unable to keep track of what we have done, the places we have visited, or which clients have or have not received their test results. This has made it challenging for us to create awareness among our community, and we feel that we are falling short of our responsibilities as CBOs.

Many individuals are affected by contaminated well water without realizing it. Children, in particular, may fall ill after playing with or drinking the water on hot summer days. Despite the community's need for more filtered water, it has been largely ignored. While some filtered water is provided, it is uncertain if it is enough to meet the needs of everyone. Visitors or individuals with medical conditions may require additional filtered water, and it is important to ensure that the community's needs are met. "Why are we simply sitting here and waiting for a system to decide our next course of action?"

We have sick parents, children, pregnant women, and pets who require our assistance. It is unacceptable that we are not taking action to support our people. Instead, we are waiting for someone else to take charge, we need to be proactive and find solutions to help those in need. I hope this message causes you to consider our request and assist us in achieving our goals. I am here before you all, representing our community to request additional support, funding, and resources to help us achieve what we have been tasked to do!

Thank you all for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Griselda Paredes.

Assistant Director of Public Health and Support Services

Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living (EOCIL)

griseldaparedes@eocil.org (541)889-3119 Ext:116