

New Jersey Chapter

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American Academy of Pediatrics 
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



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Virtual Earth Day Forum Brings Together Climate, Health Professionals in Response to Unsustainable Levels of Carbon Pollution

In connection with Earth Day 2022, Clinicians for Climate Action New Jersey (CCANJ) is hosting a virtual gathering of New Jersey's medical and health professionals to raise awareness of the devastating impacts associated with our changing climate.

Co-sponsored by the New Jersey Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (NJAAP) and Health Care Without Harm, the virtual forum offers the opportunity to hear from health professionals about their focus on reducing carbon pollution from the transportation sector and the highest priority policies and programs available to tackle the global climate crisis.

The Health of New Jerseyans in a Changing Climate: The Powerful Voice of the Medical and Health Community will be hosted on Zoom on Thursday, April 21 from 7-9 p.m. Register [here](#).

CCANJ will also be hosting an Earth Day Twitter Chat on Friday, April 22 from 12-1 p.m. Follow [@CCANewJersey](#) and use hashtag [#EarthDayHealthNJ](#) to join the conversation.

"Today, carbon pollution is dramatically increasing illness among all New Jerseyans, especially children, elderly populations, and people with respiratory and cardiovascular disease. More broadly, as more and more extreme weather-driven events occur across the country, including here in New Jersey, we must face the reality that the impacts of climate change on health will extend into every aspect of our lives if we don't take immediate action now," **NJAAP CEO Felicia Taylor said**. "Achieving an equitable, clean energy economy will reduce threats tied to air quality and protect our way of life, leading to safe and stable communities, especially in our urban centers. Our most vulnerable residents experiencing disparate environmental pollution are the same who experience disproportionate pandemic impacts. This year, Earth Day serves as a reminder that the health of all New Jerseyans must be prioritized through climate action."

The World Health Organization diagnosed climate change as the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century. About 40 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in New Jersey come from trucks, cars, buses, and other vehicles, [according to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection \(DEP\)](#).

In New Jersey, more than 600,000 adults and 167,000 children (767,000 total residents, or 8.5% of the population) have asthma, increasing their sensitivity to air pollution, [according to the New Jersey Department of Health](#). Blacks, Hispanics, and urban residents are more likely to be affected by asthma symptoms, according to DOH. As the nation's most densely populated state with vehicles disproportionately polluting environmentally overburdened communities, New Jersey set an ambitious goal of having 330,000 electric vehicles on the road by 2025. While New Jersey is making strides in electrifying the transportation sector, reducing reliance on

vehicles, and encouraging mass transit ridership, our state must increase funding for the EV rebate program and enhance charging network infrastructure.

Everyone across New Jersey is exposed to unhealthy levels of air pollution, but that exposure is not equitably distributed. People of color are three times more likely than white people to breathe the most polluted air. Historically, New Jersey's low-income communities and communities of color have been subject to a disproportionately high number of environmental and public health stressors, including pollution from numerous industrial, commercial, and governmental facilities in those communities.

[In 2019](#), Black preschool-aged children were hospitalized for severe asthma attacks 3.7 times more often than white children in New Jersey. In the American Lung Association's 2021 ["State of the Air" report](#), eight urban New Jersey counties earned "F" grades for exceeding national air quality standards for ground-level ozone, increased by heat and pollution. This underscores the importance of reducing emissions in overburdened communities.