



Through the Lens of Community: A Photovoice Exploration of Health and Environmental Connections

haz.waste@kingcounty.gov
kingcounty.gov/hazwaste
206-296-4692



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Project Team

Celina Kareiva

Anahi Sandoval

Roger J. Chin

Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County

Sully Moreno

Culture Shift Consulting

Molly C. O'Connor

Coco Canary Consulting



Community Partners

- King County community partners who identify as Black, Chinese, Muckleshoot, Nuu Savi, Samoan or Pacific Islander, Thai, and Zambian

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We Serve King County

- ✓ Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County (Haz Waste Program) is a regional coalition of government agencies working together to make the Puget Sound region the cleanest in the country.
- ✓ Participating agencies: King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Public Health – Seattle & King County, Seattle Public Utilities, and Sound Cities Association.
- ✓ Serves over 2 million people, two tribal nations, and approximately 70,000 businesses in King County.
- ✓ Services provided include regional education, outreach, research and evaluation, community support, information resources, collections services, and assistance for businesses in managing hazardous waste.



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Agenda

- Objectives and Research Questions
- Research Methodology and Approaches
- Overview of Outcomes
- CBPR Best Practices
- Next Steps

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Objectives and Research Questions

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Objectives and Building on Prior Research

- Understand community values that relate to environmental protection and stewardship and what motivates people to safely use and dispose of toxic chemicals.
- Conduct research on the knowledge levels, motivators, and perceived barriers for accessing Haz Waste Program services

The Haz Waste Program identified the following gaps in prior research projects:

- Perspectives from Black and Indigenous communities
- Active community-led engagement and community ownership of programs and services
- Motivations and knowledge levels regarding proper disposal and use of hazardous products

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Priority Community Partners

Black and African American

- ✓ Just 1% of Wastemobile customers were Black, despite comprising 7% of King County population.
- ✓ The highest rates of infant mortality in King County.
- ✓ Among the lowest life expectancy of any race in King County – 75.5 years.
- ✓ The highest rates of eligibility for free and reduced lunch.
- ✓ Important to distinguish between US born and immigrant and first-generation communities.

South King County Residents

- ✓ 33% of customers from Seattle and South King County.
- ✓ Considered more diverse than King County as a whole with 1 in 4 people foreign born.
- ✓ Region ranks high for many environmental exposures—from lead exposure and toxic release from facilities.
- ✓ Schools have the highest eligibility for free and reduced lunch.
- ✓ Ranks high for social and health vulnerabilities with high rates of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and the lowest life expectancy of any other region.

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Research Questions



Why does safely using and disposing of hazardous products matter to community partners?



What outreach strategies are effective to encourage community members to safely use and dispose of hazardous products?



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Research Methodology and Approaches

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Community-Based Participatory Research



Equitably involves community members, organization representatives, government officials, and researchers as co-creators in all aspects of the research.



Establish transparency, power sharing, community capacity building, collaborative learning, and sustained partnership.



Flexible and can be modified to accommodate unique cultures, customs, and resources of the community.



Embraces "non-traditional" research methodologies to address community needs and respect different cultures (e.g., talking circles, photovoice, community walks, netnography).



Disseminate findings and commitment to transform research findings into practical solutions.

Traditional Research Style



In the traditional, "parachute" model: researchers drop in, collect data, and disappear without any feedback to the community



This approach rarely benefited, and sometimes harmed the communities involved...



... resulting in distrust of, and reluctance to participate in, research

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Photovoice Methodology



- ✓ Creative images can transcend barriers such as language, culture, and other factors.
- ✓ Provides evidence from community members' perspectives.
- ✓ Adaptable to meet diverse cultures and needs.



- ✓ Loan digital cameras or encourage participants to use their own electronic devices.
- ✓ Photography and safety training will be provided.
- ✓ Upload the photos and we will print them out.

- ✓ Community-based research method that supports social change.
- ✓ Participants take photos that highlight issues, values, challenges, and barriers relating to a particular issue.



- ✓ Photovoice offers a method of empowerment and belonging.
- ✓ A picture is worth a thousand words.
- ✓ Community members share recommendations to implement new solutions and strategies.



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Using the **SHOWED** approach to guide the focus group process:

- S:** What do you **SEE** here?
- H:** What is really **HAPPENING** here?
- O:** How does this relate to **OUR** lives?
- W:** **WHY** does this problem or situation exist?
- E:** How could this image **EDUCATE** and **EMPOWER** others?
- D:** What can we **DO** about the problem or situation?

Law Enforcement



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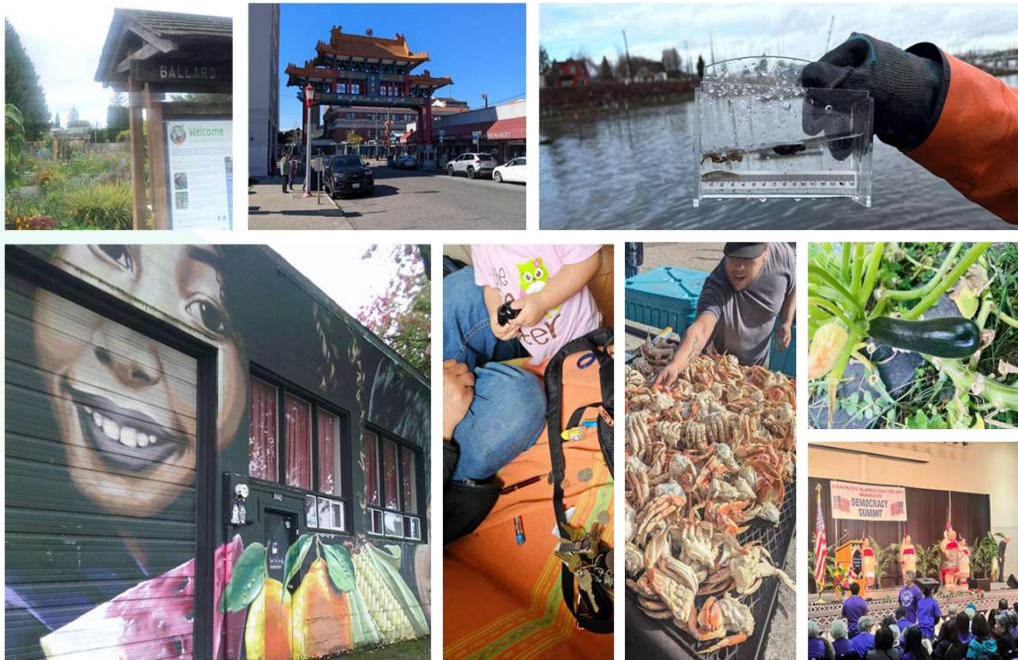
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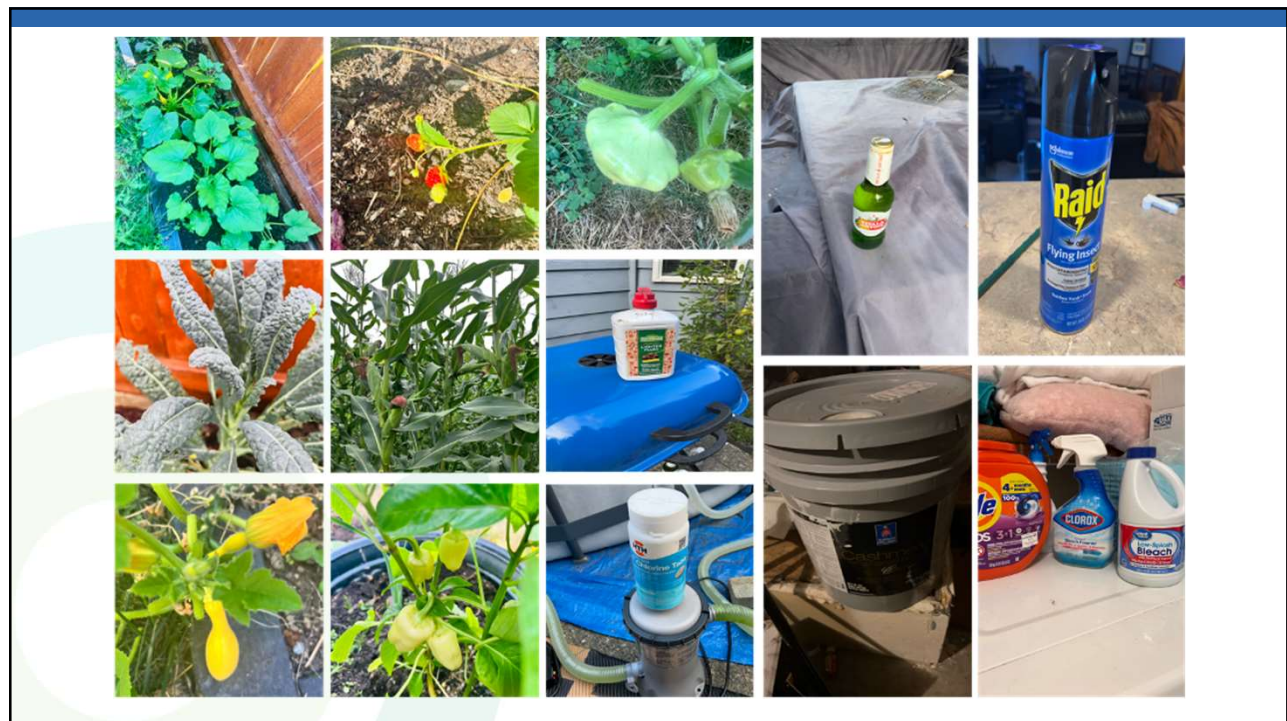
Healthy Living and Exercising

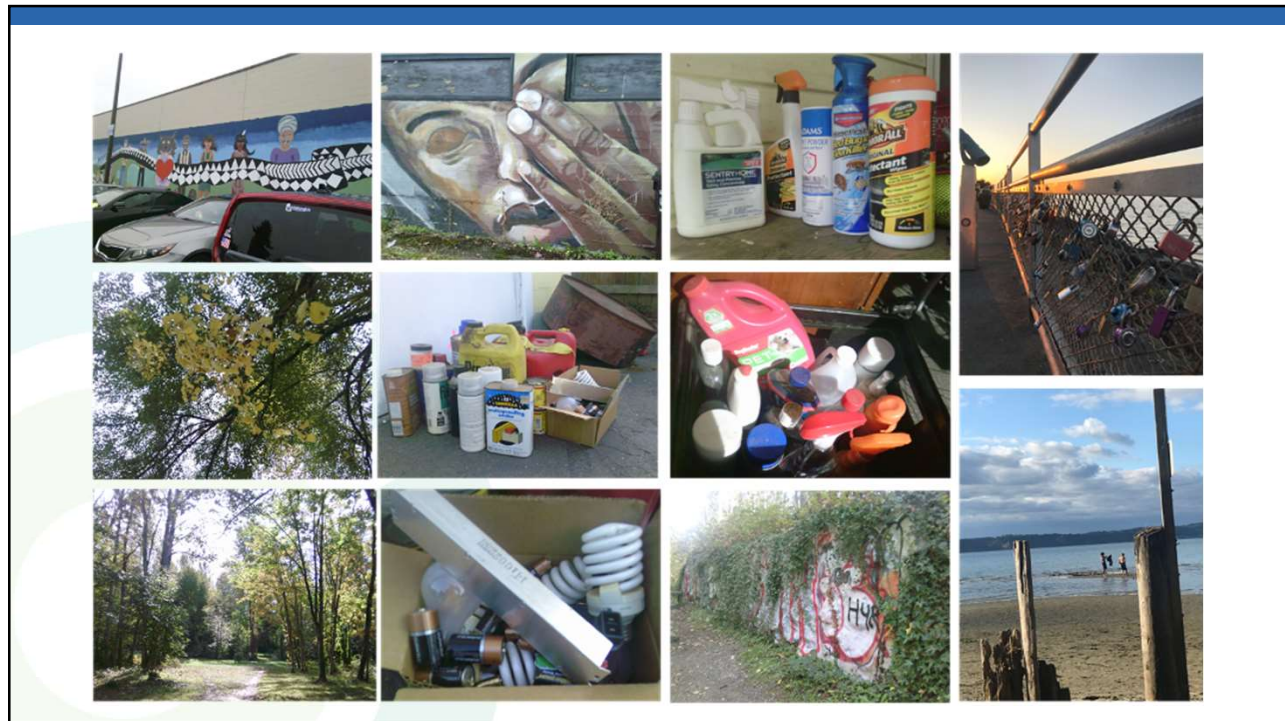


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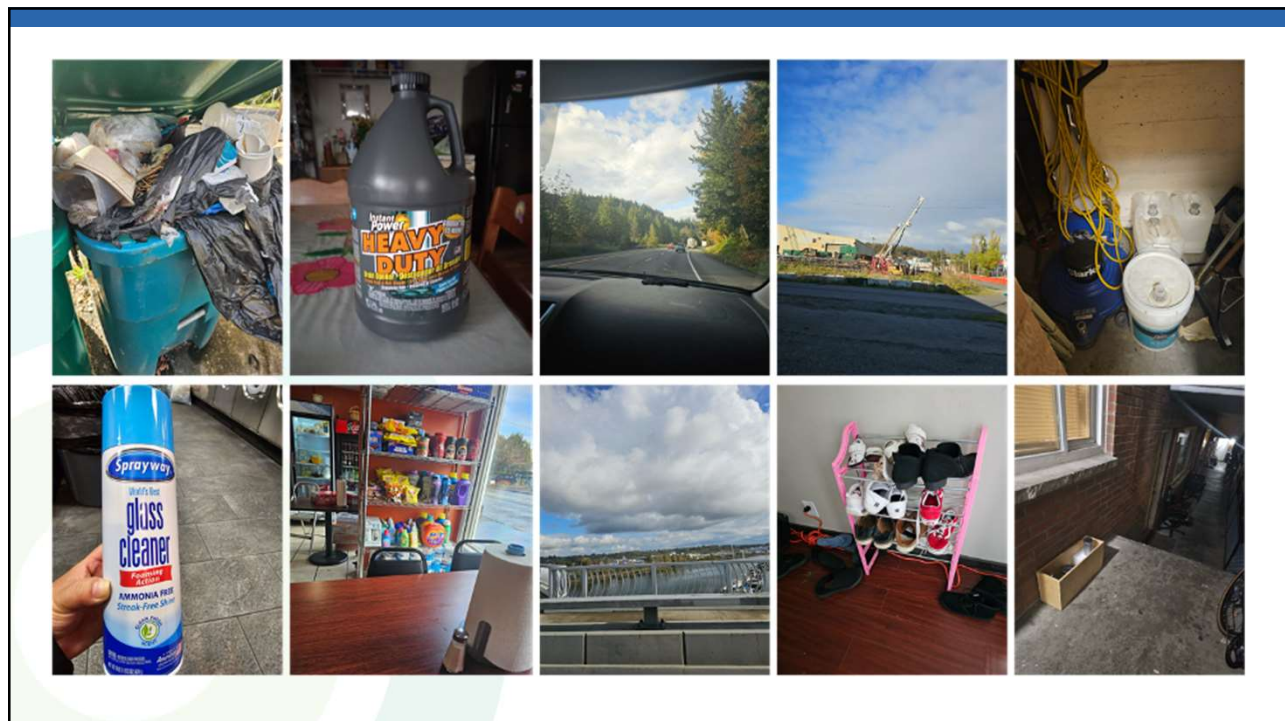


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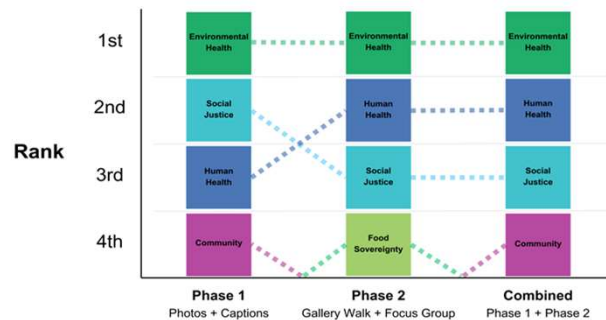
Overview of Outcomes

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Overview of Outcomes

- ✓ Received **126 photographs**, and captions explaining the meaning of **40 photographs**
- ✓ Applied thematic analysis to draw initial themes
- ✓ Developed **4 key themes** that illustrate why the safe use and disposal of hazardous waste is important to community partners:
 - Environmental Health and Connection
 - Human Health
 - Community, Culture, and Social Justice
 - Food Sovereignty
- ✓ Discovered **8 insights** on barriers and motivators
- ✓ Collaborative research group identified **13 themes** for what motivates people to safely use and dispose of hazardous products.
- ✓ A list of **28 actions to promote and improve** the safe use and disposal of hazardous products
- ✓ Created **35 opportunities for improvement** of communications and agency strategies

Beauty
Water Health
Community
Human Health
Environmental Health
Social Justice
Gardening, Farming, Foraging
Tranquility
Safety
Culture



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Community-Based Participatory Research Best Practices

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Creating an Inclusive Project

	Considerations
Availability	Weekend community engagement session
Communication	Communicated via email, phone call, and text message
Compensation	Remunerated community partners for their time attending and preparing for meetings, taking and captioning photos, and reviewing and commenting on the report
Refreshments	Offered food tailored to dietary restrictions
Language Access	Provided interpretation in Spanish and Thai
Technology	Loaned digital cameras
Transportation	Coordinated with Sound Transit to provide free transportation passes to community partners and searched for location accessible via transit



Note: Generous contribution of engagement items was provided by the Business Services Program, Residential Services Program, and Research Services Team of the Haz Waste Program.

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Feedback Loop from Community Partners

Experience survey answered by 5 out of the 8 community partners who all **agreed** or **strongly agreed**:

- The project was **engaging**
- They felt **comfortable** sharing their thoughts
- Their opinions were **valued**
- **Enough time** was provided to complete activities
- The project fostered a **welcoming** environment
- Needs for **accommodations** were met
- The overall project experience was **satisfying**

"This was the first project with a government agency where I felt like the staff really cared about the participants and valued our time."

– Community Partner

"I would like for Haz Waste to have more projects like this one that are teamwork between Haz Waste staff, consultants, and the community, bringing together community members with people who have professional knowledge about the topic."

– Community Partner

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Next Steps

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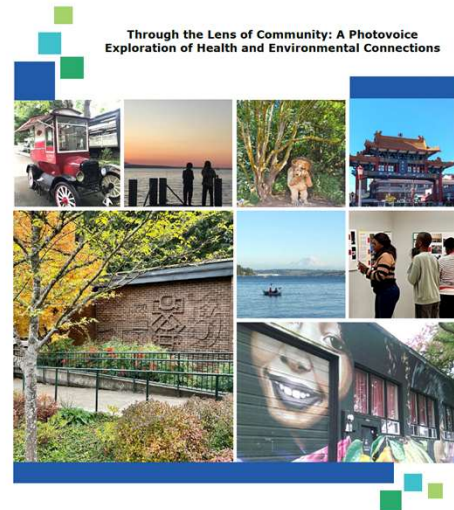
Presentation, Report, and Next Steps

Phase I - Complete!

- Photovoice project to gain insights from priority population
- Presentation with community partners
- Recording and report will be made available

Phase II

- Convene a task force to build on initial findings, co-create culturally relevant solutions, and develop a community engagement model.



Culture Shift
CONSULTING

Hazardous Waste
Management Program
GOVERNMENTS WORKING TOGETHER FOR
A HEALTHIER AND CLEANER KING COUNTY

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