

Project Narrative – anc1D 2008 Small Grants **anc1D** mount pleasant, dc

Title: In 15 words or less, give a title that describes the project's main beneficial result.

Is My Neighborhood Hazardous to My Health?

A proposal for a science project for the community

Narrative: 500 words or less, all on this page. Label paragraphs - A: Group. B: Project. C: Benefits. D: Leverage.

Is My Neighborhood Hazardous to My Health?

A proposal for a science project for the community

Abstract: To teach interested residents in the pollution standards where they live, and to see what the levels of pollution are currently in the Mt. Pleasant area.

The news today is full of reports about threats to our health from the hazards of urban life due to air, water and noise pollution in a general way, but most people don't have a quantitative idea of how these problems vary from neighborhood to neighborhood, from day to day and from indoors to outdoors, nor how the levels they live with compare to the levels permitted by law.

The project proposed here would involve community members - young and old - in educating themselves and each other about the dangers of various forms of pollution and the legal limits for these pollutants set by national standards and by DC laws. Then the participants would go into the field in teams to gather relevant data, measuring pollutant levels in their own neighborhood. They would attempt to make synoptic measurements, that is, measurements in different places at about the same time of day on several selected days through a given month. Then they would share the data and work in teams to prepare maps and charts showing how the pollutants vary from place to place and time to time. And compare how they meet the local and national standards. The pollutants could include particles or gases in the air or lead in the drinking water, or even the acidity of the rain. Noise pollution can also be measured.

Equipment for the project would be kept as simple as possible and borrowed where feasible from local universities or bought if necessary from funding provided by the grant. The findings could be published in school, community or city newspapers.

Advisors to the project, who would work with local school science teachers could include, but not be limited to Drs. David Schwartzman and John Tharakan of Howard University.

Submitted on behalf of DC Metro Science for the People

Peter M Caplan, 11/24/08