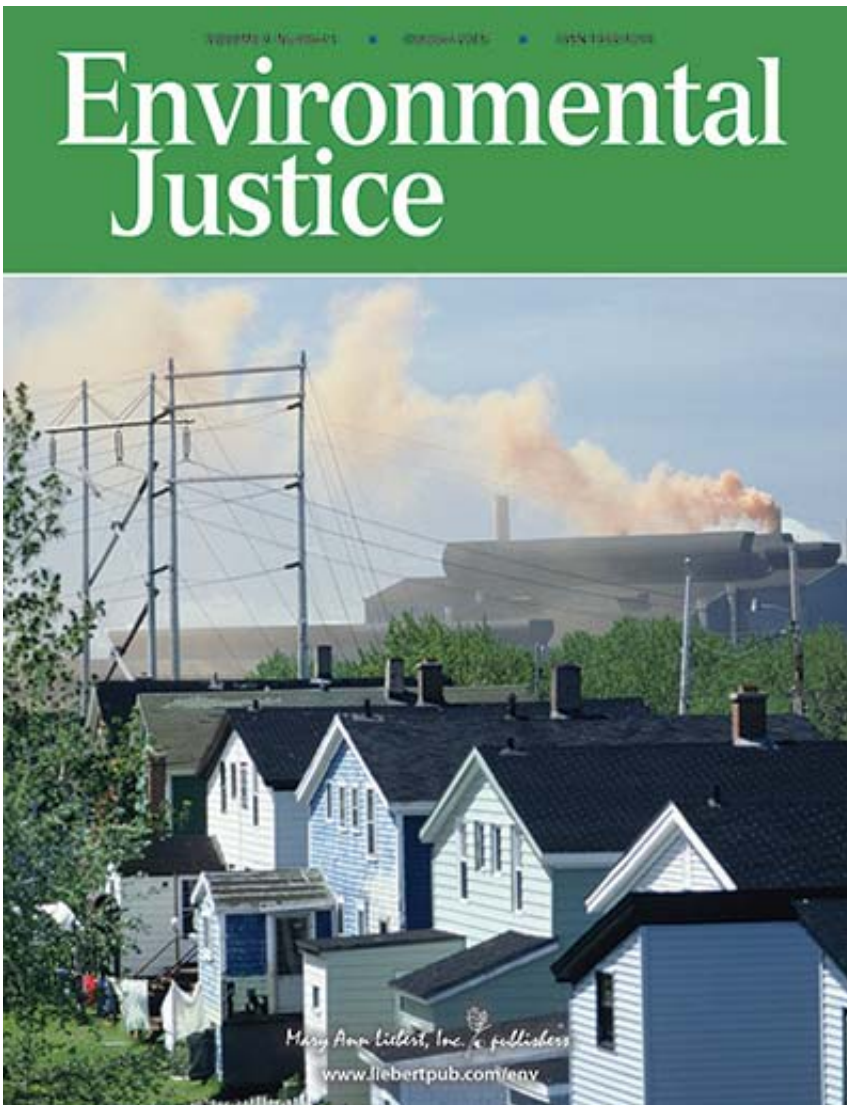


# What happens when people are treated like pollution?

October 25 2016

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In cities where homeless persons are viewed as an "environmental contaminant"—a form of pollution, efforts to purge the homeless from the area tend to push them to the fringes of the community and diminish their access to the urban environment and the resources it provides, according to an article published in *Environmental Justice*, a peer-reviewed journal published by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc. publishers. The article is available free on the *Environmental Justice* website until November 28, 2016.

In the article, "Treating People Like Pollution: Homelessness and Environmental Injustice," Eric Bonds, PhD and Leslie Martin, PhD, University of Mary Washington, Fredericksburg, VA, focus on the homeless population of Fredericksburg, Virginia, a small city and distant suburb of Washington, DC. The authors provide compelling information and arguments to demonstrate how both official and unofficial movements and exclusionary policies from within communities reduce the visible existence of homeless populations. This important, and too often under-recognized environmental injustice, marginalizes homeless persons, making them feel less safe and unable to access community resources that may provide shelter, meals, and other social services.

"This article is important in elucidating the human costs of environmental indifference to those who we perceive as "others" in our society," says *Environmental Justice* Editor-in-Chief Sylvia Hood Washington, PhD, MSE, MPH, and a LEED AP, and Sustainability Director, Environmental Health Research Associates, LLC. "The authors make a significant contribution to the field of environmental injustice by including the homeless in our understanding of who suffers from environmental disenfranchisement."

**More information:** Eric Bonds et al, Treating People Like Pollution: Homelessness and Environmental Injustice, *Environmental Justice* (2016). [DOI: 10.1089/env.2016.0021](https://doi.org/10.1089/env.2016.0021)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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