Weigh in on Easton's worst environmental issues

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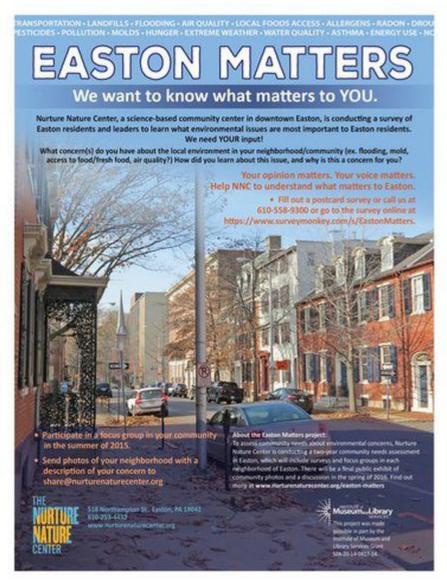
easton flooding

A row of homes on Bushkill Drive in Easton are seen flooded June 29, 2006.

(Matt Rourke | AP file photo)

Are you more worried about <u>Easton's flooding</u> or its litter? What about air pollution or access to the rivers?

The <u>Nurture Nature Center</u> wants Easton residents to weigh in with their environmental priorities so they can get them into the hands of city leaders.



The Nurture Nature Center is distributing these posters around Easton.

The nonprofit environmental advocacy center at 518 Northampton St. has offered environmental programming for the past three years, according to center director <u>Rachel</u><u>Hogan</u>.

About a week and a half ago the center rolled out its Easton Matters survey asking city residents to document the local environmental issues that concern them the most, with flooding, mold, access to food and air quality as some examples.

"We really want to get to the issues that people are dealing with on a day-to-day basis that concern them so the city can understand where to prioritize resources," Hogan said. The survey will also help the Nurture Nature Center provide programs that most interest residents.

The center has been putting up posters at Downtown businesses, according to Kate Semmens, who is spearheading the project. Each poster has a pocket with stamped postcards to fill out with survey results. Or, <u>you can complete the survey online</u>. The survey is available in English and Spanish.

"We really want this to be as broad and inclusive as possible," Hogan said.

In the late spring or early summer the center will meet with focus groups in each neighborhood to discuss the survey results. Then residents from each neighborhood will be selected to photograph examples of the environmental concerns most cited.

The project will culminate with a photo exhibit and community discussion.

Results will be forwarded to city officials and the city's environmental advisory council.

"We're looking forward to the survey results," said <u>Easton Mayor Sal Panto Jr.</u> "Obviously we're worried in this area about flooding. We're worried about pollutants in the air and climate change."

He said environmental issues are important to the city. The new city hall to open next year will be Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certified, which means it meets environmental and sustainability standards.

Residents can participate in the survey for the next year, even beyond the point when the focus groups begin to meet. The center had 3,000 postcards printed, according to Semmens.

ON THE WEB

Easton residents can participate in the Easton Matters environmental survey online.