An aerial photograph of an industrial recycling facility. The scene shows a large, open area with various pieces of machinery, including trucks and a yellow excavator. There are several large piles of scrap metal and other materials. In the background, there are several large industrial buildings with flat roofs. The ground is mostly dirt and gravel, with some puddles of water. A red text box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the title and authors of the document.

Documenting Hazards and the Injury Experiences of E-Waste and Scrap Metal Recycling Workers

OHIP 2018

Centro de Trabajadores Unidos

Mayra Lozano, BA, UC Berkeley

Ivy Torres, PhD Student, UC Irvine

Background - Southeast Chicago

- Black and Latinx working class community
- Superfund site
- Environmental Justice groups organizing for over 10 years
- At least 8 recycling facilities and 1 on the way - General Iron
- Focused on 3 Plants: South Shore, Regency, & Napuck



Chicago, Ill. Factory district in South Chicago.



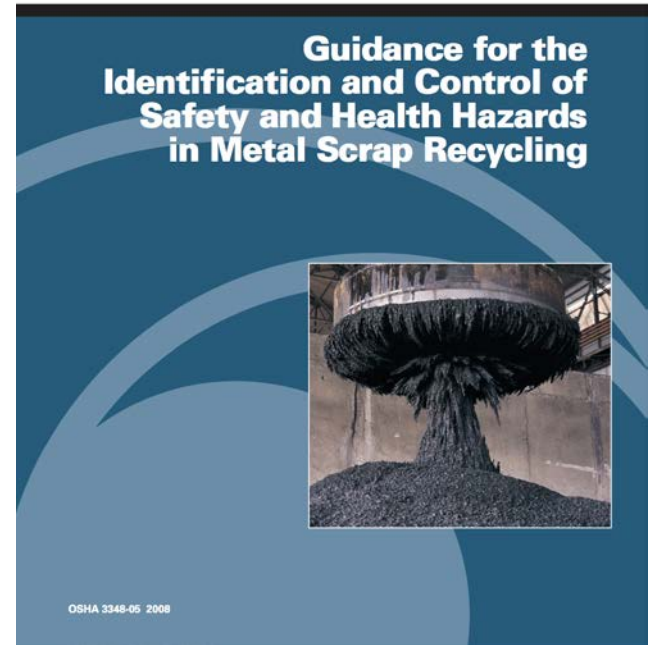
68. Illinois Scrap Processing, view from river, November 1990



69. 106th St. and Calumet River scrap yard, 7/29/2004

Background - Hazards

- OSHA developed 40 page guide
 - Toxic chemicals - lead, mercury, cadmium, beryllium
 - Repetitive motions
 - Noise
 - Cuts and lacerations
 - Heavy machinery - crushing, amputations



Centro De Trabajadores Unidos



- Small hybrid organization - community organization & worker center
- Health and Safety
- Labor Rights
- Immigration Services
- Community Education

Objectives

- Document hazards faced by scrap metal and electronic waste recycling workers in the southeast Chicago area and any experiences of employment discrimination and labor abuse
 - Generate recommendations concerning recycling worker health and safety education and action steps with regulatory bodies and local government officials
-

METHODS

- Interviews
- Observations
- Secondary data collection
- Worker lunch site visitations
- Social media

Do you work in the recycling industry?
GET PAID to participate in a Research Study

STUDENT LEAD RESEARCH PROJECT
COMPENSATION:

**\$10 Gift Card for Quick
30min Survey**

If you would like more info about participating contact us in English or in Spanish at: (312) 566-8960 or (312) 572-9916
All participation is confidential

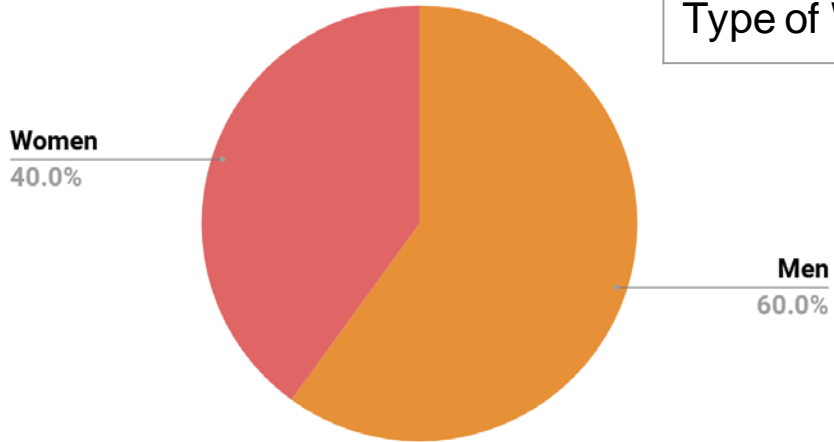
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CHICAGO, SCHOOL OF PUBLIC
HEALTH

project2@gmail.com

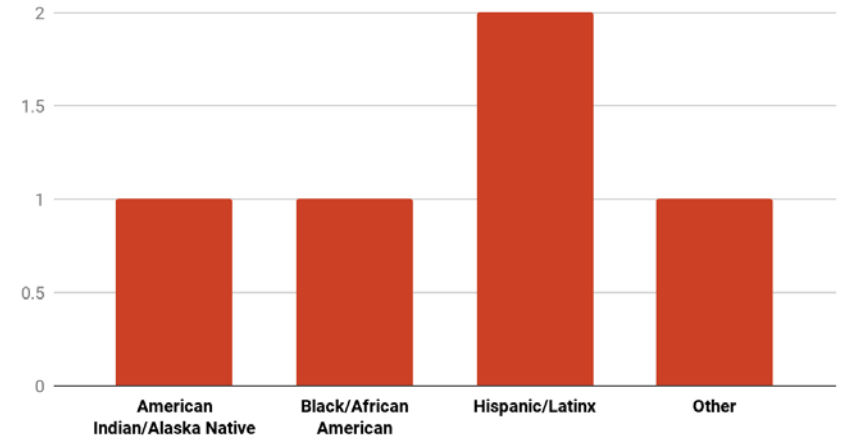
Results

Number of Interviews Completed	5
Average Length of Interviews	30 minutes
Average Age of Workers	38.6
Type of Work	Breaking & separating

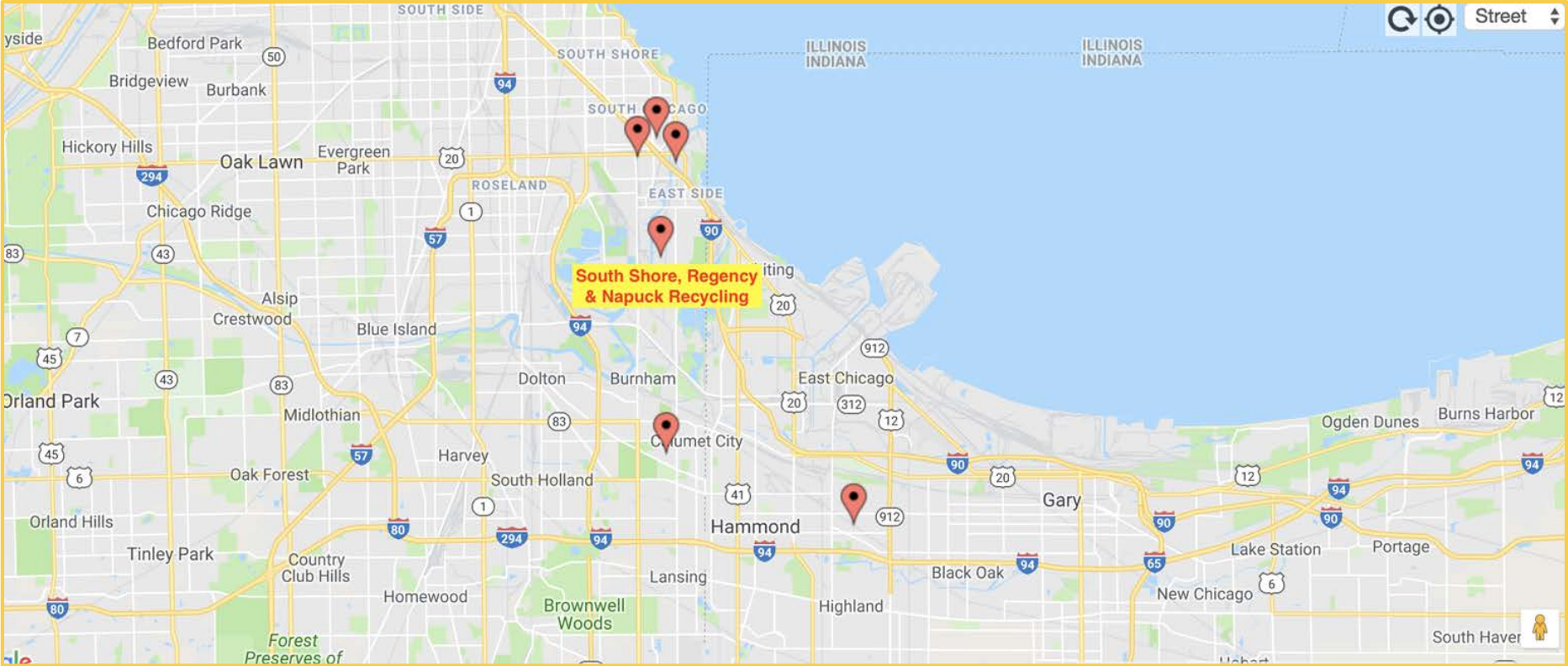
Gender



Race/Ethnicity



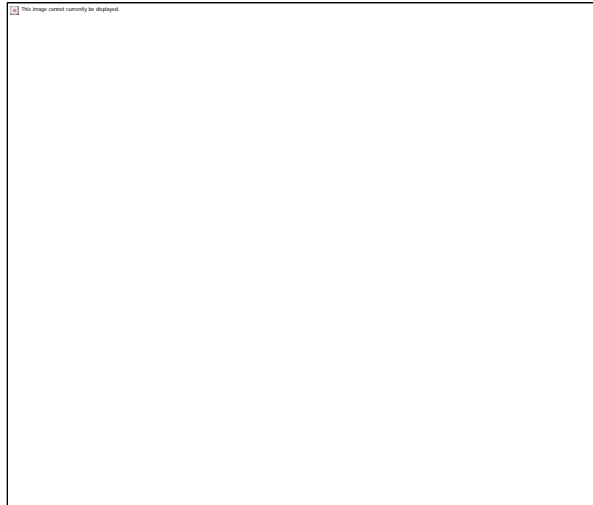
Results - Continued



Results - Continued

Themes

- Surveillance
- Temp Worker
Vulnerability
- Racialized Dynamics
- Individualism
- Hazards
- Extreme Weather



Results - Continued

2008 - 2018 Southeast Chicago recycling facilities

Total Amount of Penalties Paid	\$66,837
Total Number of OSHA Violations	31
Number of Workplace Fatalities	3

Challenges

- Hostile management
- Limited relationship with workers
- Limited time frame
- Physical barriers



Successes

- Obtained workers' stories
 - Timely - General Iron & Reserve Management Group merger
 - Meeting with 10th Ward Alderwoman Susan Sadlowski Garza
 - Care Package for workers to help with extreme weather
-

CULTURE

'We Don't Want Your Trash': Residents Protest General Iron's Move to Southeast Side



EPA in Illinois

CONTACT US SHARE    

Environmental Issues in Southeast Chicago

Through partnerships with advocacy groups, industry, other agencies and individual residents, EPA has empowered the environmentally overburdened community in Southeast Chicago to

ADVERTISEMENT

News

Manganese pollution in Southeast Side yards prompts new EPA probe



Recommendations



Photo source: www.chicagotonight.wttw.com

- Build relationships with workers
- Provide safety and chemical hazard trainings
- Take stand against General Iron
- Temp worker legislation
- Continue partnering with environmental justice organizations

Personal Reflections



Acknowledgements

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Marsha Love

Sarah Jacobs

**"You have to
act as if it
were
possible to
radically
transform
the world.**

**And you
have to do it
all the time."**

Angela Davis

