



1 National Life Drive, Davis 2, Montpelier, VT 05620-3901  
(802) 828-1294 | <https://anr.vermont.gov/>

# Environmental Benefits Spending Guidance

## Public Overview of the Environmental Benefits Spending Guidance

This overview introduces the Environmental Benefits Spending Guidance (EBSG) – a document created to help the Vermont State Agencies listed under Vermont’s Environmental Justice Law of 2022 to report on the investments that provide environmental benefits to Vermont communities, especially those most affected by environmental issues. It explains how agencies should document and share information on the investments that result in environmental benefits for Environmental Justice Focus Populations (EJFPs). EJFPs are communities that receive fewer environmental benefits. The EBSG does not tell each agency what investments they should make.

This overview aims to clarify what this guidance document is, why public input matters, and how it connects to broader accountability efforts across the state.

### Why reporting matters

Reporting allows state agencies to communicate clearly and consistently about where public funds go and whether those investments are benefiting the people and places most in need. This guidance supports agencies in taking the right steps to prepare that kind of transparent reporting. In plain terms: it helps agencies tell a clear story about who is benefiting from environmental investments.

### Why your feedback matters

The public has the right to understand, question, and shape government processes. Your feedback will help us improve how agencies report on their work—not just for compliance, but for community understanding, trust, and state and community-level changes.

### What does the guidance document include

- **Executive Summary** – a short overview of the EBSG’s goals and approach
- **Context** – a high-level overview of how Environmental Justice, environmental benefits and the EBSG are connected
- **Statutory Context** – a plain language explanation of the legal requirements

- **Definitions** – key terms used throughout the document
- **Reporting Process** – a recommended step-by-step outline of how agencies should prepare their reports
- **Next Steps** – a brief overview to future action steps agencies will need to accomplish after the Baseline Spending Reports
- **Appendix** – a helpful collection of contextual information to support agencies in reading this document

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