

Plymouth MVP Workshop: Social Vulnerability Poster Transcript

Social vulnerability refers to social, economic, demographic, or health factors that may make groups of people less resilient to climate change impacts. Certain vulnerabilities tend to be correlated; for example, older adults are more likely to have a disability and live alone than younger adults.

Our strategies for adapting to a changing climate should protect these populations in addition to our natural and built environment.

Who is most at risk from climate change impacts?

People who may be more susceptible to negative health effects: These can include older adults, young children, pregnant women, people with disabilities, and people with pre-existing health conditions, as they are more likely to be physically vulnerable to the health impacts of extreme heat and poor air quality caused by climate change. Individuals with physical mobility constraints, such as people with disabilities and seniors, may need additional assistance with emergency response.

People who may have more difficulty adapting to, preparing for, or recovering from extreme weather events: Socioeconomic characteristics such as income and race can influence vulnerability to climate change. Low-income people are often more susceptible to financial shocks, which can occur after extreme weather and which can impact financial security and the ability to secure safe shelter and meet medical needs. Social isolation can also influence vulnerability, as it limits access to critical information, municipal resources, and social support systems. People at the most risk for social isolation include those living alone and people with limited English language proficiency.

People who live or work in vulnerable locations: Historic or predicted floodplain, urban flooding locations, areas prone to wildfire, heat islands, neighborhoods prone to power outages. Outdoor workers, first responders, those working in hot indoor environments.

Population

2010 -58,000 people in Plymouth, projected at over 60,000 by 2030

Declining population of children and increasing population of seniors, 30% of total population in 2030

Income:

7.5% poverty level (household of 4 with an income of \$24,000)

7.1% rely on state services for food

Median income \$83,745-lower than Duxbury but similar to Kingston and other surrounding towns.

Average male income 3.4 times average female income.

Females over the age 65 largest demographic living in poverty

Households:

23% households of person living alone and 50% of those were over 65

14% of Plymouth households are unmarried with dependents.

Renters pay more than 35% of their annual income on rent (recommended 30% of income on housing)

Communities of color

Particular racial or ethnic groups may also be more likely to have certain social vulnerabilities than others. For example, Black and Latino populations have a much higher rate of asthma hospitalizations than other groups. Heat waves and poor air quality can trigger asthma.

7% people of color in Plymouth, with a growing population

7.9% speak a language other than English and 30% of those speak English less than very well.

Only 3% of households have no car and 79% have two or more cars.