**A critique of “the most detailed map of cancer-causing industrial air pollution in the US” by ProPublica.**

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URL:<https://projects.propublica.org/toxmap/>

This article features how much toxic air pollution industrial facilities emit could be elevating cancer risks in the community. This article has many folds for the reader to observe. It is interactive & data driven and it shows many analyses of different industrial plants around the United States.

Overall, I believe that is a very important and shocking article that I don’t believe many are aware of and I believe that the way in which the article was executed was done very successfully. However, I think there are some improvements.

The Article is broken down in the three main parts. First, the story, which introduces the topic to its readers. They explain in this story that the study took over five years and that they examined 1,000 hot spots across the country and found that an estimated 250,000 people living in them may be exposed to levels of excess cancer risk. With this information they mapped all the industrial sources.

The interactive piece comes in when you scroll down and click on the locations that ProPublica examine and read how much of a risk people living in those areas have to lifetime cancer. One part of the article that I thought was done very successfully was the ability to enter a zip code or city in the search bar and see the potential risks for toxic air pollution in your area. I think this feature was greatly executed because it gives the reader that “why you should care” factor because this could happen to them.

One thing that I wish was included in this piece was more information about the industrial plants in these locations. While there is information on where the plants are located, I think the article could speak more about what these plants are used for and the population of people who live in the area.

The next part that I believe the article does a great job of including, is how they established their methodology. Not only does the article discuss how long the study took, but it also breaks down the most toxic chemical that are causing cancer in these areas. I think it was important to include a disclaimer that says that the studies aim to give an overall view of the cancerous toxins in certain areas, but it does not identify a single cause for one person’s cancer. I can see many people reading this article to be upset if they have personal experiences with cancer.

I do believe the article becomes a little jargony after a while and I began to lose interest in the article itself. I believe that if ProPublica wants the public to pay attention to the affects these industrial plants are having on communities, they should write to all audiences, not just the scientific ones. What I did not see int the article that I would have liked was how low income and disadvantaged area fall into these locations and if poorer areas are more at risk for getting cancer.

The last part of the article was how air pollution causes cancer, and what the public needs to know about the risks. Though this part of the article had the least data, I thought that it was the most interesting and the easiest to understand for the reader. If I was writing this article, I would have moved it up more to the top so that it could be the first part the reader viewers before getting into the maps. It would have been easier to understand for the general public going into the article. In this part of the article, the writer breakdown certain terminology such as carcinogens and what it means for risking getting cancer. This part was extremely helpful and a great take away for the reader to know what to look out for in themselves and their community.

While I enjoyed this article and the credibility of this work based on the in-depth research, I thought that the article could had a better take away if it was more relatable to its audience up front. I got a little lost in the maps and without a clear distinction of how the risks impact communities, I lost interest. I did at some point find what I was looking for, but it took me a while. Overall, I believe the work is a job well done and I look forward to reading more of ProPublica’s work.