

Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation
Dorchester, MA
Fairmount Fellows Program
Budget: \$10,000



In a neighborhood with a high concentration of respiratory health problems, [Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation](#) (CSNDC) is using its Fairmount Fellows Program to engage Boston-area residents in environmental justice issues.

After surveying more than 200 households this summer, the fellows have discovered that 94 percent of those surveyed think air pollution is a significant issue in the community. The fellows, who all live in the target area, also found that more than half their neighbors regularly drive cars because the area is underserved by the city's transit system.

Based on their findings, the fellows have developed and distributed a factsheet that describes how reducing vehicular travel, electricity consumption and waste production can improve air quality. CSNDC Community Organizer Marcos Beleche says the fellows are “emphasizing the importance of having both a green home and a green neighborhood. They are showing residents that they can start as an individual in their own homes and then move on to improve their whole community.”

This year's program builds on a 2006 survey, which found the target area's three most common green practices to be using compact fluorescent light bulbs, conserving water and recycling. Beleche says “residents' green practices are in line with what they have to pay for- electricity and water. That made us think about how we can educate residents about green topics that may not impact their pocketbooks but will improve their health.”

Beleche says their studies have helped the fellows think of issues around which to organize their community. Because of upcoming elections, the fellows' next step will be to work with other neighborhood groups to develop a clear agenda of community concerns to communicate to public officials.