

**ALTERNATIVE MODELS OF HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT IN AN URBAN
INDUSTRIAL NEIGHBOURHOOD**

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a multi-stakeholder health risk assessment exercise undertaken in an urban industrial neighbourhood in central Canada. A quantitative risk assessment conducted by scientific experts concluded that certain locally occurring components of air pollution of concern to the community were unlikely to result in adverse health effects. Rather than accept the experts' opinions, however, the community used their powers of perception to advantage by successfully advocating for a community health survey. This paper describes the institutional and community contexts which frame the risk assessment exercise, as well as the design, administration, analysis and results of about air quality as well as to broaden locally accepted definitions of *health*. In addition, the results of both components of the health risk assessment exercises served to keep *air quality* on the local political agenda. The paper concludes with some reflections on the implications of these findings for our understanding of the environmental justice *process* and the capacity of individuals and communities to influence environmental health policy.