

Muskego Way Neighborhood Data Chat

Event Description

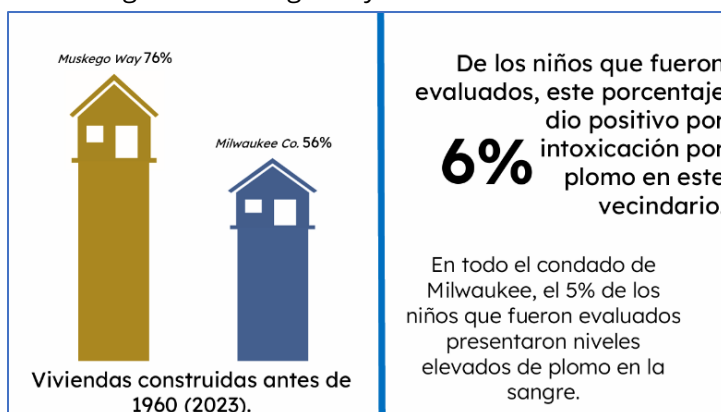
On June 23rd, 2026, 16 Muskego Way residents attended a bilingual data chat hosted by Clean Wisconsin and the Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) in partnership with Muskego Way Forward at the Milwaukee Community Crossroads. This data chat was developed with support from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services Taking Action with Data grant. The purpose of this chat was to give residents of the Muskego Way neighborhood the opportunity to voice their concerns, opinions, advice, and stories about the environmental health risks in their neighborhood, while also reviewing the environmental health risk data from Clean Wisconsin & MHD.

Data chats are conversations with the purpose of understanding local community member's opinions, perspectives, and interpretations of data. This locally tested model was developed in Milwaukee, Wisconsin by Data You Can Use and centers the knowledge and lived experience of people who live in a neighborhood, adding context to quantitative data.ⁱ

Topics Covered

Throughout the data chat, Clean Wisconsin, MHD, and 16 residents of the neighborhood explored data about the environmental conditions of Muskego Way with the assistance of two translators. This included neighborhood-level data points on the built environment, pollution, and health outcomes. The chat also dedicated time for reflection and discussion about any environmental issues that are not reflected in the data, which current programs are improving the environmental health of their neighborhood, and what programs residents wish existed to improve the environmental health of Muskego Way. Due to recent flooding events in Milwaukee (August 2025 & April 2026), the chat also included conversation on Clean Wisconsin's Green Infrastructure Program and its efforts towards climate change and flood mitigation efforts. At the conclusion of the chat, short-term radon test kits were distributed to all participants, and an air quality monitor was provided to the host organization, Muskego Way Forward.

The Muskego Way neighborhood was prioritized given the need to expand outreach to the South Side of Milwaukee, and the developing relationship that both Clean Wisconsin and MHD are fostering with Muskego Way Forward. There is a current gap in environmental health data and



information due to the closure of the 16th Street Community Center's environmental health program.

Figure 1. Slide presented to residents about the number of children who tested positive for lead poisoning & the percentage of housing stock built before 1960 in the Muskego Way neighborhood. *Data source: American Community Survey 2023; DHS 2020-2023*

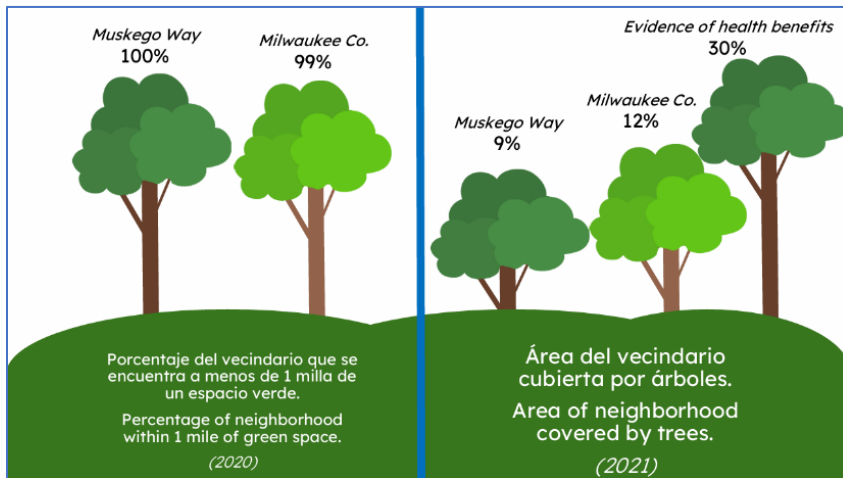


Figure 2. Slide presented to residents about Tree Canopy Cover and Green Space Access in the Muskego Way neighborhood. This graphic sparked resident conversation on how it feels hotter by streets without trees, and that flood events caused trees to be knocked down.

Data sources: Data Sources: Environmental Justice Index 2021 (Green space); USGS 2021 (canopy cover).

Themes

Some themes that emerged include:

1. **Flood Risk & Infrastructure:** Residents reflected on the impacts of the August 2025 floods, including how these storms destroyed trees, how native plants reduce flooding, and why clogged drains were caused by trash.
2. **Lead Exposure and Housing Safety:** Many residents raised concerns about lead in pipes and paint, including the limited options available to renters when it comes to pipe replacement, how the Prioritization Plan boundaries are chosen, and other safety measures residents can take (like filtering water).
3. **Green Space & Tree Canopy Opportunities:** Residents highlighted that there are fewer trees and hotter temperatures along busy streets with more businesses compared to neighborhood streets, concern over declining tree cover from storms and flooding, and expressed interest in more tree and native plantings near businesses and throughout the neighborhood.
4. **Litter & Neighborhood Conditions:** Ongoing challenges with trash, litter, needles, and street maintenance were frequently mentioned.
5. **Construction impacts on air quality:** Recent construction projects were mentioned multiple times, including concern on increasing traffic in the neighborhood (both vehicle safety and air quality), and how green infrastructure is being implemented into new construction in Muskego Way.
6. **Actionable & tangible opportunities:** Residents expressed interest in increasing educational opportunities on how to plug into systems and policy change occurring in the city, and for more tangible, actionable opportunities such as green infrastructure installations in Muskego Way.

Evaluation Results

Participants ranked their agreement with each of the following statements before and after the data chat on a 1-4 scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly agree). 18 participants completed the evaluation.

	I know where to find data and information on the environmental conditions in my neighborhood.	I know how the environmental conditions in my neighborhood impact my health.	I know how air quality in my neighborhood can impact my health.	I can identify areas of environmental concern in my neighborhood.	I can identify projects, policies, or initiatives that can improve the environmental health of my neighborhood.
Average score before data chat	1.82	2.41	2.35	1.88	2.12
Average score after data chat	3.67	3.75	3.75	3.5	3.31
Percent of participants reporting increase in knowledge	88%	69%	75%	69%	69%

Resources and Next Steps

Following up on the 6/23 data chat, Clean Wisconsin and MHD will be:

- Following up with residents who received a radon test kit about conducting and returning the test
- Continuing to look for collaboration opportunities with Muskego Way Forward on environmental health, radon, and air quality issues in Milwaukee.

Clean Wisconsin is continuing to host data chats citywide next year to reach their goal of creating data profiles for all Milwaukee neighborhoods and to show previous attendees how their feedback was integrated into the updated neighborhood profiles. Clean Wisconsin and MHD will explore ways to continue their partnership and collaboration efforts, with an emphasis on the environmental health priorities residents have mentioned over the past year. They will also continue to work collectively to engage with local neighborhood organizations and residents to incorporate their lived experiences with pollution and environmental health risks into data.

¹ Cohen, M., Rohan, A., Pritchard, K., & Pettit, K. (2022). Guide to data chats: convening community conversations about data. Urban Institute. [Guide to Data Chats: Convening Community Conversations about Data](#)