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1962

Rachel Carson released ***Silent Spring***, which detailed the effects of pollution and pesticides on both environmental and human health. This book, and a number of large-scale environmental emergencies in the 1960s, caused environmental awareness to spike.

April 22, 1970

Growing concern over damage being done to the Earth led U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson to propose **the first Earth Day**. People from throughout the nation joined together to listen to speeches, watch performances, and show their support for protecting the Earth.

Early 70's

The decade leading up to it, and Earth Day 1970 itself, led to a permanent change in environmental awareness and action. After Earth Day, **the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** was established to enhance environmental protection at the national level. Important environmental laws were enacted, including the **Clean Air Act, Endangered Species Act, and the Toxic Substances Control Act.**



1982

In Warren County, North Carolina, over **500 protesters were arrested** for challenging the siting of a hazardous waste disposal site in an extremely poor, predominantly Black community. While these protests ultimately did not prevent the dumping of hazardous waste, the event marks the beginning of a coordinated national movement for environmental justice, which works to ensure that marginalized communities do not bear a disproportionate burden of environmental hazards.

1991

Representatives across the country gathered at the first National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit and created the **Principles of Environmental Justice**, pushing the issue to the forefront of the national agenda.

1994

President Clinton signed an executive order directing the federal government to **include environmental justice as part of their decision making process.**

2016

Countries throughout the world joined the **Paris Climate Accords**, committing to cut greenhouse gas emissions in order to limit global temperature rise to two degrees Celsius.

2019

Global climate strikes took place all over the world, led mainly by students, demanding climate justice and inspiring collective action.