

## Tracking Health In Your Community

*First-of-its-kind Environmental Tracking Network  
designed to protect nation's health*



Jupiter Images

If you wonder how environmental contaminants in your community affect your health, you can now find information online by using the Environmental Public Health Tracking Network.

Developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Tracking Network is a dynamic Web site that, for the first time, provides health and environmental data in one easy to find location.

The Tracking Network allows scientists, health professionals, and members of the public to track environmental exposures and some non-infectious health conditions. For example, the Tracking Network lets people know the health risks possible from contaminants such as air pollution and the relationship to asthma, and lead in drinking water and how it is related to premature birth.

For decades, the United States has faced a fundamental gap in knowing how environmental contaminants affect people's health. The Tracking Network was created to close this gap by improving the nation's environmental public health surveillance.

"The Tracking Network is the foundation we need to protect our health from environmental hazards, make faster research progress and help prevent chronic illnesses, such as asthma, heart disease, lead poisoning and cancer," said Michael McGeehin, PhD, director of CDC's Division of Environmental Hazard and Health Effects at the National Center for Environmental Health.

The Tracking Network can be used in many ways:

- By visiting the Tracking Network's asthma page, parents and community activists can learn about how common asthma is where they live, how it is tracked, and the role the environment plays. According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, 20 million persons in the United States suffer from asthma.
- Families can access the Web site and review data and information about community water systems. Specifically, they can look at the

levels of three contaminants in drinking water: nitrate, arsenic, and disinfection by-products. About 90 percent of people in the United States get their water from a community water system.

Until recently, data on health and the environment existed only in separate databases, making it difficult for health professionals to study and analyze the data. The Tracking Network is a launching pad for further research because for the first time it connects a body of environmental and health information from multiple states and national sources. Now with information they need available at their fingertips, scientists and the public can better understand connections between environmental exposures and chronic health conditions.

CDC funds health departments in 16 states and one city to contribute data to the Tracking Network. In addition, four federal agencies provide data and expertise for Network development:

- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Cancer Institute
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Geological Survey

### Key Features

- Standardized environment and health data across contributing states
- Information by location
- Easy to read maps, charts & tables

### Health conditions to the Tracking Network

- Asthma
- Birth defects (coming soon)
- Cancer
- Carbon monoxide poisoning
- Childhood lead poisoning
- Heart attacks
- Reproductive and birth outcomes (coming soon)

### Environmental data on the Tracking Network

- Air quality related to ozone & particulate matter
- Community water
- Well water

Visit CDC's Tracking Network at [www.cdc.gov/ephtracking](http://www.cdc.gov/ephtracking). For more information on other environmental public health issues, visit [www.cdc.gov/nceh](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh).