CDC's National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network

Keeping Track, Promoting Health

Key Features

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

Health conditions on the Tracking Network:

- Asthma
- Birth defects
- Cancer
- Carbon monoxide poisoning
- Childhood lead poisoning
- Heart attacks
- Population characteristics
- Reproductive and birth outcomes

Environmental data on the Tracking Network:

- Air quality related to ozone and particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$)
- Community design
- Community water
- Well water

Closing the Gap

For decades, the United States has faced a gap in knowing how environmental contaminants affect people's health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is working to close this gap by improving surveillance through the Environmental Public Health Tracking Network (Tracking Network).

The Tracking Network is a dynamic Web-based tool that, for the first time, provides health and environmental data in one easy to find location.

- Health professionals and researchers will have access to more and better scientific data allowing them to learn more about health conditions related to the environment.
- Parents can learn about conditions such as asthma or the presence of contaminants in the air where they live and take action to protect their children.
- Elected officials can make more informed health policy decisions. For example, they can see their community's air quality trends to determine if actions taken to reduce pollution levels are working.

Using New and Existing Data

To lay the foundation for the national Tracking Network, CDC is funding health departments in 23 states and New York City to build local tracking networks.

Each health department is building a local network to:

- Monitor environmental public health issues important in their communities.
- Share local data with CDC for the national Tracking Network to monitor and identify national environmental public health trends.

The Future of Tracking

The Tracking Network will continue to grow as CDC increases the types of data available and adds new functionality. Plans also include supporting more states, cities, and counties to contribute data, so more people from around the country can see vital public health and environment information about their communities.

Visit CDC's Tracking Network: www.cdc.gov/ephtracking

National Center for Environmental Health
Division of Environmental Hazards and Health Effects

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Tracking In Action

Since 2005, environmental public health tracking has led to 91 public health actions to prevent or control potential health effects from environmental exposures.

The stories below are just a few examples of the kinds of actions that are happening in all of our Tracking partners' communities:

New York City limits bug bomb use and pesticide exposure

In 2008, the New York City (NYC) Tracking Program took action to better understand and characterize short-term health effects and injuries associated with the use of total release foggers, more commonly known as bug bombs. After reviewing available national and local data, the Tracking Program and its partners published findings on reported bug bomb incidents. Findings included data for a range of injuries and illness, from severe irritation of the eyes and throat, to nausea and shortness of breath. Also, bug bombs were more likely to be used in low-income neighborhoods. This information led the health department to pursue the restriction of bug bomb use by the public, making the devices only available for purchase and use by licensed pest control professionals. NYC has also encouraged the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to restrict use of total release foggers nationwide.

Maine tracks and prevents CO poisoning

Carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning has been an ongoing public health concern in Maine since a major outbreak of poison-ings happened after a 1998 ice storm. The Maine Tracking Program can now track data on the number of carbon monoxide poisonings each year, and the percent of Maine homes with a carbon monoxide alarm. These data have been used to influence state policy and as a result carbon monoxide poisoning is now a reportable condition in Maine. There is also a new law requiring carbon monoxide alarms in rental property, new homes, and existing homes when there is a transfer of ownership.

Utah addresses citizen's cancer cluster concern in hours

The Utah Department of Health received a call from a citizen concerned about cases of cancer in his neighborhood. In the past, a similar call would have prompted a study that would have taken up to a year to complete, with most of that time spent waiting for data. In less than a day, the Utah Tracking Program was able to let this resident know that the likelihood of cancer in his area was no greater than in the state as a whole. This is a substantial improvement in the time and cost required for cancer investigations in the past and in the services Utah's Tracking Program is able to provide to their citizens.

Wisconsin eliminates TCE emissions and exposure

A question arose regarding the level of trichloroethylene (TCE) emissions from a Wisconsin industrial facility. The Wisconsin Tracking Program produced data on exposure from that industrial facility. This prompted the facility's owner to voluntarily agree to changes to eliminate TCE emissions altogether. While the facility was in compliance with all applicable emission permit requirements, the Wisconsin Tracking Program's data was compelling enough to encourage the owner to make improvements which reduced community TCE exposure. Wisconsin's project now serves as a model for how air pollutant data can identify high-risk communities, and can translate into reduced exposure to air toxics.

TRACKING NETWORK STATE AND CITY PARTNERS:

California	Iowa	Maryland	New Hampshire	New York City, NY	Utah
Colorado	Kansas	Massachusetts	New Jersey	Oregon	Vermont
Connecticut	Louisiana	Minnesota	New Mexico	Pennsylvania	Washington
Florida	Maine	Missouri	New York	South Carolina	Wisconsin