

Environmental Health Services Branch: Enhancing and Revitalizing Environmental Public Health

The overarching goal of the Environmental Health Services Branch (EHSB) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is to enhance and revitalize environmental public health to address a range of environmental health issues. The branch strengthens the roles of local, state, tribal, and national environmental health programs and professionals to better anticipate, identify, and respond to adverse environmental exposures and their consequences for human health.

EHSB staff members work with environmental public health stakeholders in six areas identified in this fact sheet and in CDC's National Strategy to Revitalize Environmental Public Health Services. For more information on the strategy, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/Strategy.htm>.

Building Capacity

EHSB funds cooperative agreements to help local, state, and tribal health departments develop effective state-of-the-art environmental public health programs. Grantees implement interventions addressing issues related to inadequate environmental health services (i.e., services involving water quality, air quality, waste management, or vector control) that can potentially contribute to health disparities in the communities they serve. Get information about grantees and their products at <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/CapacityBuilding>.

EHSB's new Global Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Team works on

- evaluating the sustainability of water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions;
- improving access to safe drinking water through the implementation of Water Safety Plans; and
- researching the public health impacts of sanitation program

Supporting Research

The Environmental Health Services Network (EHS-Net) exemplifies EHSB's support for research. EHS-Net is a collaborative forum of environmental health specialists whose mission is to improve environmental health. The network allows environmental health specialists to collaborate with epidemiologists and laboratorians to identify and prevent environmental factors contributing to foodborne illnesses, waterborne illnesses, and disease outbreaks. For more information about EHS-Net studies, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/EHSNet>.



Fostering Leadership

The Environmental Public Health Leadership Institute is a year-long program of seminars, workshops, special projects, and individual studies. The institute strengthens the country's environmental public health system by improving the leadership capabilities of local, state, and tribal environmental public health specialists. Download graduates' final projects at <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/EPHLI>.



Communicating and Marketing

The EHSB Web site is a major channel for new tools and information. EHSB is stepping up efforts to post program information to the Web site, which now includes 10 major content areas. Visit the site at <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs>.

Authors from EHSB publish a monthly column in the Journal of Environmental Health. Read the columns at http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/Publications/JEH_EHSB_Columns.htm.

Developing the Workforce

The Emergency and Terrorism Preparedness for Environmental Health Practitioners Web site is a clearinghouse of information resources related to emergency and terrorism preparedness for environmental health practitioners. Access the site at <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/ETP>.

Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response (EHTER)—Awareness Level is a 10-module comprehensive pilot training that focuses on key environmental health issues and challenges for emergency response. For more information about EHTER, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/Resources/EHTER.htm>.

Environmental Public Health Performance Standards, now in development, can be used to assess local, state, and tribal capability to perform the 10 essential services of environmental public health at all levels. Find out more about the standards at <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/EnvPHPS>.

EHSB is working with the Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs (AEHAP) to address the shortage of environmental health professionals and the importance of accredited programs. Read more about AEHAP at <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/Topics/workforce.htm> or http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/Docs/JEH/2006/June_2006_Herring.pdf.

Creating Strategic Partnerships

EHSB is collaborating with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, in partnership with state and local governments to use a community-centered approach to build healthy communities. Find information about the collaboration at <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/CEHA/collaboration.htm>.

For more information

on EHSB, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs>, call the branch office at 770-488-7476, or send an e-mail to ehsb@cdc.gov.