Linking Health and Environmental Data in a Public Health Surveillance System

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NASA/MSFC formerly CDC USRA



- What type of information do decision makers need and what are the pressing science questions?
- Are we communicating information to decision makers effectively or are we falling short on delivering the information they need?
- What are the barriers to using climate information in decision making and how can they be overcome?
- How can CCSP best maintain a dialogue with decision makers to evolve the program?



Public health surveillance is the ongoing, systematic collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of data regarding a health-related event for use in public health action to reduce morbidity and mortality and to improve health. Data disseminated by a public health surveillance system can be used for immediate public health action, program planning and evaluation, and formulating research hypotheses.

Public health surveillance activities are generally authorized by legislators and carried out by public health officials.

"Updated Guidelines for Evaluating Public Health Surveillance Systems, Recommendations from the Guidelines Working Group"; Robert R. German, Chairman; Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report; July 27, 2001 / 50(RR13);1-35



Public health surveillance systems can be used to

- guide immediate action for cases of public health;
- measure the burden of a disease, related factors, and risk populations;
- monitor trends, including the detection of epidemics (outbreaks) and pandemics;
- guide planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs to prevent and control disease, injury, or exposure;
- detect changes in health practices and the effects of these changes;
- prioritize the allocation of health resources;
- describe the clinical course of disease;
- provide a basis for epidemiologic research.

Modified from "Updated Guidelines for Evaluating Public Health Surveillance Systems, Recommendations from the Guidelines Working Group"; Robert R. German, Chairman; Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report; July 27, 2001 / 50(RR13);1-35



Health and Environment Linked for Information Exchange, Atlanta

(HELIX - Atlanta)

Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) in 2003



Data from scattered EPA monitoring sites were used to make daily surfaces of PM2.5



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concentrations. High PM2.5 concentrations are associated with respiratory and cardiovascular problems.

NASA/MSFC and the CDC are partners in linking environmental and health data to enhance public health surveillance.

The use of NASA technology creates value – added geospatial products from existing environmental data sources to facilitate public health linkages. In the future, MODIS data will be combined with the EPA data.

Additional environmental and technology data products, such as ozone and surface temperature, are being developed to provide information to the national Environmental Public Health Tracking Network (EPHTN).

High : 50 μg/m³

EPA sites

Low : 0 μg/m³



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October 9, 2003 EPA AQS PM2.5 Sites





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Monthly correlation coefficients between

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MODIS AOD and AQS-measured PM2.5

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By being in the mine with them!



1400 Feet Under the Missouri Ozarks Mining Lead

> Dressed at the mine mouth in Coahuila Strontium Mine





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