



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network

Climate Change, Extreme Heat, and Health

A Tool Kit



This toolkit provides messages related to the National Tracking Network. We strongly encourage you to use tool kit components as guides, substituting your own local and regional level messaging and data whenever possible

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Goals and Guiding Principles



In today's world, we are exposed to between 3,500 and 5,000 messages a day. From TV ads to news stories, and tweets to Web sites, there's a fierce competition for our attention—and our response. As public health professionals, you have a uniquely valuable message to communicate, that often pertains to keeping people healthy and saving lives.

Whether communicating with citizens, other public health professionals, or policymakers, the following steps can help your organization cut through the clutter and be heard:

1.

Know your audience

Different audiences require different messages and methods of delivery. Identify your audience, understand what's important to them, and identify what barriers may keep them from action. Then say what you need to say in a way that connects your ideas to that specific audience's needs or wants.



2.

Say it simply

Use plain language, explain technical terms, and be brief. Regardless of profession or background, we all appreciate straightforward, efficient explanations.



3.

Say it often

Advertising studies suggest that a person needs to be exposed to a message three to five times to receive the full effect of the message. Choose the mediums, such as social media, websites, interviews and articles, that your audience uses to communicate, and reinforce your messages often.



4.

Touch the heart

Tell stories that people connect with on an emotional level and underscore that story with data that show the larger perspective. Use personal or local stories to illustrate the big picture.



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Goals and Guiding Principles



This tool kit was developed as a resource for your organization, with messages that are intended to resonate with either certain demographics or your audiences overall.

This toolkit can be used to help meet the communication goals set by CDC's Environmental Public Health Tracking Network (Tracking Network).

Tracking Network Communication Goals

- Educate about the existence of the Tracking Network and how it can be used to show the connections between health and the environment.
- Demonstrate the effect that Tracking Network findings can have on specific environmental public health issues (for example, heart health and exposure to air pollution).
- Encourage partners, stakeholders, and other organizations to access information from and participate in the Tracking Network and help them recognize it as a valuable tool and good investment.

Audiences

This tool kit was developed as a resource for your organization, with messages that are intended to resonate with either certain demographics or your audiences overall. These audiences include:

- **State and local public and environmental health practitioners:** This group will benefit from general awareness of the Tracking Network and exposure to success stories and specific examples of how data are being used. Encourage them to not only use existing and new Tracking Network services but also advocate use of the program among peer groups.
- **Decision makers:** This group could include city, county, or state health department leadership or elected officials. These are people who might need information for making resource decisions and potential legislative or policy-making opportunities. They are a critical audience for the Tracking Program. Try to provide them with an overall understanding of the functions of the Tracking Network and examples of practical applications of its data. These examples can show how the Tracking Network has proven valuable to cities, states and regions.
- **Interested public:** This group will likely include persons who look to your organization for health or environment-specific information and discover the Tracking Network via that search. They will benefit most from exposure to specific articles and health-specific information that show the connection between a particular health condition and the environment. Because traditional media channels such as television, radio, and newspapers are important information resources for this group, they will benefit from your organization's active engagement with, and response to, media coverage that relates to health and the environment.

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Goals and Guiding Principles



How to Use Tool Kit Components

Decade of Tracking This piece is a straightforward story of the Tracking Network. It uses the simple structure of “Before and After Tracking” to explain the effect the Tracking Network has had.

Ideas for use: Use this item as an introductory piece that tells the story of tracking. Include it as a link, borrow from it when developing presentations, and use it when informing colleagues about available resources, interviews, and materials.

Timeline: This piece serves as a visual demonstration of how the Tracking Network (and its parent, the Tracking Program) began and has evolved.

Ideas for use: Use when creating briefings, as background for presentations, and as a resource for interviews and material development.

Key Messages and Talking Points: The key messages and talking points have been written to support you and your spokespersons as you address the critical role the Tracking Network has played in addressing environmental and public health issues. These messages may be used as is or can be customized and incorporated into your own messaging. We encourage you to use local-, regional-, or state-specific data whenever possible; using these data will further underscore the importance of this resource for your constituents.

Ideas for use include: Incorporate these messages into talking points for presentations, speeches, media interviews and copy for materials.

The Facts: This fact sheet was developed to provide you with health- and environment-specific information that can be used to coincide with awareness events and more. For example, the Heart Health and the Air Pollution fact sheet contains information that relates specifically to American Heart Month as well as general statistics about heart health and air pollution.

Ideas for use: Incorporate these facts into your outreach via speeches, emails, Web site content, material development, and social media channels. Provide the fact sheet as a resource to news media. Include interesting data as part of your organization e-mail signature during awareness events. Also, provide the fact sheet to your partners as a resource to distribute.

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Goals and Guiding Principles



Matte Article: This article has been developed as a stand-alone piece that highlights the connection between a health topic and the environment. Its messaging reach is designed to be broad and valuable for everyone from general consumers looking for information about a particular disease to health professionals who want to raise awareness among patients.

Ideas for use: *Submit this piece to community papers, provide it to organizations to publish in their newsletters, post it on your Web site, include a link to it on your Facebook wall, and share it via tweets. Distribute or make it available electronically to local schools, medical centers, nursing homes, and health care professionals. Provide this piece to decision makers and use local data when possible – it will inform them about the environment-health connection and how that can affect their constituents; they can also use it on their Web sites. You can also include it in newsletters and incorporate into your organization’s mailings.*

Social Media Examples: This document contains example topics and sample copy for use on social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter. These posts/tweets were written with the goal of helping your organization engage in a dialogue with your many and varied audiences. Specific examples are provided that can be used to help communicate the value of the Tracking Network to health departments, health practitioners, decision makers and other interested organizations and individual persons.

Ideas for use: *Use posts on Facebook and tweets on Twitter. Share with partners who have social media outlets.*

Effective Communication: A Crucial Investment

As grantees and partners of the National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network, your organization is an important voice that helps communicate the value of the Tracking Network, and ensures that it can grow and evolve to provide even better service into the future. By incorporating this message at every opportunity into your documents, policy briefings, community outreach, social networks, and media outreach, you serve as an influential resource that can provide critical information and translate the value of the Tracking Network to your different audiences. Together, we can educate people about the connection between health and the environment, encourage Tracking Network use, and help potential partners and champions recognize this tool as a crucial investment that saves lives, protects people and saves money through prevention. ■



Environmental Public Health Before and After Tracking:

A Decade of Tracking



After a decade of tracking via a national environmental public health tracking program, our understanding of the connections between public health and the environment is vastly improved. CDC's Environmental Public Health Tracking Program began 10 years ago with the idea that health and environmental problems are not always separate issues with unrelated solutions.

Though the program began in 2002, the actual online Environmental Public Health Tracking Network launched in 2009. This website is a valuable tool that is helping draw a clear picture of the intricate relationships between environment and health. And, as we move forward, the Tracking Network has the potential to empower more and more organizations to save lives and protect health.

"When the Pew Commission report came out, everyone — the press, the public, Congress — couldn't believe that a tracking program didn't already exist."

Shelly Hearne, Dr. P.H.
Founding Executive Director,
Trust for America's Health (2000)

"CDC's National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network is the most important accomplishment of the past decade."

Thomas A. Burke, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Associate Dean for Public Health
Practice and Training
Professor, Department of Health
Policy and Management
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg
School of Public Health (2010)

Before tracking, even simple questions about health and the environment could take months to answer.

With a tracking network in place, public health officials can respond quickly, often within hours, to locate hazard sources or answer citizens' concerns.

Before tracking, collections of data were created and held by many different government departments within their separate department "silos."

With tracking, standards and tools to link these disparate sources of information now exist and can help answer important questions about the public's health.

Before tracking, environmental and health fields were often separated both physically and philosophically.

With tracking, these two worlds are brought together to benefit of all.

Before tracking, public health and environmental officials concentrated mainly on acute events such as hazardous chemical releases or point-source pollution, such as air pollution from a specific factory.

With tracking in place, officials can trace amounts and geographic spread of pollutants over time. This capability allows the officials to monitor long-term trends and place those acute events in context.

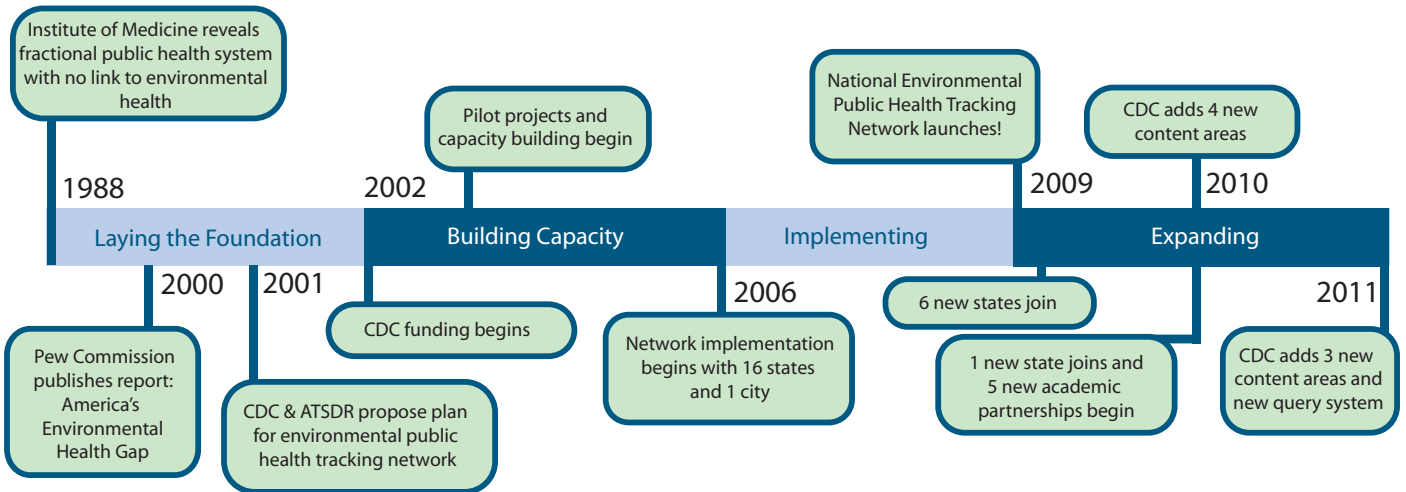
Before tracking, environmental health surveillance was more difficult than infectious disease surveillance, a traditional area of concern for CDC and state and local health departments.

With tracking, we can apply the same "disease detective" skills to finding environmental causes of illnesses and then take preventive measures to protect the public's health. ■



Environmental Public Health Tracking Network:

A Timeline





Key Messages and Talking Points



The following key messages and talking points can help you and your spokespeople convey and emphasize the effect the Tracking Network can have.

How to Use

The following key messages and talking points can help you and your spokespeople convey and emphasize the impact that the Tracking Network can have on addressing the connections between climate change, extreme heat, and health. These messages and points may be used as they have been written, or they can be customized for your own purposes. We encourage you to use local, regional-, or state-specific information whenever possible because it will further underscore the importance of this resource for your constituents. Each of the three key messages presented are supported by three to four additional talking points.

Key Messages

- The National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network is a one-of-a-kind tool that brings together information that cannot be found, or is hard to find, anywhere else.
 - The Tracking Network is the best Internet resource connecting environmental and health information.
 - The Tracking Network is unique because it brings together and standardizes data that would be usually be kept by many different agencies, allowing us to see how our health and the environment are related.
 - The Tracking Network helps make sense of these data with tools such as maps that show where environmental and health problems are happening. This makes that valuable information more useful to people who need it, from scientists to decision-makers.
 - Policy makers, educators, and public health workers can protect people and save lives by using The Tracking Network to help make critical decisions about where to target environmental public health resources.
- The Tracking Network is helping us better understand how the environment is connected to climate change, extreme heat, and public health.
 - Improving our understanding of these connections will help us better prepare to respond and save lives.
 - On average, extreme heat events are the most common cause of weather-related deaths in the U.S.
 - Climate change is causing these events to occur more intensely with a longer duration.
 - The Tracking Network data are useful for providing information about who is most at-risk during heat waves. Because of this information, we can make informed decisions and plan how and where to best focus adaptation efforts to protect people from extreme heat.
 - In our area, (INSERT ORGANIZATION) was able to put (INSERT ACTION, SAFEGUARD,

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Key Messages and Talking Points



ETC.) in place to help protect people who are vulnerable to extreme heat which could save (INSERT LOCAL/STATE NUMBERS) of lives in our (INSERT CITY/STATE).

- The Tracking Network hosts records of:
 - Extreme temperatures
 - Records of deaths that are related to heat
 - Social and environmental conditions that make people vulnerable to extreme heat.
- The Tracking Network boosts (INSERT ORGANIZATION) ability to save lives and protect the health of the people we serve.
 - The Tracking Network fills information gaps.
 - The Tracking Network helps us respond quickly to environmental public health issues
 - Please help others use this important and valuable resource. Everyone who is looking for information about a health and environmental connection should and can use the Tracking Network at www.cdc.gov/ephtracking.



Climate Change, Extreme Heat, and Health

The Facts



Climate change refers to any major change in climate and weather patterns which lasts for ten years or more.

Weather and climate have affected human health for hundreds of years. Experts predict that climate changes will bring more intense and prolonged heat waves and other extreme weather events, as well as a rise in sea levels. These changes have the potential to affect human health in direct and indirect ways, imposing severe economic and public health burdens on society. The National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network (Tracking Network) is helping us understand the connection between climate change, extreme heat, and public health. The Tracking Network uses data from many sources to track the effects of weather, focusing on extreme heat events. Data for this topic include temperature distributions, records of deaths that might be related to heat, health, and social conditions that make people vulnerable to heat.

About Climate Change and Extreme Heat

- Climate change refers to any major change in climate and weather patterns which lasts for ten years or more. Examples include temperature, precipitation, or wind.¹
- As a result of the changing climate, serious weather events such as heat waves, droughts, flooding, tropical cyclones, and rises in sea level happen more often.²
- Heat waves occur when temperatures reach unusually high levels compared to some historic averages for a specific area and remain high for a prolonged period.³
- Droughts occur when a long period of time passes without enough rainfall.³
- Humid or muggy conditions occur when hazy, damp air is trapped near the ground. This can add to the discomfort of high temperatures.
- A heat wave combined with a drought is a very dangerous situation that can cause serious health problems.

The Connection between Climate Change, Extreme Heat and Health

- A person suffers heat-related illness when their body's temperature control system is compromised. Your body normally cools itself by sweating. But under some conditions, sweating just isn't enough and your body's temperature rises rapidly. When the humidity is high, sweat will not dry as quickly. This prevents your body from releasing heat quickly. Very high body temperatures may damage the brain or other vital organs.⁴
- Adverse health effects from extreme heat events are the most common cause of weather-related deaths in the United States. On average, they cause more deaths each year than hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes, floods, and earthquakes combined.⁵

1 <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/basicinfo.html>
 2 <http://ephtracking.cdc.gov/show/ClimateChangeLanding.action>
 3 http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heat_guide.asp
 4 http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heat_guide.asp
 5 <http://ephtracking.cdc.gov/show/ClimateChangeExtremeHeat.action>

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The Facts



- Heat also increases ground-level ozone concentrations, causing direct lung injury and increasing the severity of respiratory diseases such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.⁶
- The following groups of people have a higher risk of experiencing negative health effects related to climate change.
 - People who are elderly, very young, disabled, poor, or live alone,
 - People with existing medical conditions such as heart disease or asthma, and
 - People who live in urban areas with high air pollution or in old buildings with poor cooling systems, or have no air conditioning.⁷
- Other conditions that can limit the ability to control temperature include
 - advanced age (65 years or older),
 - early childhood (age 0-4),
 - obesity,
 - fever,
 - dehydration,
 - heart disease,
 - mental illness,
 - poor blood flow ,
 - sunburn, and
 - prescription drug use and alcohol use.⁸
- People who are most vulnerable to extreme heat can protect themselves by staying in air conditioned or cooler locations during heat waves, limiting strenuous activity, and staying hydrated.⁹

What We Are Learning from the Environmental Public Health Tracking Network

- In order to understand how climate change, extreme heat and public health are related, the Tracking Network provides data about temperature distributions, heat-related deaths, and conditions that make people vulnerable to heat. Being able to examine these data together can help reveal connections between the environment and health, which may equip officials to focus resources and better protect people at-risk in extreme heat events.

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6 <http://www.cdc.gov/climatechange/effects/default.htm>
7 <http://ephtracking.cdc.gov/showClimateChangeHealth.action;http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00038443.htm>
8 <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/faq.asp>
9 <http://ephtracking.cdc.gov/showClimateChangeHealth.action>



The Facts



- The following three indicators on the Tracking Network combine weather and health data to identify patterns in extreme heat and their associated health effects.¹⁰
 - Heat vulnerabilities: This indicator includes a variety of measures that may put people at greater risk for heat-related health effects, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, advanced age, race, poverty, social isolation, and no access to green space.
 - Heat-related deaths: This indicator is based on data from death certificates. It is used to identify deaths that have identified heat as an underlying or contributing cause.
 - Temperature distribution: This indicator provides a daily temperature and heat index by county for the months of May-September each year.
- The tips below can help prevent heat-related illnesses, injuries, and deaths during hot weather.¹¹
 - **Stay cool.** Keep your body temperature cool to avoid heat-related illness.
 - Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible.
 - Find an air-conditioned shelter.
 - Do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device.
 - Avoid direct sunlight.
 - Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing.
 - Take cool showers or baths.
 - Check on those most at-risk twice a day.
 - **Stay hydrated.** Because your body loses fluids through sweat, you can become dehydrated during times of extreme heat.
 - Drink more water than usual.
 - Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink more fluids.
 - Drink from two to four cups of water every hour while working or exercising outside.
 - Avoid alcohol or liquids containing high amounts of sugar.
 - Remind others to drink enough water.
 - **Stay informed.** Stay updated on local weather forecasts so you can plan activities safely when it's hot outside.
 - Check local news for extreme heat alerts and safety tips.
 - Learn the symptoms of heat illness.
 - For more information, [please click here.](#) ■

¹⁰ <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/ncdc.html>
<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/>

¹¹ <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/extremeheat/>



Matte Article



Heat causes more deaths each year than hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes, floods and earthquakes combined.

Keeping Cool and Staying Healthy During Extreme Heat

Extreme heat events are the most common cause of weather-related deaths in the United States. They cause more deaths each year than hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes, floods, and earthquakes combined. More frequent and severe heat waves are likely to occur as climate change continues to change weather patterns. These events pose a serious public health risk. As we head into summer, there are steps you can take to prevent illness, injury, and death related to hot weather. Heat waves occur when temperatures reach unusually high levels compared to some historic averages for a specific area and remain high for a prolonged period. Humid or muggy conditions can add to the discomfort and severity of a heat wave. It is during these extended periods that extreme heat can be dangerous. People suffer heat-related illness when the body's temperature control system is compromised. Your body normally cools itself by sweating. But under some conditions, sweating just isn't enough and your body temperature rises rapidly. When the humidity is high, sweat will not dry as quickly. This prevents your body from releasing heat quickly. Very high body temperatures might damage your brain or other vital organs.

Certain groups are at a higher risk for heat-related illness or injury. These groups include

- o adults over 65 years old and children under four years old,
- o those with existing medical problems such as heart disease,
- o people with no access to air conditioning

A tool from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is helping us understand the connection between climate change, extreme heat and public health. The National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network (Tracking Network) is the best Internet resource that explains the relationships between some environmental and health problems. It does this by collecting information that would traditionally be kept separately by many government and public health agencies. For example, the data available for climate change and health are from 5 different sources. Bringing it all together can help us discover the connections between our health and the environment.

The Tracking Network is helping us determine who is most at-risk to heat waves and where they live. Records of extreme temperatures, records of deaths that are related to heat and health, and social conditions that make people at-risk to heat are now available in the Tracking Network. This information equips public health officials to focus resources and better protect at-risk populations. And it can be used by individuals to identify opportunities to lower their risk of heat-related injuries, such as staying in air conditioned surroundings and staying well-hydrated when the temperature rises.

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Matte Article



These tips from CDC's Extreme Heat Media Kit can help you prevent heat-related illnesses, injuries, and deaths during hot weather.

- **Stay cool.** Keep your body temperature cool to avoid heat-related illness.
 - Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible.
 - Find an air-conditioned shelter.
 - Do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device.
 - Avoid direct sunlight.
 - Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing.
 - Take cool showers or baths.
 - Check on those most at-risk twice a day.
- **Stay hydrated.** Because your body loses fluids through sweat, you can become dehydrated during times of extreme heat.
 - Drink more water than usual.
 - Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink more fluids.
 - Drink from two to four cups of water every hour while working or exercising outside.
 - Avoid alcohol or liquids containing high amounts of sugar.
 - Remind others to drink enough water.
- **Stay informed.** Stay updated on local weather forecasts so you can plan activities safely when it's hot outside.
 - Check local news for extreme heat alerts and safety tips.
 - Learn the [symptoms](#) of heat illness.
 - For more information, [please click here](#).

Learn more about Environmental Public Health Tracking at www.cdc.gov/ephtracking and climate change at <http://www.cdc.gov/climatechange/>. ■



Social Media Examples



These posts/tweets were written to help your organization “talk” with your many audiences.

This document contains example topics for social media channels

such as Facebook and Twitter. These posts/tweets were written to help your organization “talk” with your many audiences. Specific examples are provided that can be used to help communicate the value of the Tracking Network to health departments, decision makers and other interested parties. Each post/tweet is organized under a goal of the Tracking Network: each is written so that it may be used as is or customized by your organization with language and data that will best resonate with your constituents.

Tips for Using Social Media:

- Social media is a powerful tool that can help you communicate with and engage your audience. If you do not already have social media tools in place, set up a Facebook page and Twitter account here:
 - www.facebook.com; <http://twitter.com/>
- CDC’s Tracking Network has an active Facebook page and Twitter account. “Friends” can follow us and share relevant and interesting posts.
 - Facebook: like CDC National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network
 - Twitter: follow @CDC_EPHTracking
- Watch for general news articles about public health and the environment and share these articles on your Facebook wall and your Twitter account. For example, during the summer months, share or retweet news stories about extreme heat and add your own comments and tweets to the discussion. Use the provided tool kit materials, such as the fact sheet and key messages, to create new posts and tweets that underscore how effective the Tracking Network is and has been.
- Tips for Facebook:
 - When mentioning the Tracking Network, use @CDC National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network
- Tips for Twitter:
 - Hashtags make your tweets searchable and allow them to become part of the broader conversation on a given topic. When posting extreme heat-related material, use #heatwave. When mentioning the Tracking Network, use #CDCEPHT.
 - Help build the Tracking Network’s Twitter following by including @CDC_EPHTracking in your #FF (Follow Friday) tweets. Follow Friday (#FF) is a hashtag used to help Twitter users find other compatible users through their friends’ recommendations. Here’s an example of what a Follow Friday tweet looks like:
#FF #Medical #Health @DMC_Heals @HenryFordNews @ClevelandClinic @KHNews @kevinmd @DoctorsLounge @GoHealthDotCom @DrDavidHanscom @meyouhealth

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Climate Change, Extreme Heat, and Health

Social Media Examples



Sample Posts/Tweets for Social Media

Goal: Educate about the connection between extreme heat and public health.

Facebook	Twitter
<p>Summer's here! CDC's Tracking Network equips public health officials with information to help people stay safe during extreme heat: www.cdc.gov/ephtracking</p>	<p>Summer's here! CDC's Tracking Network equips pub health officials w/ info to stay healthy during extreme heat: http://bit.ly/eZiMpa</p>
<p>Certain groups are more at-risk during heat waves. CDC's Tracking Network helps public health officials identify those groups affected and where they live: www.cdc.gov/ephtracking</p>	<p>CDC's Tracking Network helps public health officials identify groups most at-risk during heat waves: http://bit.ly/eZiMpa</p>
<p>Public health professionals: The Tracking Network hosts information on heat-related hospital stays and deaths. Access this tool to help target your outreach: www.cdc.gov/ephtracking</p>	<p>#Publichealth pros: The Tracking Network hosts info on heat-related hospital stays and more. Use it to target your outreach: http://bit.ly/eZiMpa</p>
<p>Extreme heat events are the most common cause of weather-related deaths in the United States. CDC's Tracking Network helps public health pros focus resources to protect those most at-risk: www.cdc.gov/ephtracking</p>	<p>Extrm heat = main cause of weather-related deaths in US. The Tracking Network helps pub hlth pros protect the @ risk http://bit.ly/eZiMpa</p>

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Climate Change, Extreme Heat, and Health

Social Media Examples



Goal: Raise awareness about the connection between public health and the environment via Tracking Network.

Facebook	Twitter
<p>Did you know there's a connection between extreme heat and health? Check out other connections between health and the environment in your area: www.cdc.gov/ephtracking</p>	<p>Did you know health is affected by extreme heat? Check out other health/enviro info near you http://bit.ly/eZiMpa</p>
<p>Want to learn what environmental health issues are of most concern in your area? Use CDC's Tracking Network to find out: www.cdc.gov/ephtracking</p>	<p>Use the @CDC_EPHTracking Network to learn about issues near you http://bit.ly/eZiMpa</p>
<p>Poll: CDC's Tracking Network is helping us better understand the relationship between environment and health, equipping us to respond and save lives. What environmental health problems are you concerned with right now? How extreme heat affects my health How lead poisoning can affect children How carbon monoxide poisoning affects the body</p>	<p>What #environmental #health problems are you concerned with right now? http://bit.ly/eZiMpa</p>

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Climate Change, Extreme Heat, and Health

Social Media Examples



Goal: Demonstrate Tracking Network value as a resource and attract people to the website.

Facebook	Twitter
<p>You work to protect people and save lives. Use the Tracking Network to access environmental health data that help you do just that!</p> <p>www.cdc.gov/ephtracking</p>	<p>#Health & #enviro data can protect people and save lives! Check out @CDC_EPHTtracking Network</p> <p>http://bit.ly/eZiMpa</p>
<p>(INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME) is using the CDC's Tracking Network to understand how public health and the environment are connected. What environmental health issues most concern you?</p> <p>www.cdc.gov/ephtracking</p>	<p>We're using the @CDC_EPHTtracking Network to understand how #PublicHealth & the #environment are connected</p> <p>http://bit.ly/eZiMpa</p>
<p>Public health professionals: Access CDC's Tracking Network to find relevant environmental health information that can help you make critical decisions about where to target resources most effectively.</p> <p>www.cdc.gov/ephtracking</p>	<p>#PublicHealth pros, use the @CDC_EPHTtracking Network to find #enviro health info to help make resource decisions</p> <p>http://bit.ly/eZiMpa</p>



The stories provided here highlight how the Tracking Network has been used to improve public health. You can share these stories as examples of how the Tracking Network has been used for asthma and outdoor air pollution issues, as examples of how the network could be used to benefit your community, or as models for your own success story using network data. You can find more success stories on the Tracking Network in the Asthma and Outdoor Air sections.

Take a look at how Minnesota used its tracking network to better prepare for extreme heat events brought on by climate change

The global climate is changing, causing rising temperatures, melting ice and snow, rising sea levels, and climate uncertainty. However, it is hard to measure the changes in climate regionally and locally. State and local health departments need help to understand climate change better and prepare for its possible health impacts.

Minnesota's Tracking Program worked with CDC and other states in the National Tracking Network to gather data about and find ways to measure illnesses and deaths caused by heat. Minnesota's tracking program is using data from hospital stays and death certificates to track health outcomes of extreme heat, such as deaths, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke.

Minnesota's Tracking Program is working with state and local health programs to help them to prepare for the health effects of climate change using climate and health data along with sound science. Data provided by Minnesota's climate change tracking program will help public health officials to develop effective strategies to prepare for the health effects of climate change.

Take a look at how California worked with the Tracking Network to better inform policy changes in response to a changing climate.

During the California 2006 heat wave, there were 140 confirmed deaths and an additional 515 suspected deaths due to extreme heat. An estimated \$133 million in health-related costs was attributed to the heat wave, along with an estimated \$500 million in agriculture-related costs from the loss of livestock. Heat waves have and will continue to impact all regions of California, including urban, rural, inland, and coastal areas. In California, heat waves are expected to become longer and more frequent over time.

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Climate Change, Extreme Heat, and Health

Success Stories



The California Tracking Program worked with the Bay Area National Weather Service (NWS) regional office to conduct a study to determine if heat alerts accurately predicted times when people suffered the most heat illness. The California Tracking Program showed that heat-related emergency room visits peaked immediately following heat alerts for the San Jose area and subsided when the heat alerts were discontinued. Without this data, decision-makers would not approve the opening of cooling centers as part of the city's heat alert response plan for the upcoming summer.

NWS presented the California Tracking Program study findings to City of San Jose decision-makers. Based on this evidence, the city decided to allow cooling centers to open as part of the city's heat alert response. The California Tracking Program is partnering with NWS to conduct similar studies for other regions in California, including Los Angeles. This information will help cities to make decisions about heat wave preparedness policies and help NWS refine its heat alert system for each region.

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