National Environmental Public Health Tracking Public Portal User Guide

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction 1
2. Becoming Familiar with the Tracking Network Public Portal 3
   - 2.1 Environments 3
   - 2.2 Health Effects 9
   - 2.3 Population Data 15
   - 2.4 Info by Location 18
     - 2.4.1 Content Areas, Indicators, and Measures 19
   - 2.5 Quick Links, Tracking Hot Topics, and Resources 21
     - 2.5.1 Quick Links 21
     - 2.5.2 Tracking Hot Topics 25
     - 2.5.3 Resources 25
   - 2.6 Search 26
3. Navigating and Using the Tracking Network Public Portal 29
   - 3.1 Getting to Data through the Home Page Interactive Areas 29
     - 3.1.1 Environments 30
     - 3.1.2 Health Effects 31
     - 3.1.3 Info by Location 33
   - 3.2 The Data Query and Results Page 35
   - 3.3 Query Indicators 45
   - 3.4 Search and View Metadata 48
   - 3.5 Sample Search Scenarios 51
     - 3.5.1 I want to learn more about arsenic in water. 51
     - 3.5.2 I want to learn about lead based paint in homes in my state 55
     - 3.5.3 What kind of cancer information and data are on the Network. 57
     - 3.5.4 I want to see the Tracking Network Public Portal for New Mexico 58
     - 3.5.5 I want to find asthma metadata. 58
4. The Secure Portal 60
5. Frequently Asked Questions 63

Table of Figures

Figure 1. Tracking Network Public Portal Home Page 3

Figure 2. Options available from the Environments screen 4

Figure 3. The Homes option from the Environments screen 6

Figure 4. The Homes and Health subheading 7

Figure 5. The Tracking Housing Conditions subheading 8

Figure 6. The Tracking Network home page 9

Figure 7. The Health Effects landing page 10

Figure 8. Hearth Attacks from the Health Effects screen 12

Figure 9. Heart Attacks and the Environments from the Health Effects screen 13

Figure 10. Tracking Heart Attacks page from the Health Effects screen 14

Figure 11. The Tracking Network home page 15

Figure 12. The Population Data landing page 16

Figure 13. Biomonitoring: Population Exposures page from Population Data 17

Figure 14. Info by Location on the home page 18

Figure 15. Info by Location map 19

Figure 16. Tracking home page quick links 21

Figure 17. The Tracking Program's participating health departments 22

Figure 18. Indicators drop down list and Data search box 23

Figure 19. Tracking home page Hot Topics 25

Figure 20. Tracking home page Resources 25

Figure 21. Starting a new search 27

Figure 22. Sample search results 28

Figure 23. Search Tracking Data link 23

Figure 24. The Environments link from the home page 30

Figure 25. The data search options from the Environments page 31

Figure 26. The Health Effects link from the home page 32

Figure 27. Info by Location link from the home page 33

Figure 28. Data Query and Results page from the Info by Location link 34

Figure 29. The Query and Results page 35
Figure 30. Data Query and Results page use agreement 38
Figure 31. Map view results 39
Figure 32. Data Query and Results Map View Options 41
Figure 33. The Data Query and Results chart view 42
Figure 34. The Data Query and Results table view 44
Figure 35. Tracking home page quick links 45
Figure 36. Indicator Definitions and Documentation lookup screen 45
Figure 37. Indicator screen from the Indicators & Data link 47
Figure 38. Tracking home page quick links 48
Figure 39. Data-Indicators and Data search area 49
Figure 40. Metadata Summary 49
Figure 41. Metadata Advanced Search 50
Figure 42. The Advanced Search screen for Metadata 51
Figure 43. The Environments tab 52
Figure 44. The Water landing page 52
Figure 45. More community water data and information options 54
Figure 46. The Info by Location state selection area 55
Figure 47. The Info by Location geography and content area selection screen 56
Figure 48. The Health Effects tab 57
Figure 49. Tracking home page quick links 58
Figure 50. Tracking home page quick links 59
Figure 51. The Search Data-Indicators and Data area 59
Figure 52. Tracking home page quick links 60
Figure 53. The Secure Portal screen 63

1. Introduction

Welcome to the National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network User Guide.

Environmental causes of chronic diseases are hard to identify. Measuring amounts of hazardous substances in our environment in a standard way, tracking the spread of these over time and geography, seeing how they show up in human tissues, and understanding how they may cause illness is critical but very difficult to do. The National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network (Tracking Network) is CDC's effort to combine data for some of these components into one resource to benefit public health.

The Tracking Network is a system of integrated health, exposure, and hazard information and data from a variety of national, state, and city sources. On the Tracking Network, you can explore information and view maps, tables, and charts about health and the environment across the country.

The chapters in this manual are:

- **Becoming Familiar with the Tracking Network Public Portal**

  A guide through the main topics of the Public Portal.

- **Navigating and Using the Tracking Network Public Portal**

  Lessons in navigating the Public Portal—how to find information and documentation, and how to display data.

- **The Tracking Network Secure Portal**

  An introduction to the secure portal—what it contains, and how to access it.

- **Frequently Asked Questions**

  A list of questions users most often ask.

If you have technical questions about the Tracking Network contact us at 1-877-923-8722 or email us at trackingsupport@cdc.gov.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Tracking Network Public Portal

This chapter focuses on becoming familiar with portal content through the navigation links and the four interactive areas featured on the home page: *Environments, Health Effects, Population Data*, and *Info by Location*. Figure 1 below is the Tracking Network Public Portal home page which is located at www.cdc.gov/ephtracking/.

2.1 Environments

From the home page, the *Environments* link provides access to the environmental health topics included in the Tracking Network.

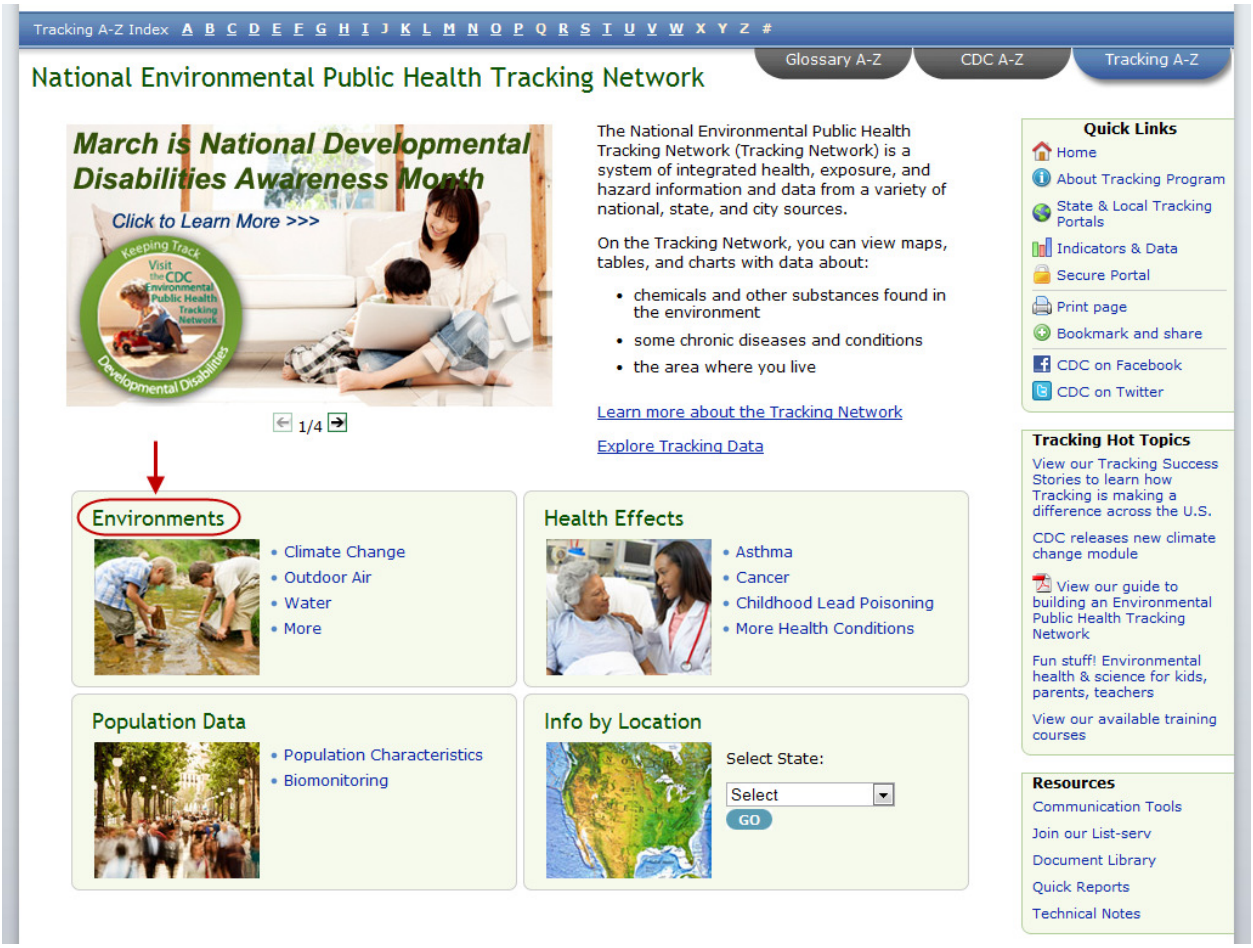


Figure 1. Tracking Network Public Portal Home Page

From the Environments screen, select any of the main headings—*Climate Change, Community Design, Homes, Outdoor Air,* or *Water.* (Figure 2)

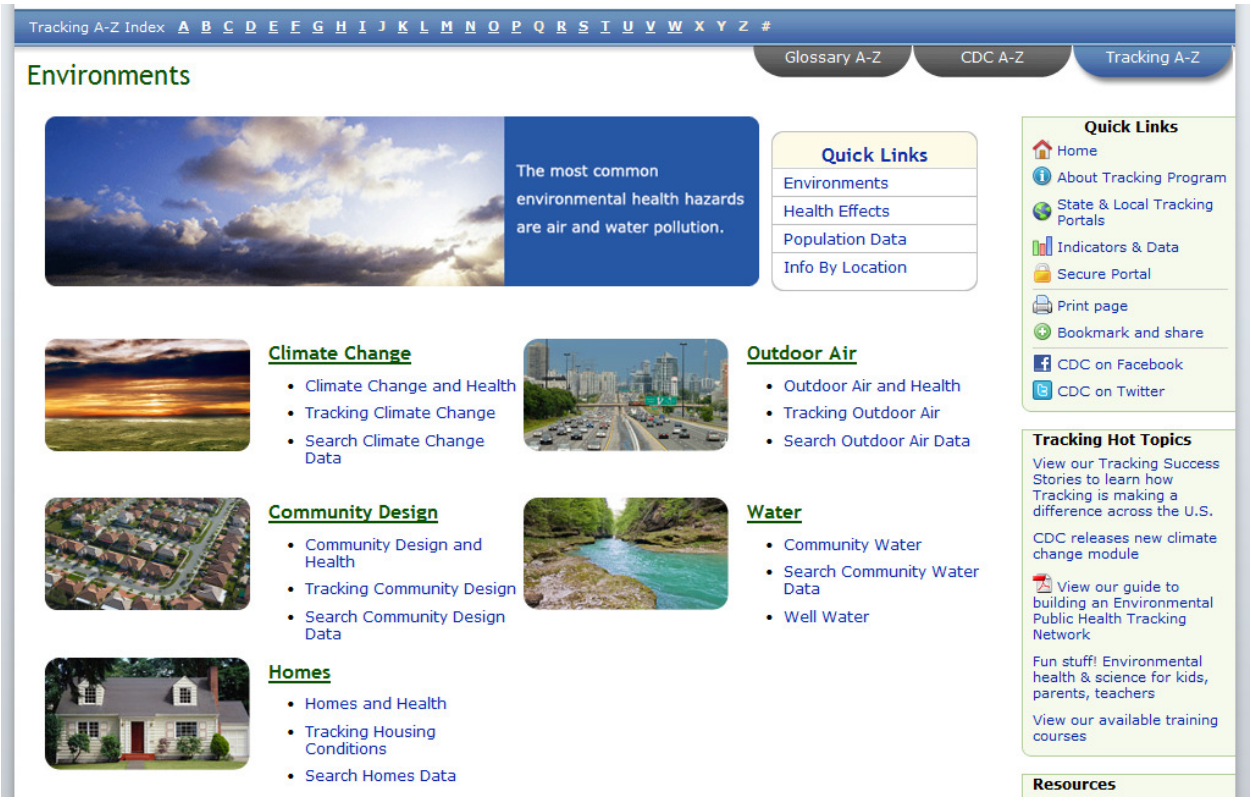
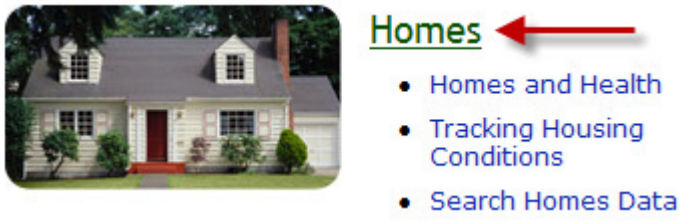


Figure 2. Options available from the *Environments* screen

As an example, click on the main heading, *Homes*.



From this page you can:

1. Learn about two major health effects associated with housing: childhood lead poisoning and carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.
2. Read how public health information is collected about lead and CO exposures in the home.
3. Learn about contaminants in the home. At this time the Tracking Network contains information about lead and CO.
4. Learn about how the Tracking Network uses childhood lead poisoning and carbon monoxide data.
5. View related resource links.
6. Read about the *Blood Lead Testing and Housing Age* indicators.
7. Go directly to the *Data Query and Results* page.
8. View Tracking Success Stories – Click on the Tracking Success Stories links to see how states utilized the Tracking Network to research and solve a problem.

See Figure 3 below.

See Section 3.2 for the Data Query and Results page example and steps.

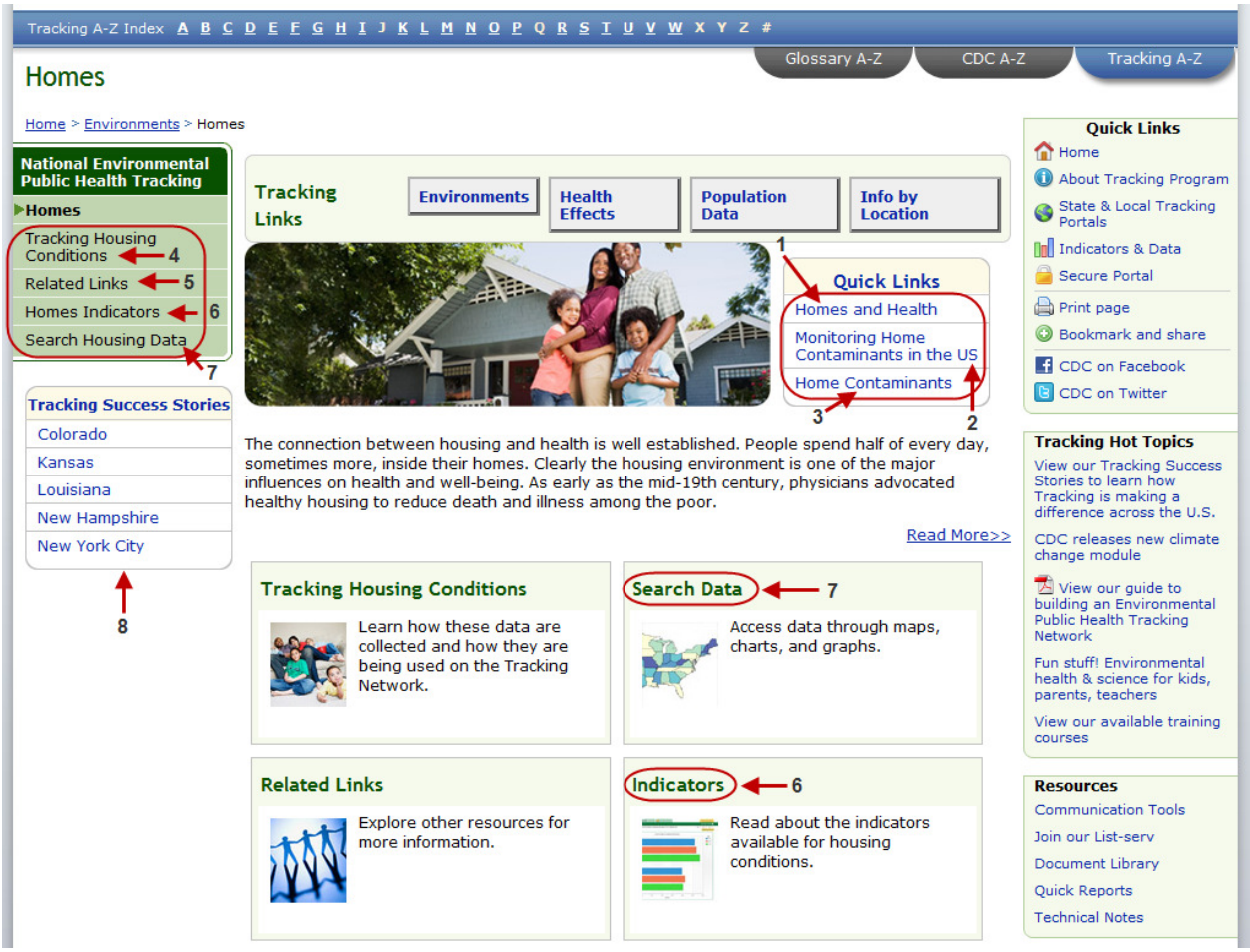


Figure 3. The *Homes* option from the *Environments* screen

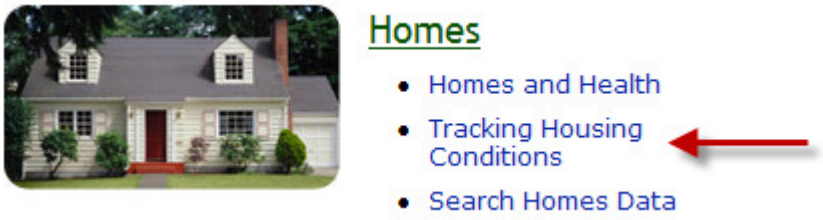
In each area you will find more specific information, related links, and a way to search for data for that topic. The other Environments pages (*Outdoor Air*, *Water, etc.*) will have a similar layout.

You can access some of these sections quickly from the Environments home page as well. The first *Homes* subheading is *Homes and Health*.

This link opens a page that details two major health issues associated with exposures in the home—childhood lead poisoning and CO poisoning. To learn more, click on the links for each condition. (Figure 4)

Figure 4. The *Homes and Health* subheading

From the Environments home page, the second subheading is *Tracking Housing Conditions*.



From here you can learn about childhood lead and CO poisoning surveillance and access a link to CDC's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. (Figure 5)

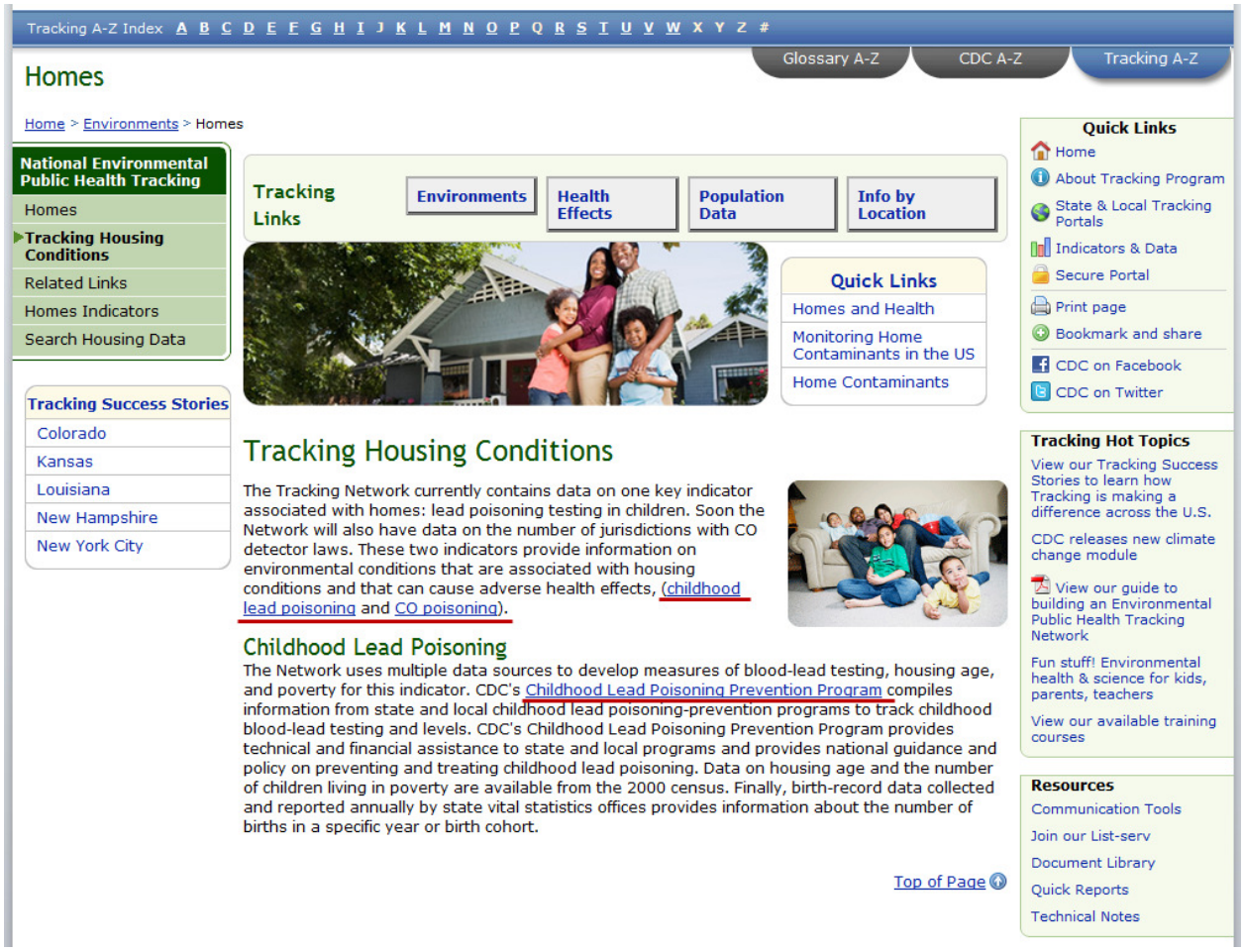
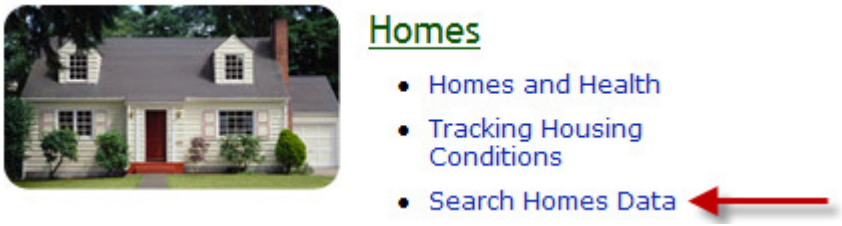


Figure 5. The Tracking Housing Conditions subheading

From the Environments home page, the final subheading is *Search Homes Data*, which will take you directly to the *Data Query and Results* page.



See Section 3.2 for the Data Query and Results page example and steps.

2.2 Health Effects

Back on the home page, you will see an option to navigate to the health effects information included in the Tracking Network. (Figure 6)

Figure 6. The Tracking Network home page

Selecting from the main headings will lead to specific information about that topic, related resource links, and data searches. If you choose the Health Effects link you will come to the Health Effects landing page. (Figure 7)

Figure 7. The *Health Effects* landing page

These subheadings show how we track each health effect and explain what we know about ways in which the environment and other factors may influence it.

The last subheading for each area will take you directly to the data query and results page.

For example, selecting the *Heart Attacks* main heading will take you to a page that begins to explain why heart attack information is part of the Tracking Network.

Heart Attacks ←

- Heart Attacks and the Environment
- Tracking Heart Attacks
- Search Heart Attacks Data

From the Heart Attacks main page you can:

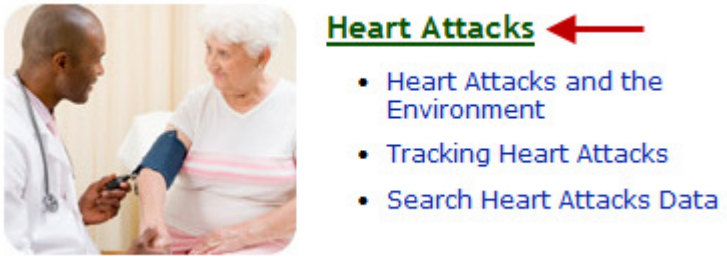
1. Learn about the role the environment plays in heart attacks.
2. Learn about exposure and risk factors associated with heart attacks.
3. Learn about preventing and reducing risks for heart attacks.
4. Learn how the Tracking Network uses heart attack surveillance data.
5. View more resource links related to heart attacks.
6. View the Hospitalizations for Heart Attack indicator information.
7. Search heart attack data through the data query and results page.

See Figure 8 below.

See Section 3.2 for the Data Query and Results page example and steps.

Figure 8. *Heart Attacks* from the *Health Effects* screen

Back on the *Health Effects* main page, the first subheading is *Heart Attacks and the Environment*.



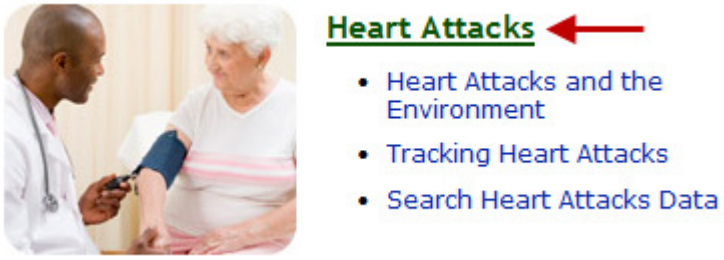
This option will take you to a page describing what we know about the role the environment plays in heart attacks. (Figure 9) On this page you can:

1. Read about heart attacks and the environment.

2. Mouse over the blue hyperlinks to read definitions about important highlighted words.

Figure 9. *Heart Attacks and the Environment* from the *Health Effects* screen.

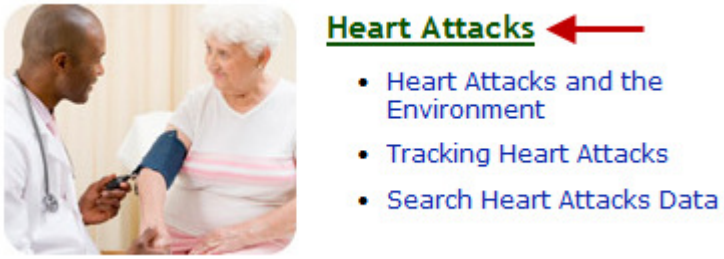
From the Health Effects main page, the next subheading is *Tracking Heart Attacks*.



This will take you to a page that describes how the Tracking Network uses heart attack surveillance data. (Figure 10)

Figure 10. *Tracking Heart Attacks* page from the *Health Effects* screen.

From the Health Effects main page, the last subheading is *Search Heart Attacks Data*.



This link will take you directly to the Data Query and Results page.

See Section 3.2 for the Data Query and Results page example and steps.

2.3 Population Data

Return to the home page to access the Population Data section. Population data contributes to a better understanding of how our health is affected by the environment. (Figure 11)

Figure 11. The Tracking Network home page

Select the main heading, Population Data. On the landing page select one of the main headings for more specific information. (Figure 12)

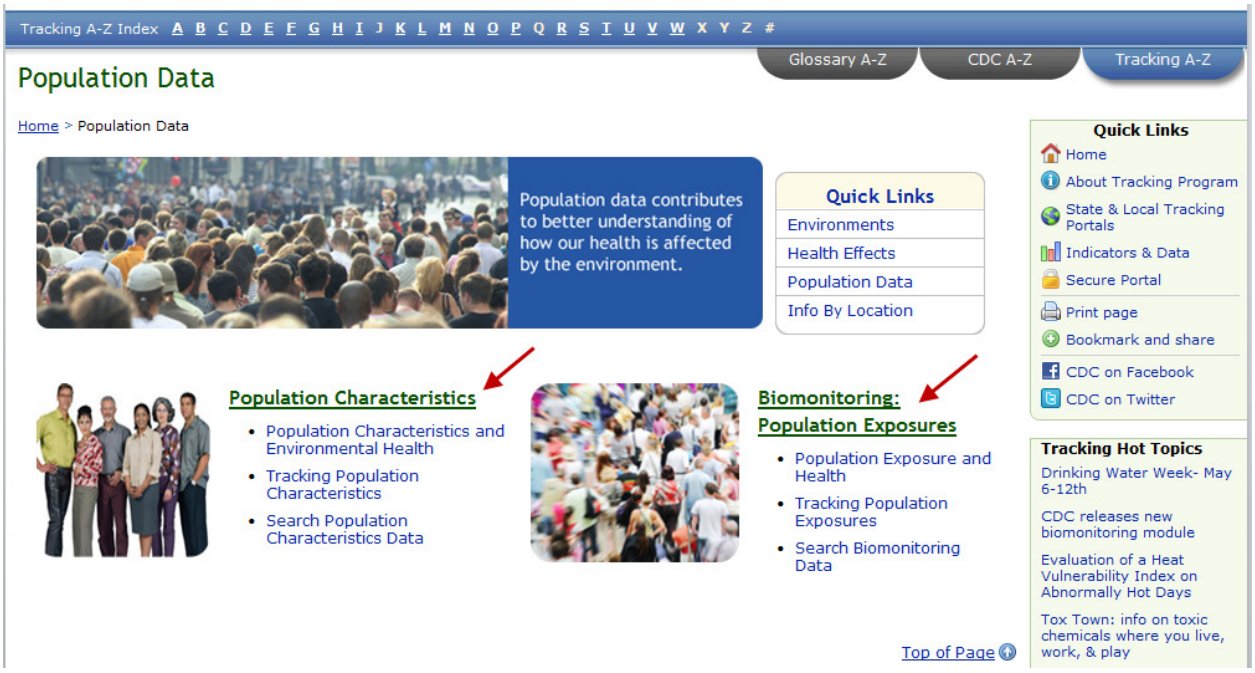


Figure 12. The *Population Data* landing page

For example, select Biomonitoring: Population Exposures. (Figure 13)

From this page you can:

1. Learn about environmental chemical exposures and how to reduce them.
2. Learn about the source of our Biomonitoring data.
3. Learn about the environmental chemicals whose data is included here.
4. View information about each environmental chemical.
5. Go back to the Biomonitoring landing page.
6. View more information about how Biomonitoring data is used.
7. View more resource links related to Biomonitoring.
8. View Biomonitoring indicator information.
9. Search Biomonitoring data through the data query and results page.

10. View success stories to see how states used the data to solve a problem.

Figure 13. Biomonitoring: Population Exposures page from Population Data

2.4 Info by Location

From the home page, the *Info by Location* section will allow you to search available data by state. (Figure 14)

Figure 14. *Info by Location* on the home page

Choosing the *Info by Location* link opens a map of the United States. You can then select criteria for a state specific search. (Figure 15)

Step 1 - Select a state by clicking on it from the map.

Step 2 - Select a content area, indicator, and measure. Click the *GO* button to be taken to the *Data query and Results* page.

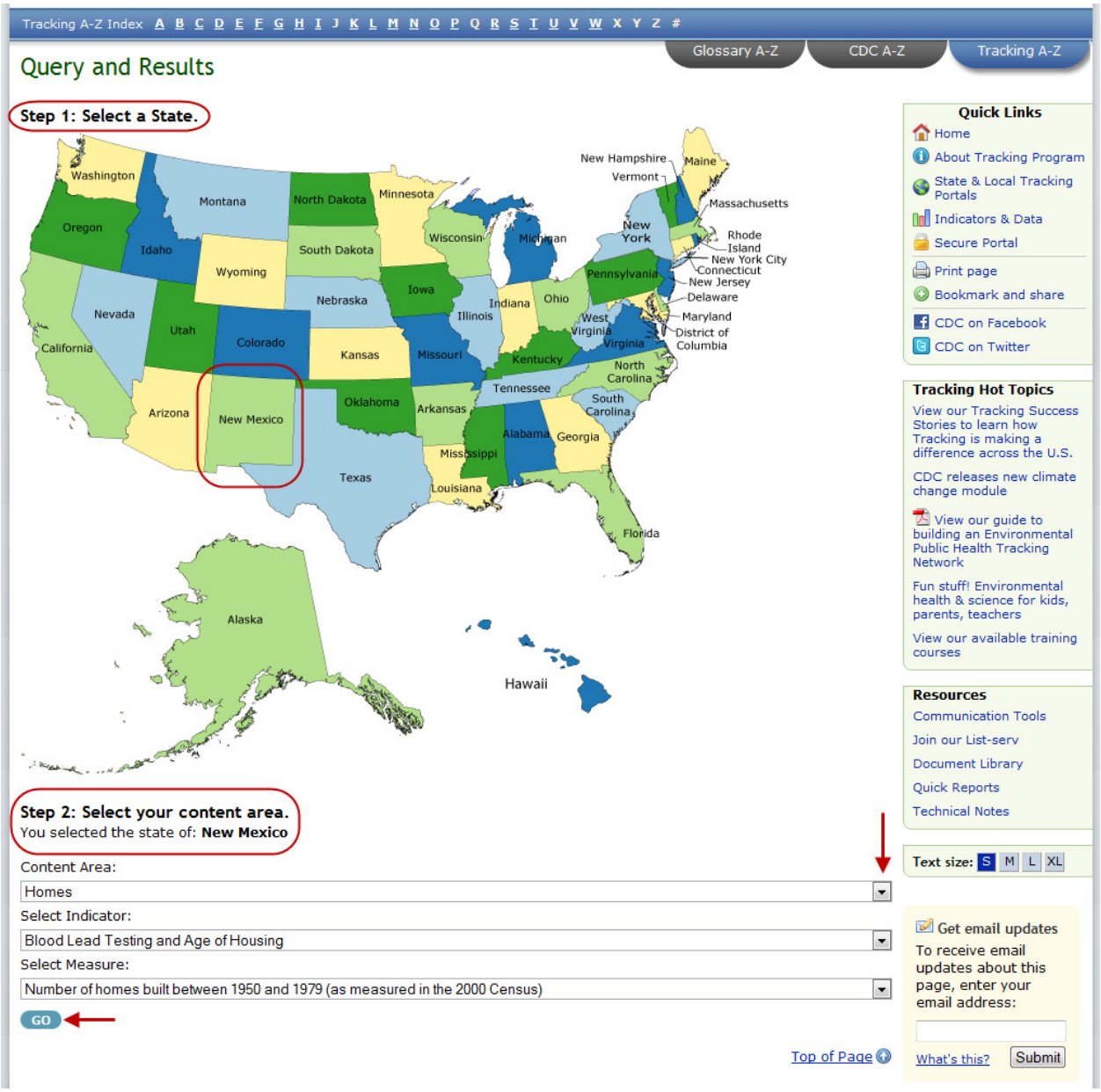


Figure 15. ***Info by location*** **map**

2.4.1 Content Areas, Indicators, and Measures

The drop down menus under **Step 2: Select your content area** are dynamic. (Figure 15) This means your *Indicator* and *Measure* selections will adjust based on the content area selection you start with, proceeding from more general categories to more specific categories.

Content Area (the starting point for data categorization in the Tracking Network) is the general health effect or environmental area about which you want more information. In the example, *Homes* is selected as the content area. (Figure 14) From that selection the next drop down menu displays only *Indicators* pertaining to *Homes*.

Indicators are available within each content area. For Tracking, an indicator is one or more items, characteristics or other things that will be assessed and that provide information about a population's health status, their environment, and other factors with the goal of allowing us to monitor trends, compare situations, and better understand the link between environment and health. It is assessed through the use of direct and indirect measures (for example levels of a pollutant in the environment as a measure of possible exposure) that describe health or a factor associated with health (such as environmental hazard or age) in a specified population. In the example above, the available indicator for the content area Homes is "Blood Lead Testing and Housing Age."

Measures are available for each indicator. On the Tracking Network, a measure is a summary characteristic or statistic, such as a sum, percentage, or rate. In the above example, an available measure for the content area Homes is "Number of Houses Built between 1950 to 1979."

Section 3.1.3 is dedicated to helping you navigate through the Info by Location feature.

See Section 3.2 for the Data Query and Results page example and steps.

2.5 Quick Links, Tracking Hot Topics, and Resources

2.5.1 Quick Links

Quick links appear on the right side of the Tracking Portal home page. Here is an example of the Quick Links: (Figure 16)

Figure 16. ***Tracking home page quick links***

Home
Clicking the Home link from anywhere in the portal will return you to the Tracking Network home page.

About Tracking Program
This links to background information about the Tracking Program. It provides detailed information about the Program and its underlying concepts.

State and Local Tracking Portals
Here you can access the tracking portals of the 24 state and local health departments that are part of the National Tracking Network. (Figure 17)

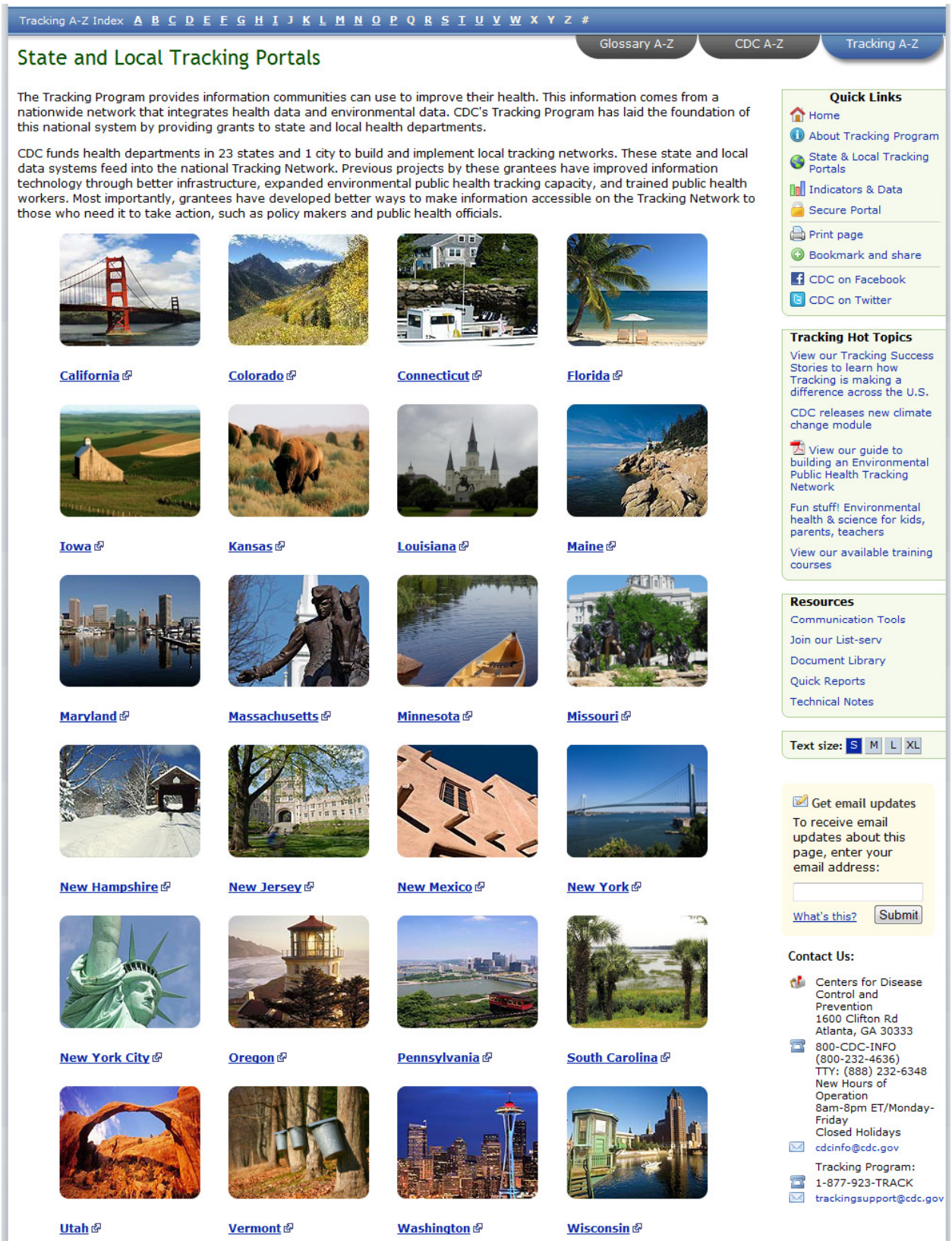


Figure 17. The Tracking Program's participating health departments

Indicators and Data

Here you can search for information on environmental Indicators and metadata. (Figure 18)

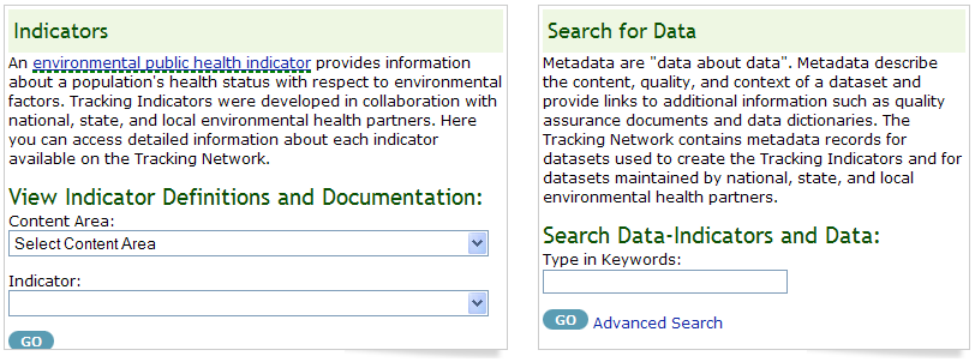


Figure 18. *Indicators* drop down list and *Data* search box

Indicators

Indicators are available within each content area. For Tracking, an indicator is one or more items, characteristics or other things that will be assessed and that provide information about a population's health status, their environment, and other factors with the goal of allowing us to monitor trends, compare situations, and better understand the link between environment and health. It is assessed through the use of direct and indirect measures (for example levels of a pollutant in the environment as a measure of possible exposure) that describe health or a factor associated with health (such as environmental hazard or age) in a specified population. From here, you can select a content area and indicator that will return a chart that includes:

- indicator type,
- measure derivation information,
- geography,
- time period and scale,
- rationale,
- limitations of the data source, and
- access to the data query and results page and more.

See Section 3.3, which explains Indicator use.

Search for Data

Generally speaking, metadata are data about data. Metadata describe the content, quality, and context of a dataset and provide links to additional information such as quality assurance documents and data dictionaries. From here you can search for and view the detailed metadata reports available on the Tracking Network Public Portal.

See Section 3.4, Search and View Metadata.

Secure Portal

The next option in Quick Links is the Tracking Network's Secure Portal. This is a separate Web-based system that provides access to resources for environmental and public health practitioners and researchers. To gain access you must register, have an appropriate professional need, and a digital certificate from CDC's Secure Data Networks. The secure portal employs rigorous security measures to protect potentially private and confidential health information.

See Chapter 4.0 for detailed information about the Secure Portal.

Email Page

When clicked the Email Page link opens a new pop up window. Here you can send a link of the current page to any email address.

Print Page

Click to print a view of the current page.

Bookmark and Share

Clicking on Bookmark and Share drops down a list of options to add the current page to your bookmarks or share on your social networks.

CDC on Facebook

Click here to view the NEPH Tracking Network's Facebook page and "Like" us.

CDC on Twitter

Click here to view our Twitter page and "Follow" us.

2.5.2 Tracking Hot Topics

These topical and timely links are updated periodically. They typically highlight our partner programs and other CDC programs. There could also be links to updates within the portal. You can also view our portal training videos and listen to podcast about Tracking Network topics.

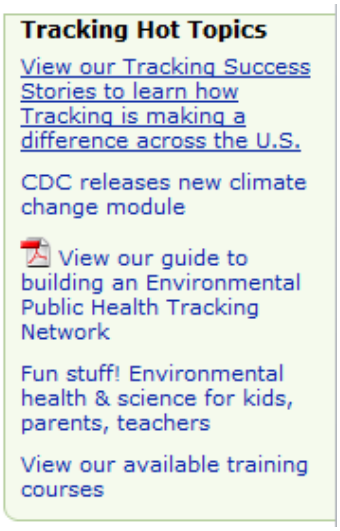


Figure 19. Tracking home page Hot Topics

2.5.3 Resources

The Resources section includes links to pages that are supplemental to the other features of the portal.

Figure 20. Tracking home page Resources

Communication Features

Communication Features is a one stop source for Tracking Network communication materials and social media tools.

Join our List-serv

Click here to send us an email request to join our list-serv. When you sign up we will periodically send an update about new developments and news with the Tracking Network.

Quick Reports

To view a list of pre-populated reports available click on Quick Reports. They mirror some of the reports that can be generated using our query panel.

Technical Notes

The technical notes page includes terms and definitions used throughout the public portal. Also, more detailed explanations of the rational behind how our data is displayed in the query panel are also included.

2.6 Search

A search feature is located in the banner at the top of the public portal. Using this will allow you to perform a general search of the content on the public portal.
To use the search feature:

1. Enter a term you would expect to find on the public portal. (Figure 21)

Figure 21. ***Starting a new search***

The results page will load. (Figure 22)

Figure 22. ***Sample search results***

Clicking on Search Tips will take you to a CDC.gov page that introduces basic search concepts and describes more advanced techniques that can help you search more effectively. If there is more than one page of results you can scroll through the pages using the numerical links towards the bottom of the page.

The displayed results will take you to pages within the public portal.

3. Navigating and Using the Tracking Network Public Portal

You should now be familiar with the three interactive areas on the home page: *Environments, Health Effects*, and *Info by Location*. These interactive areas provide information to help you understand the topics available on the Tracking Network and introduce you to ideas that put in context the data you will access.

3.1 Getting to Data through the Home Page Interactive Areas

You can always go straight to the query and results page by clicking on Explore Tracking Data from the home page. (Figure 23)

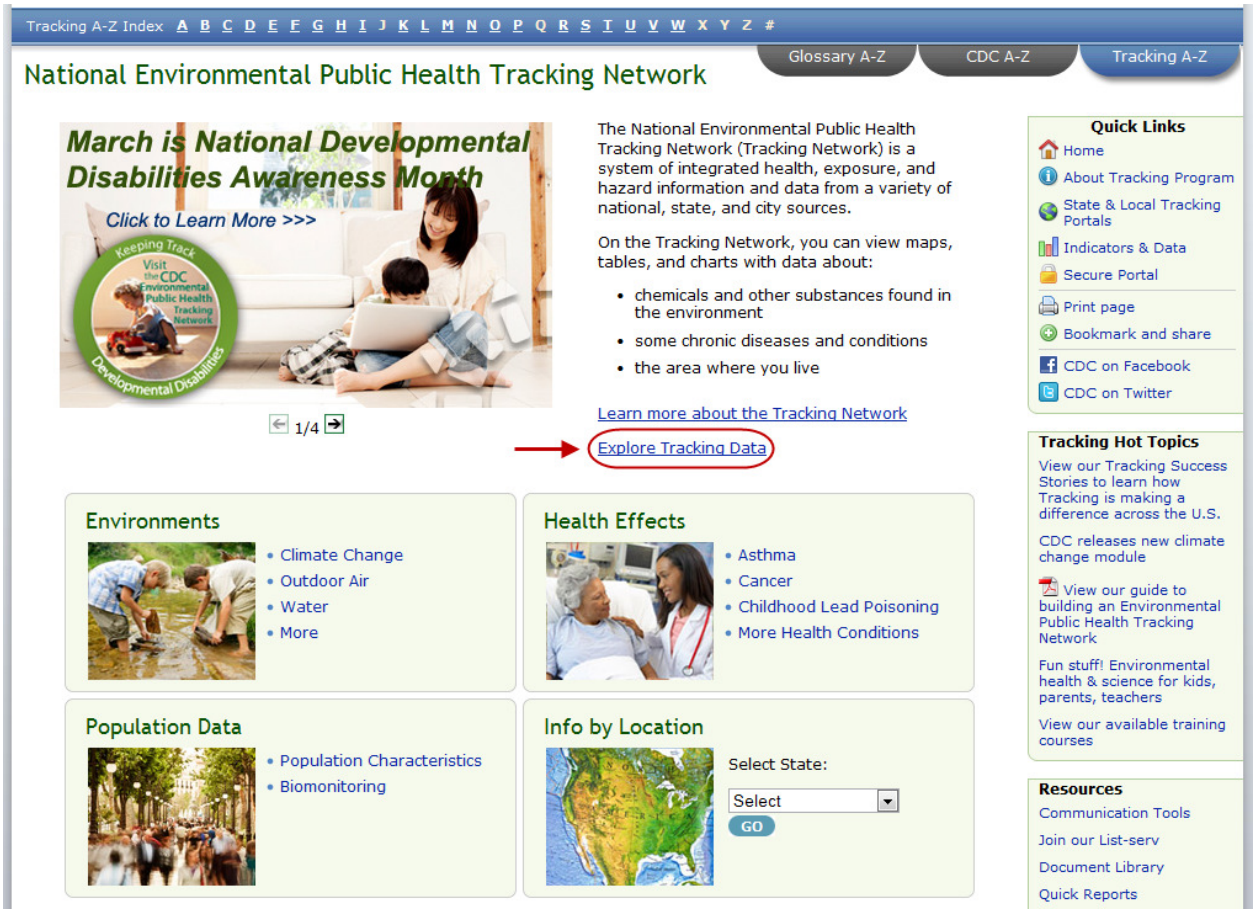


Figure 23. Search Tracking Data link

3.1.1 Environments

Step 1. From the home page, click the *Environments* link. (Figure 24)

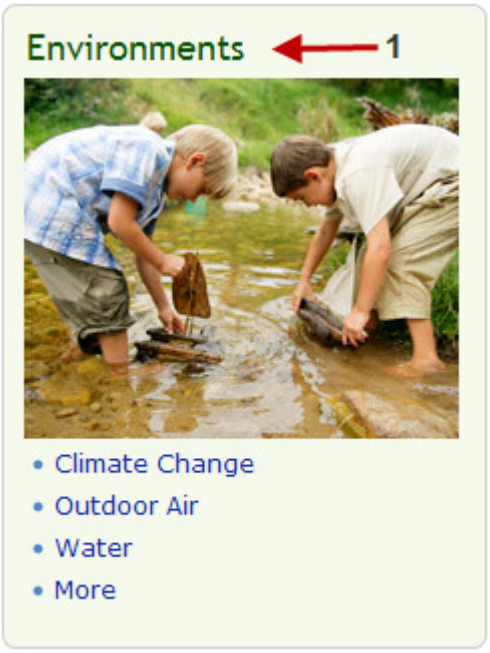


Figure 24. The Environments link from the home page

Step 2. Go directly to the *Data Query and Results* page by choosing any one of the following: (Figure 25)

- Search Climate Change Data,
- Search Outdoor Air Data,
- Search Community Design Data,
- Search Community Water Data, or
- Search Homes Data.

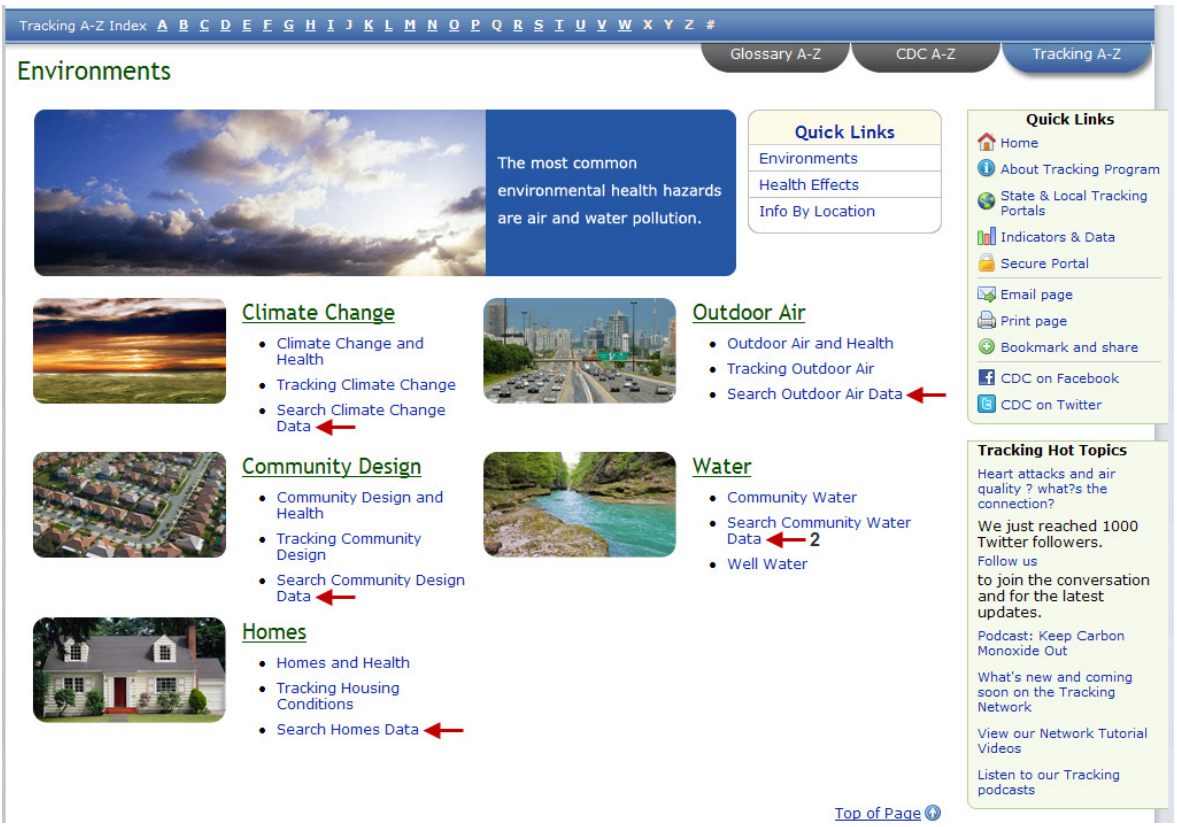


Figure 25. The data search options from the *Environments* page

See Section 3.2 for the Data Query and Results page example and steps.

3.1.2 Health Effects

Step 1. From the home page, click the Health Effects link or the Health Effects tab. (Figure 26)

Figure 26. The *Health Effects* link from the home page

Step 2. Go directly to the data query and results page by choosing the search options under any topic:

- Search Asthma Data,
- Search Childhood Lead Poisoning Data,
- Search Birth Defects Data,
- Search Heart Attack Data
- Search Cancer Data,
- Search Reproductive and Birth Outcomes Data,
- Search Carbon Monoxide Data, or
- Search Developmental Disabilities Data.

See Section 3.2 for the Data Query and Results page example and steps.

3.1.3 Info by Location

Step 1. From the home page click on the Info by Location tab to open a United States map or choose a state from the drop down box and click **Search**. (Figure 27)

Figure 27. Info by Location link from the home page

Step 2. Verify your selected state at the top of the page then select your content area, indicator, and measure. (Figure 28)

Step 3. Click **GO** to be taken directly to the Data Query and Results page.

See Section 3.2 for the Data Query and Results page example and steps.

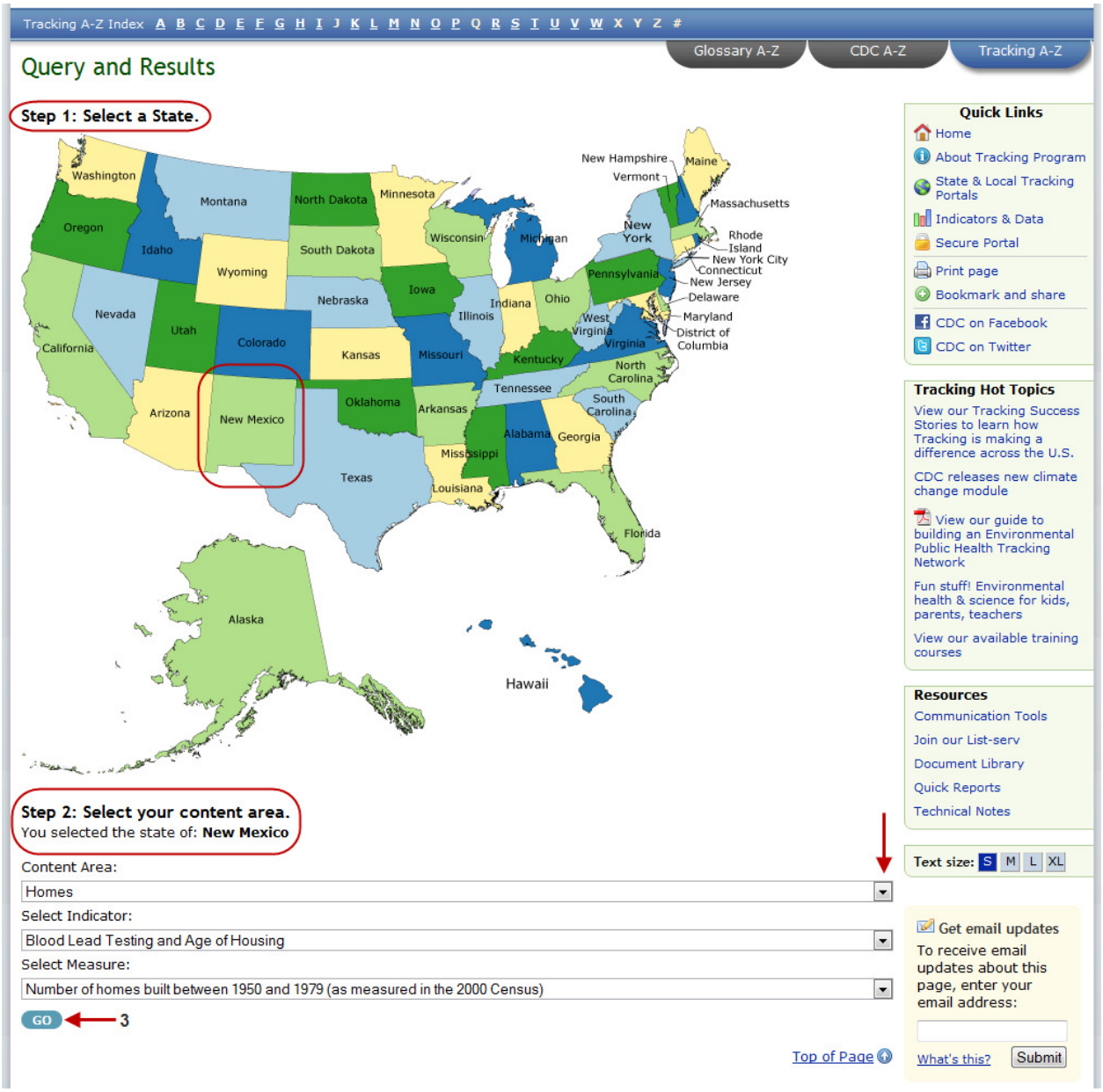


Figure 28. Data Query and Results page from the Info by Location link.

3.2 The Data Query and Results Page

See Figure 29 below to view the features of the Data Query and Results page.

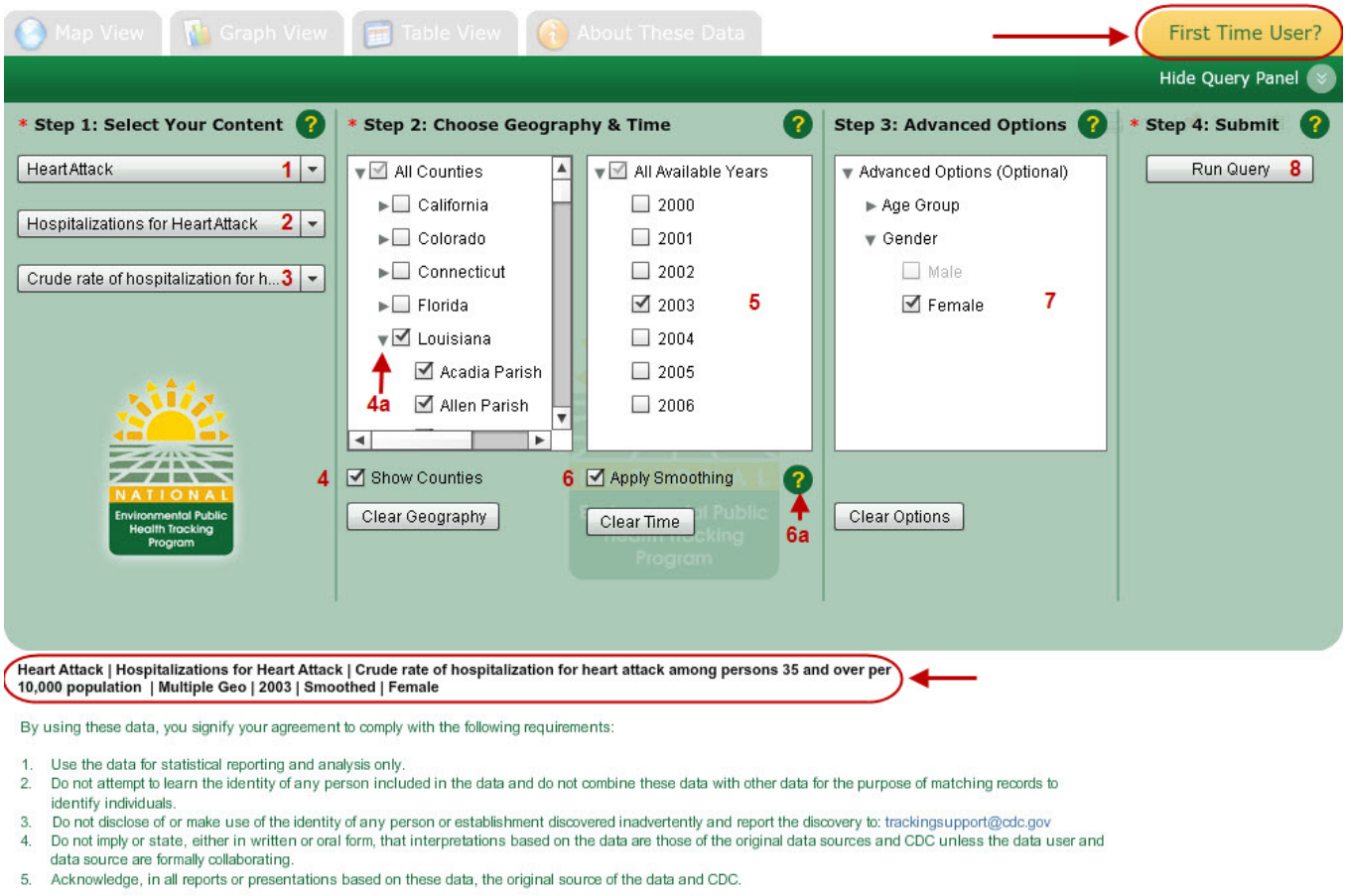


Figure 29. The Query and Results page

If this is your first time composing a query on our public portal please click on the First Time User tab in the upper right hand corner of the page. Here you will find information about how to compose a query and how to use the icons you will see.

On the *Query and Results page* multiple data and display options are available. The *Query and Results page* is where you will find detailed data related to all the content areas on the Tracking Network. You can search by single or multiple states, counties, or years. The data will automatically display first in a map, if one is available, but you can choose the chart view or table view tabs as well.

The first three steps involve selecting a *Content Area, Indicator*, and *Measure*.

Content Area (the starting point for data categorization in the Tracking Network) is the general health effect or environmental area about which you want more information. In the above example, *Asthma* is selected as the *Content Area*. From that selection, the next drop down box displays only *Indicators* pertaining to *Asthma.*

Indicators are available within each content area. For Tracking, an indicator is one or more items, characteristics or other things that will be assessed and that provide information about a population's health status, their environment, and other factors with the goal of allowing us to monitor trends, compare situations, and better understand the link between environment and health. It is assessed through the use of direct and indirect measures (e.g. levels of a pollutant in the environment as a measure of possible exposure) that describe health or a factor associated with health (i.e., environmental hazard, age) in a specified population.

Measures are available for each indicator. On the Tracking Network, a measure is a summary characteristic or statistic, such as a sum, percentage, or rate.

Now, we will step through the Query and Results process. Depending on how you came to this page you may be able to skip steps 1 and 2, they may already be populated.

Note that as you build your query a trail of your selections is written so you can see the options you have chosen.

Heart Attack | Hospitalizations for Heart Attack | Crude rate of hospitalization for heart attack among persons 35 and over per 10,000 population | Multiple Geo | 2003

Step 1. Select a *Content Area* from the drop down box.

Step 2. Select an *Indicator* from the drop down box.

Step 3. Select a *Measure* from the drop down box.

Step 4. Once you have selected your *Content Area, Indicator,* and *Measure,* you will only see state and county options for which data were reported to the Tracking Network. If all 50 states have data to view, then all 50 states will populate the geography.

Step 4a. In addition, some selections will not allow you to query data at the county level. Only if you see drop down arrow next to a state, can you expand it to select specific counties. To see data for all counties for a selected state(s) check the *All Counties* box. Counties will be selected automatically. To make your own county selection uncheck All Counties and expand the list.

Step 5. After you have made your geography selections, select a time period. The years available also vary by the data provided to the Tracking Network. The time options will populate after a geography selection is made.

If you want to change the state, year, or both, click *Clear Geography* or *Clear Time*.

At this point you can skip to Step 8 and select *RUN QUERY*. If you need to make more selections, continue to Step 6.

Step 6. To see smoothed data, if available, check the box for *Apply smoothing to view pattern across counties*.

Smoothed data is the average of a measure based on the information about that area and the areas around it. Smoothing is only available for some measures and can only be applied at the county level. You must select All Counties to apply smoothing. **If you choose to view these data smoothed, do not attempt to interpret the results for any single county, but instead, use the data to identify patterns across the state.** Smoothing borrows information from neighboring areas to stabilize results from

sparsely populated areas. Smoothing is used to reduce variability in the data, allowing patterns to emerge.

Step 6a. Additional information about an option can be found by choosing this icon .

Step 7. The advanced options contain additional filters that may include Ethnicity, Gender, Race, and Age Group.

Step 8. Click *Run Query* to view the results. Note the use agreement below the query panel options. (Figure 30)

Disclaimer:
By using these data, you signify your agreement to comply with the following requirements:

1. Use the data for statistical reporting and analysis only.
2. Do not attempt to learn the identity of any person included in the data and do not combine these data with other data for the purpose of matching records to identify individuals.
3. Do not disclose of or make use of the identity of any person or establishment discovered inadvertently and report the discovery to: trackingsupport@cdc.gov.
4. Do not imply or state, either in written or oral form, that interpretations based on the data are those of the original data sources and CDC unless the data user and data source are formally collaborating.
5. Acknowledge, in all reports or presentations based on these data, the original source of the data and CDC.
6. Suggested citation: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network. (n.d.) Web. Accessed: 10:53 3/30/2012. www.cdc.gov/ephtracking.

Figure 30. Data Query and Results page use agreement

The results panel will populate and you will see four tabs. Three of them let you view the results in map, table, or chart format. The default for every query is a map. If a map is not available the view will default to a chart. See Step 8d for more details about maps. The fourth tab is About These Data, where footnotes are located.

From any of these four views you can utilize the print, share, and csv options.

Clicking the Query Details icon will display the selection made for the current query.

Clicking the Print icon allows you to print the current view of the query results.

Clicking the Share icon will open a dialog box with a hyperlink to the query you just created that you can then copy and paste.

Clicking the CSV icon will export the table results into a CSV file that you can download and save to open in excel or other application of your choice.

Step 8a. Select *Map View* to view results in a map. If the data are insufficient or not appropriate for generating a map this tab will be grayed out.

If you select multiple states, the system will return a map with all states for which data are available, but only those states you selected will appear on your tables and charts. This also applies to counties within the states. (Figure 31)

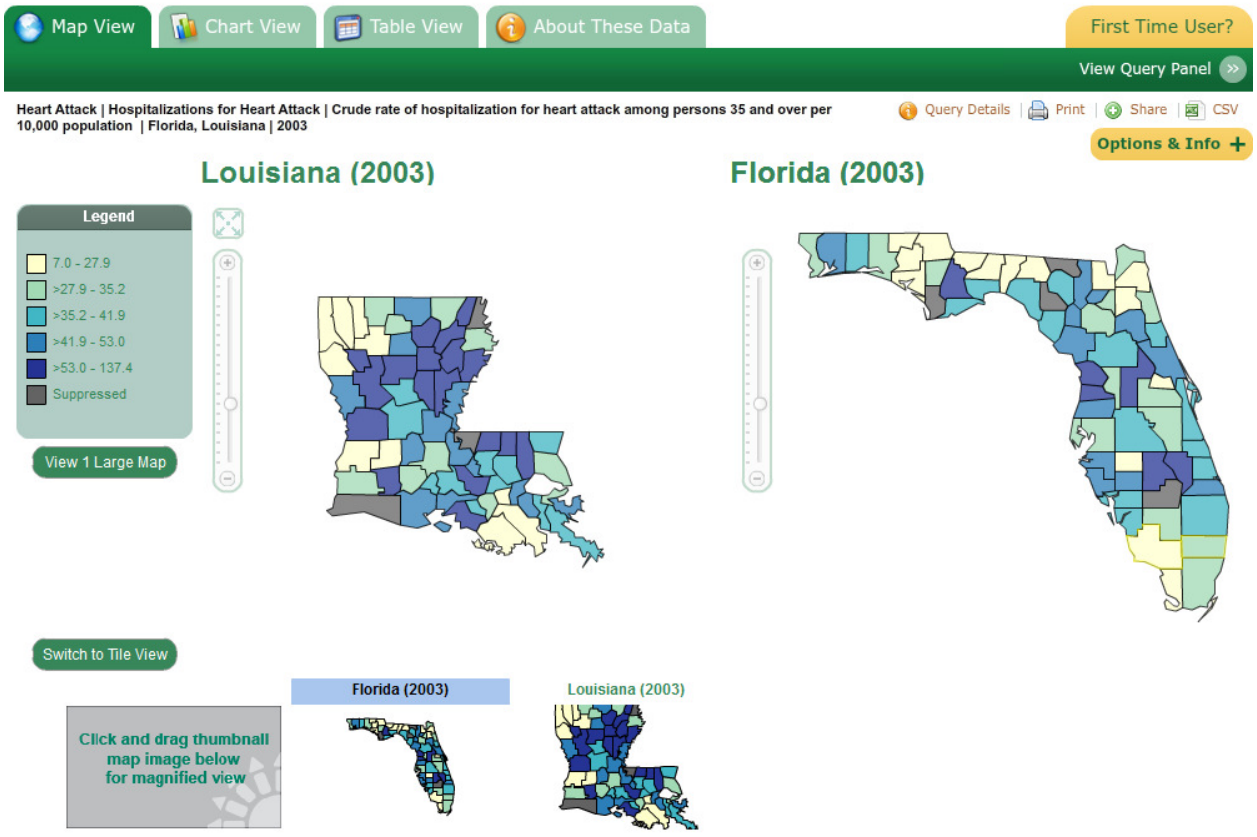


Figure 31. Map view results

Additional features of the map view:

Initial extent – Return the maps to their original size.

Tile view – Use to view multiple maps as tiled icons.

Zoom – Zoom in and out of maps.

View 1 or 2 Large Maps – Maps of individual states (the same or different) can be viewed side by side using this option. Maps of the same state in this view can be linked to zoom at the same rate.

Link Maps - Link two maps of the same state together.

AK & HI Insets – When available, click to bring Alaska and Hawaii into view.

Options & Info +

Options & Info – Expand for additional features of the map view and other information related to your query. (Figure 32) Once inside you will see the following map view options:

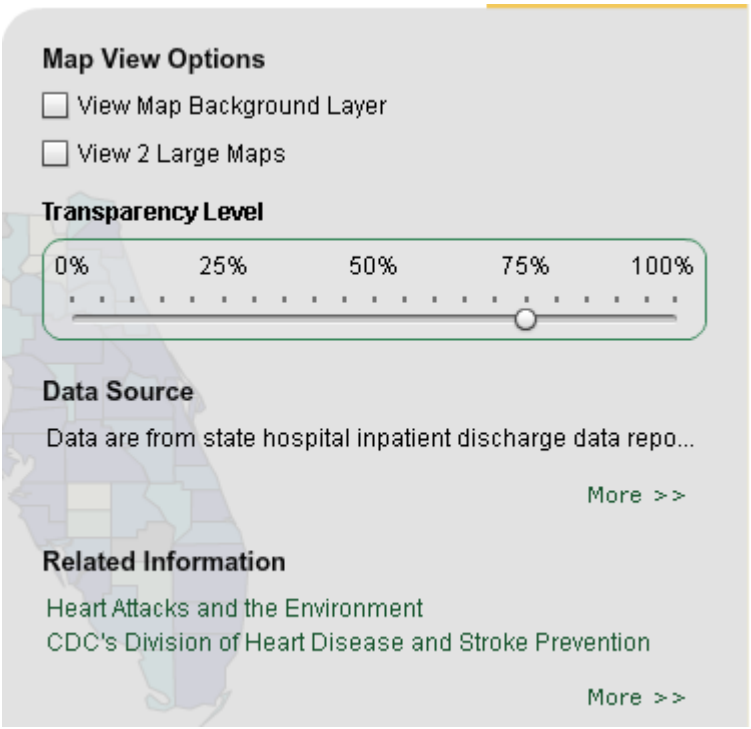


Figure 32. Data Query and Results Map View Options

View Map Background Layer – Turn on the map background layer to see roads and bodies of water.

View 2 Large maps – Performs the same as the above view large map example. Maps of individual states (the same or different) can be viewed side by side using this option. Maps of the same state in this view can be linked to zoom at the same rate.

Transparency Level – Alter the transparency of the base layer of the map. This works best when used with the map background layer.

Data Source – Expand for information about where the data you are viewing came from.

Related Information – See footnotes and links to pages within the Tracking Network or partner websites that provide background information about the topic you have chosen.

Step 8b. From the tabs, select *Chart View* to view results graphically. (Figure 33)

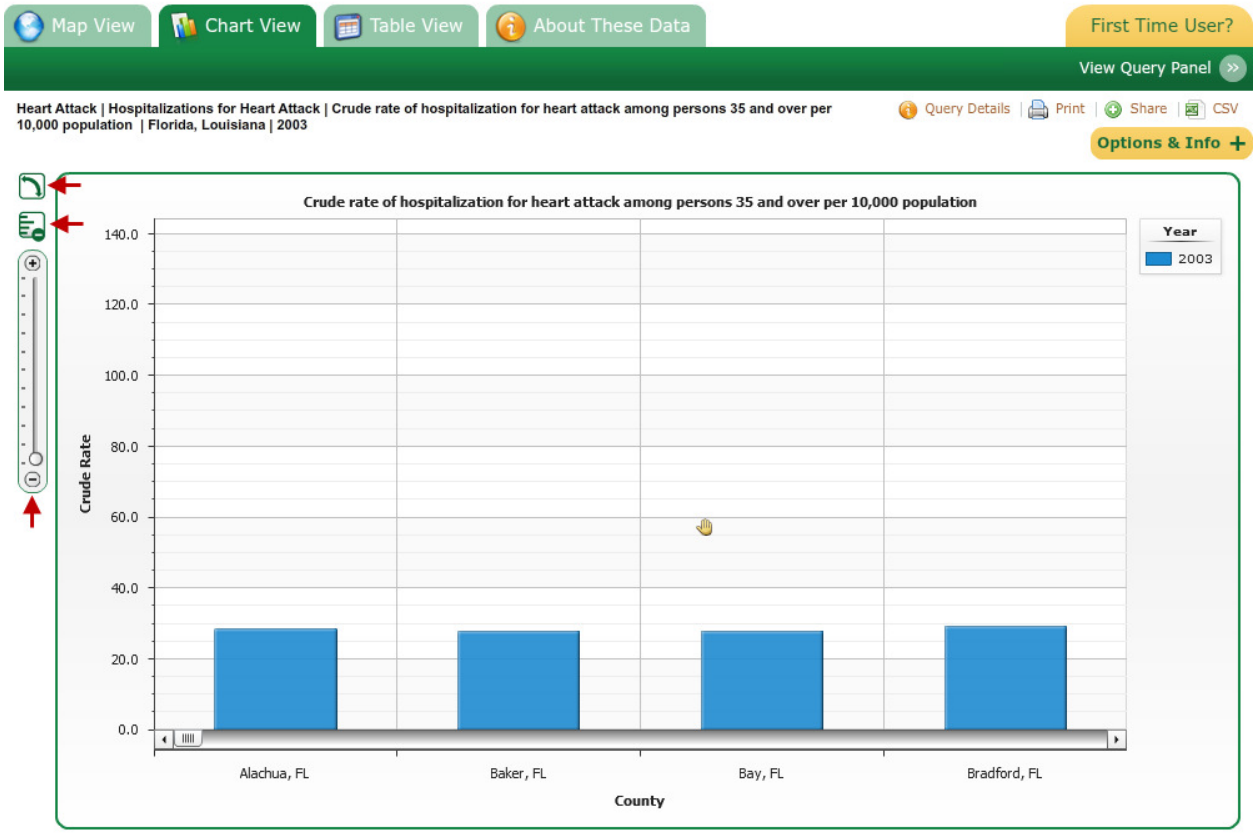


Figure 33. The Data Query and Results chart view

Additional features of the chart view:

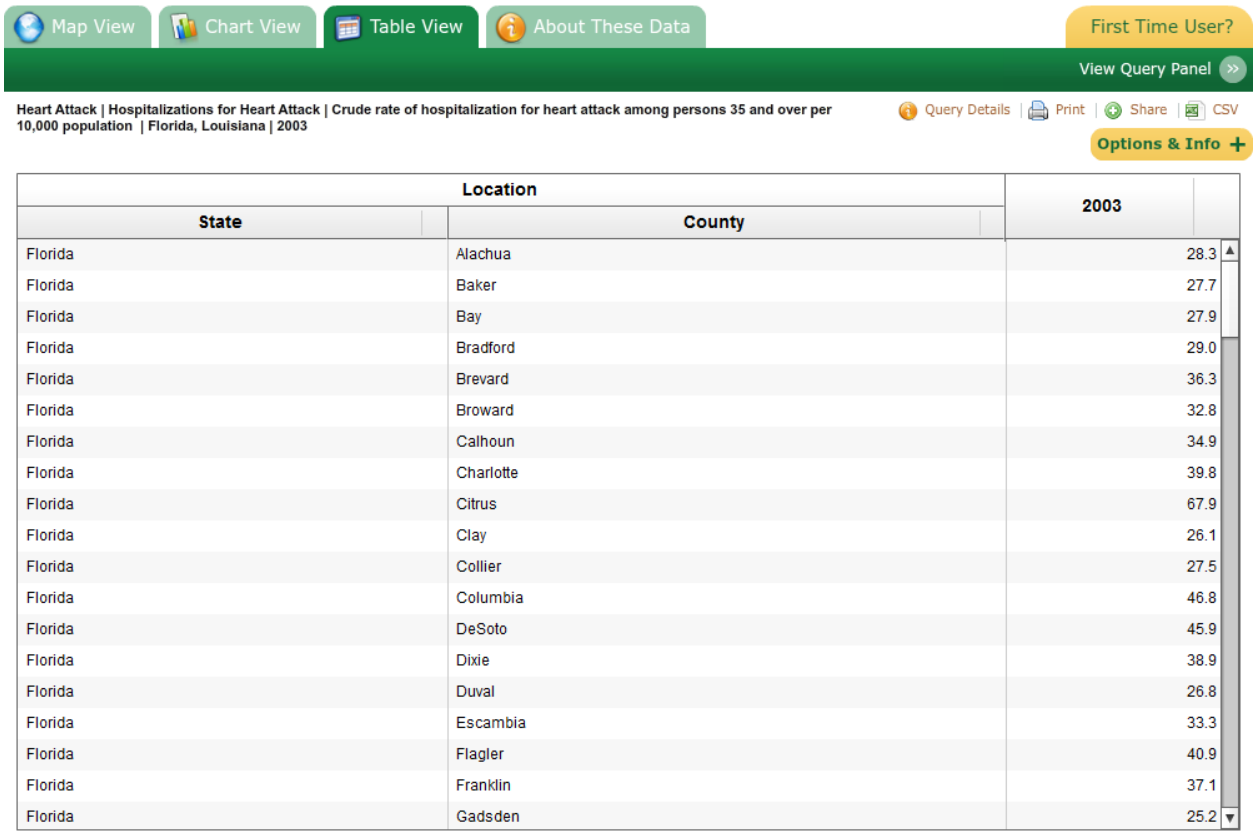
Flip Axis – View chart in a horizontal or vertical bar chart.

Hide Suppression and No Data Bars – Use to change the results to only show locations with data displayed.

Step 8c. Select Table View to view results in a table. (Figure 34)

When viewing tables you may see red asterisk (****) symbols and color coding. The **** symbols means the value is a non-zero count less than 6 and corresponding rates have been suppressed (hidden from view) to protect confidentiality.

Numbers highlighted in red are rates or measures with a relative standard error greater than 30%, are unstable (created based on a small number), and have been highlighted or suppressed to prevent misinterpretation.



Location		2003
State	County	
Florida	Alachua	28.3
Florida	Baker	27.7
Florida	Bay	27.9
Florida	Bradford	29.0
Florida	Brevard	36.3
Florida	Broward	32.8
Florida	Calhoun	34.9
Florida	Charlotte	39.8
Florida	Citrus	67.9
Florida	Clay	26.1
Florida	Collier	27.5
Florida	Columbia	46.8
Florida	DeSoto	45.9
Florida	Dixie	38.9
Florida	Duval	26.8
Florida	Escambia	33.3
Florida	Flagler	40.9
Florida	Franklin	37.1
Florida	Gadsden	25.2

Figure 34. The Data Query and Results table view

Additional Features of the Table View:

States and county columns can be sorted alphabetically. The time period column can also be sorted numerically and the years reordered for a more customized view.

Step 8d. Select *About These Data* for a description of the data you are about to view. These may also be referred to as footnotes which are associated with the results you receive and are based on the categories you have chosen. They provide information about the measure's source, quality, and general characteristics.

3.3 Query Indicators

From the home page:

Step 1. Click the *Indicators & Data* link under Quick Links.

Figure 35. Tracking home page quick links

Step 2. From the drop down lists on the *Indicators* section, select a *Content Area* and an *Indicator*. (Figure 36)

Step 3. Click *Go.*

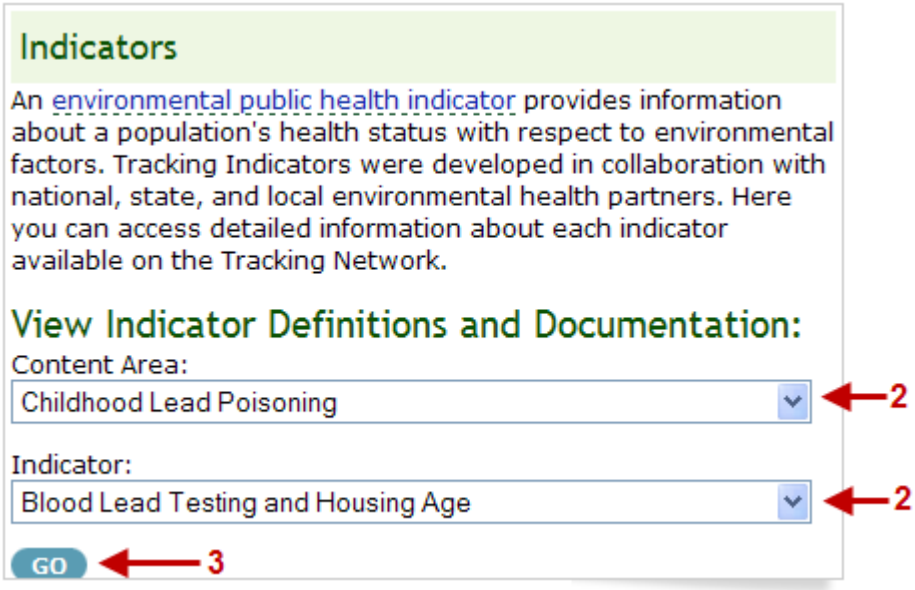
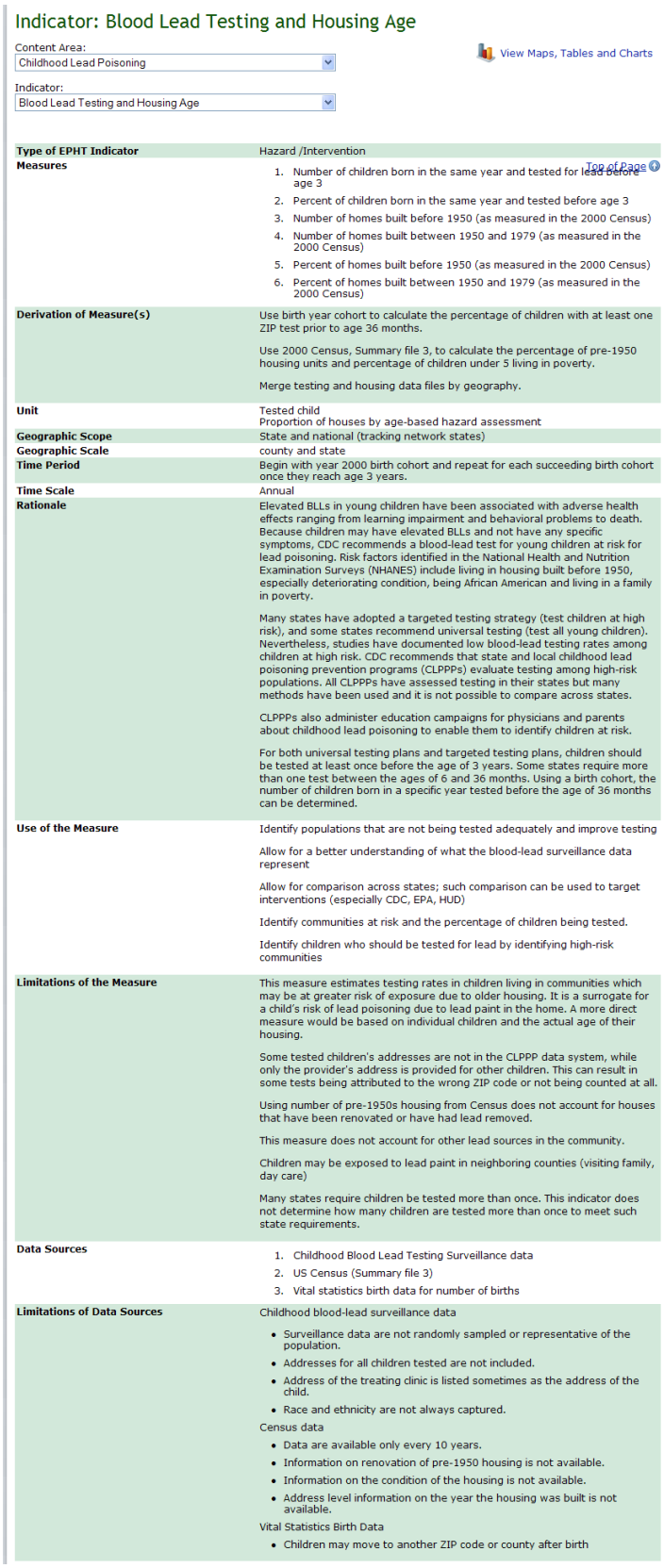


Figure 36. Indicator Definitions and Documentation lookup screen

A chart will appear that lists the indicator type, Tracking related measures, geography, time, rationale for choosing this measure for the Tracking Network, use of and limitations on the measures' data source. (Figure 37)



Indicator: Blood Lead Testing and Housing Age

Content Area:
Childhood Lead Poisoning

View Maps, Tables and Charts

Indicator:
Blood Lead Testing and Housing Age

Type of EPHT Indicator	Hazard /Intervention
Measures	Top of Page 1. Number of children born in the same year and tested for lead before age 3 2. Percent of children born in the same year and tested before age 3 3. Number of homes built before 1950 (as measured in the 2000 Census) 4. Number of homes built between 1950 and 1979 (as measured in the 2000 Census) 5. Percent of homes built before 1950 (as measured in the 2000 Census) 6. Percent of homes built between 1950 and 1979 (as measured in the 2000 Census)
Derivation of Measure(s)	Use birth year cohort to calculate the percentage of children with at least one ZIP test prior to age 36 months. Use 2000 Census, Summary file 3, to calculate the percentage of pre-1950 housing units and percentage of children under 5 living in poverty. Merge testing and housing data files by geography.
Unit	Tested child Proportion of houses by age-based hazard assessment
Geographic Scope	State and national (tracking network states)
Geographic Scale	county and state
Time Period	Begin with year 2000 birth cohort and repeat for each succeeding birth cohort once they reach age 3 years.
Time Scale	Annual
Rationale	Elevated BLLs in young children have been associated with adverse health effects ranging from learning impairment and behavioral problems to death. Because children may have elevated BLLs and not have any specific symptoms, CDC recommends a blood-lead test for young children at risk for lead poisoning. Risk factors identified in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES) include living in housing built before 1950, especially deteriorating condition, being African American and living in a family in poverty. Many states have adopted a targeted testing strategy (test children at high risk), and some states recommend universal testing (test all young children). Nevertheless, studies have documented low blood-lead testing rates among children at high risk. CDC recommends that state and local childhood lead poisoning prevention programs (CLPPPs) evaluate testing among high-risk populations. All CLPPPs have assessed testing in their states but many methods have been used and it is not possible to compare across states. CLPPPs also administer education campaigns for physicians and parents about childhood lead poisoning to enable them to identify children at risk. For both universal testing plans and targeted testing plans, children should be tested at least once before the age of 3 years. Some states require more than one test between the ages of 6 and 36 months. Using a birth cohort, the number of children born in a specific year tested before the age of 36 months can be determined.
Use of the Measure	Identify populations that are not being tested adequately and improve testing Allow for a better understanding of what the blood-lead surveillance data represent Allow for comparison across states; such comparison can be used to target interventions (especially CDC, EPA, HUD) Identify communities at risk and the percentage of children being tested. Identify children who should be tested for lead by identifying high-risk communities
Limitations of the Measure	This measure estimates testing rates in children living in communities which may be at greater risk of exposure due to older housing. It is a surrogate for a child's risk of lead poisoning due to lead paint in the home. A more direct measure would be based on individual children and the actual age of their housing. Some tested children's addresses are not in the CLPPP data system, while only the provider's address is provided for other children. This can result in some tests being attributed to the wrong ZIP code or not being counted at all. Using number of pre-1950s housing from Census does not account for houses that have been renovated or have had lead removed. This measure does not account for other lead sources in the community. Children may be exposed to lead paint in neighboring counties (visiting family, day care) Many states require children be tested more than once. This indicator does not determine how many children are tested more than once to meet such state requirements.
Data Sources	1. Childhood Blood Lead Testing Surveillance data 2. US Census (Summary file 3) 3. Vital statistics birth data for number of births
Limitations of Data Sources	Childhood blood-lead surveillance data • Surveillance data are not randomly sampled or representative of the population. • Addresses for all children tested are not included. • Address of the treating clinic is listed sometimes as the address of the child. • Race and ethnicity are not always captured. Census data • Data are available only every 10 years. • Information on renovation of pre-1950 housing is not available. • Information on the condition of the housing is not available. • Address level information on the year the housing was built is not available. Vital Statistics Birth Data • Children may move to another ZIP code or county after birth

Figure 37. *Indicator* screen from the *Indicators & Data link*

From this screen you can modify your selections or click on *View Maps, Tables and Charts* to go directly to the Data Query and Results page.

See Section 3.2 for the Data Query and Results page example and steps.

3.4 Search and View Metadata

From the home page:

Step 1. Click the *Indicators & Data* link

Figure 38. Tracking home page quick links

Under the **Search for Data** section, you will find a keyword search.

Step 2. Enter a keyword and click *GO* to perform a general metadata search. (Figure 39)

Note: Only keywords found in the metadata records will return a result. If you have used a word that is not found in any metadata record, you will not see any results.

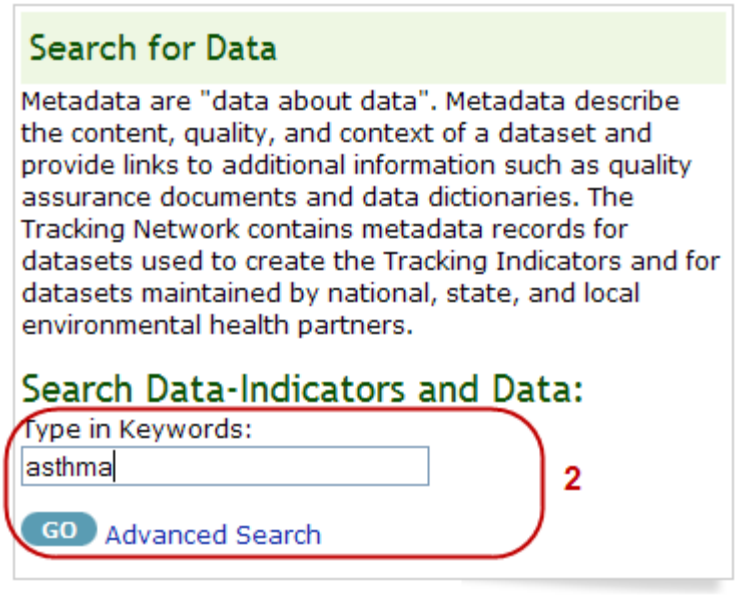


Figure 39. Data-Indicators and Data search area

The system returns a results page that displays all the metadata records that include your keyword. The description also includes the dataset title, abstract, and time period information. (Figure 40)

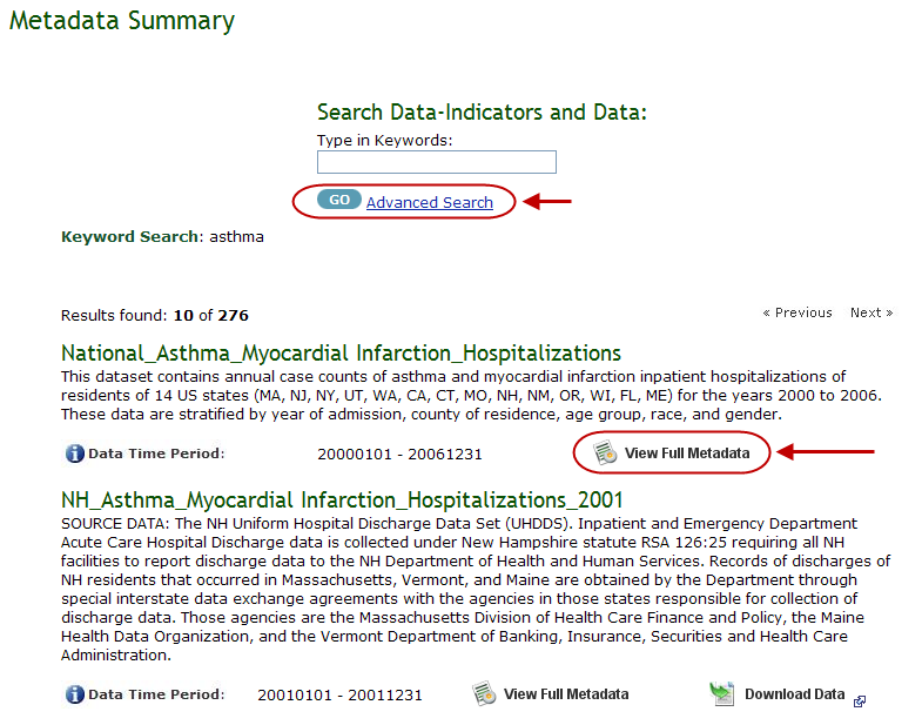


Figure 40. Metadata Summary

These results are short descriptions of the available metadata records. You can choose to view the full metadata report, which contains a complete description of the data according to the Tracking Network metadata standard.

For a more specific metadata view, perform an *Advanced Search*.

Note the *Advanced Search* option in the *Search for Data* section of the *Indicators & Data* main page. This option will allow you to refine your search further. (Figure 41)

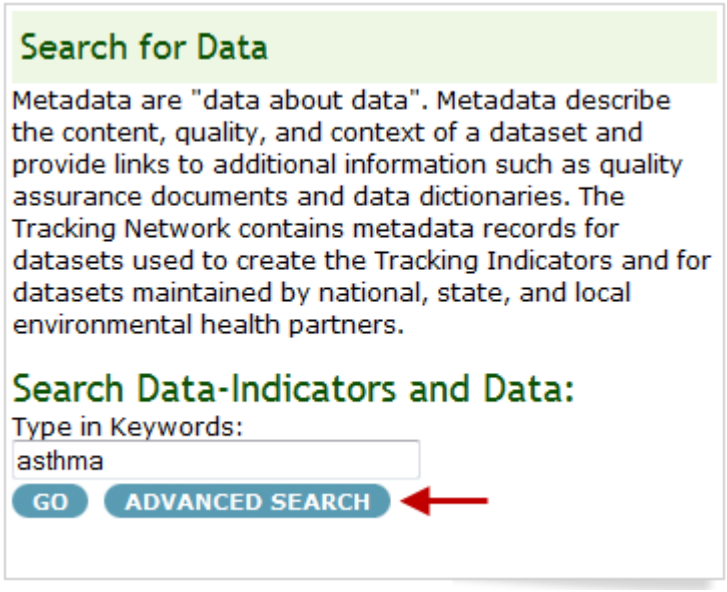


Figure 41. Metadata Advanced Search

Select the *Advanced Search Options* to open the search criteria page. (Figure 42)

Step 1. Specify a date range—or choose not to search based on time period.

Step 2. Search for keywords from the categories in the drop down list (for example Abstract, Purpose, Location, Keyword, Title). When searching more than one word you must choose an (*AND/OR*) connector.

Step 3. To see the results, click *Search*.

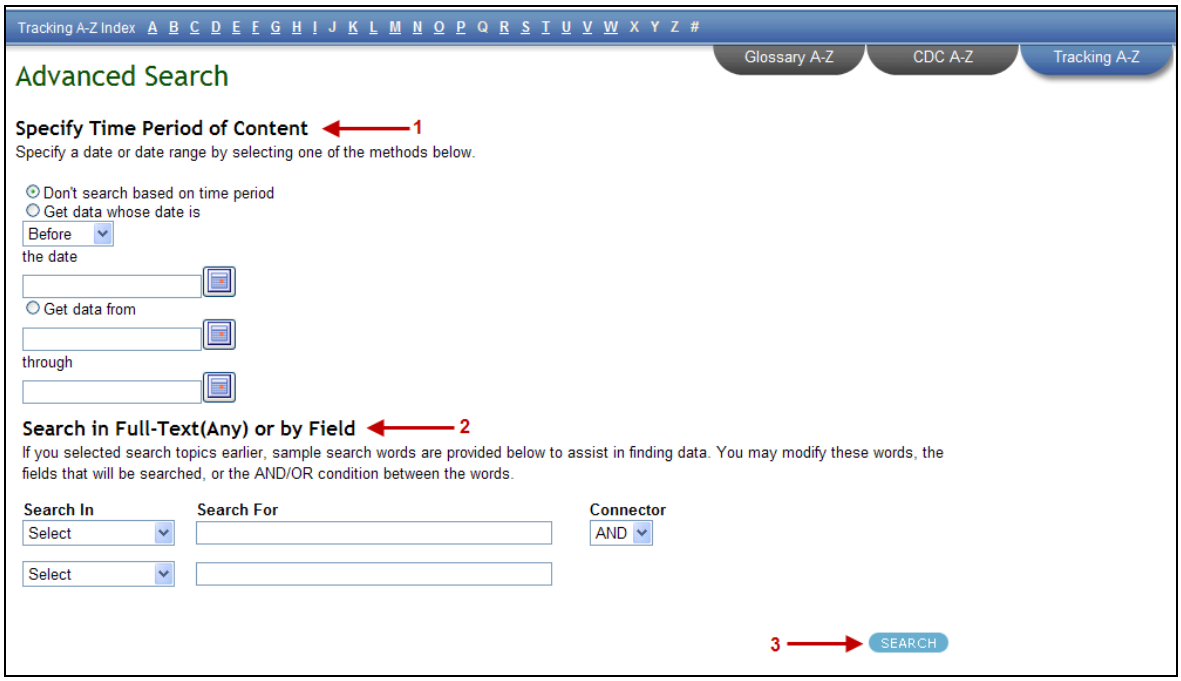


Figure 42. The Advanced Search screen for Metadata

3.5 Sample Search Scenarios

To conclude the *Navigating and Using the Public Portal* chapter, here are a few sample scenarios.

3.5.1 I want to learn more about arsenic in water.

From the home page

Step 1. Click *Water* under Environments. (Figure 43)

Figure 43. The Environments tab

Step 2. Click *Community Water* or *More Community Water Data and Information.* (Figure 44)

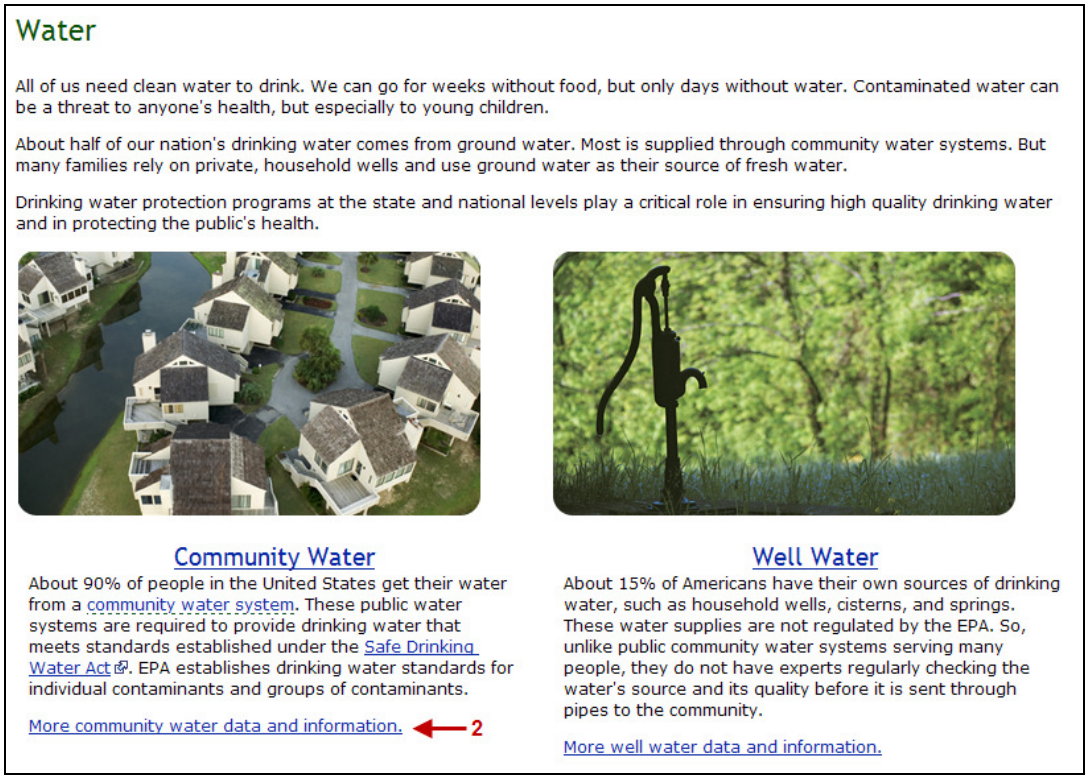


Figure 44. The Water landing page

Step 3. (Figure 45) Here you have three options. In the blue box labeled Additional Links, choose Arsenic. This will take you to information about arsenic, exposure, and prevention.

OR

Step 3a. Click the Indicator link on the same page to view a slide out of Community Water indicators. Click on *Arsenic in Community Water Systems*. This will lead you to information about this indicator, such as measure, descriptions, time period, and a scale of measures for arsenic and others.

OR

Step 3b. Click the Search Data link on the same page to open the Query and Results page. Select Arsenic in Community Water Systems as the indicator.

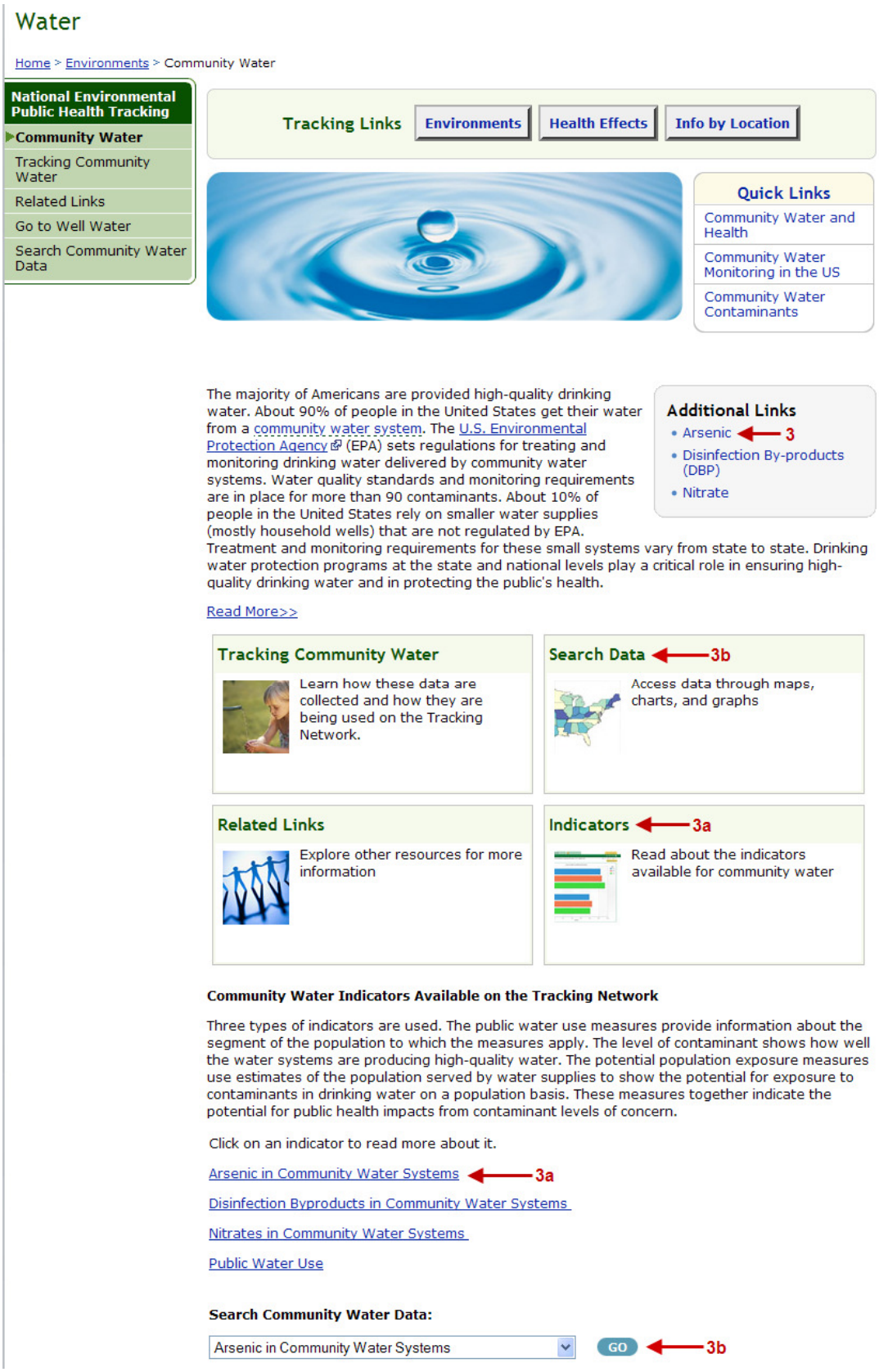


Figure 45. More community water data and information options

3.5.2 I want to learn about lead based paint in homes in my state.

From the Home page:

Step 1. Go to the Info by Location section, select a state and click the search button. (Figure 46)

Figure 46. The Info by Location state selection area

Step 2. (Figure 47) Under *Select your Content Area* choose *Homes* as the Content Area, *Blood Lead Testing & Housing Age* as the Indicator*, and Number of homes built before 1950* as the Measure*.*

Click *Go.*

Note: If you do not find the content area, indicator, and measure you are looking for, data is not available for that chosen state.

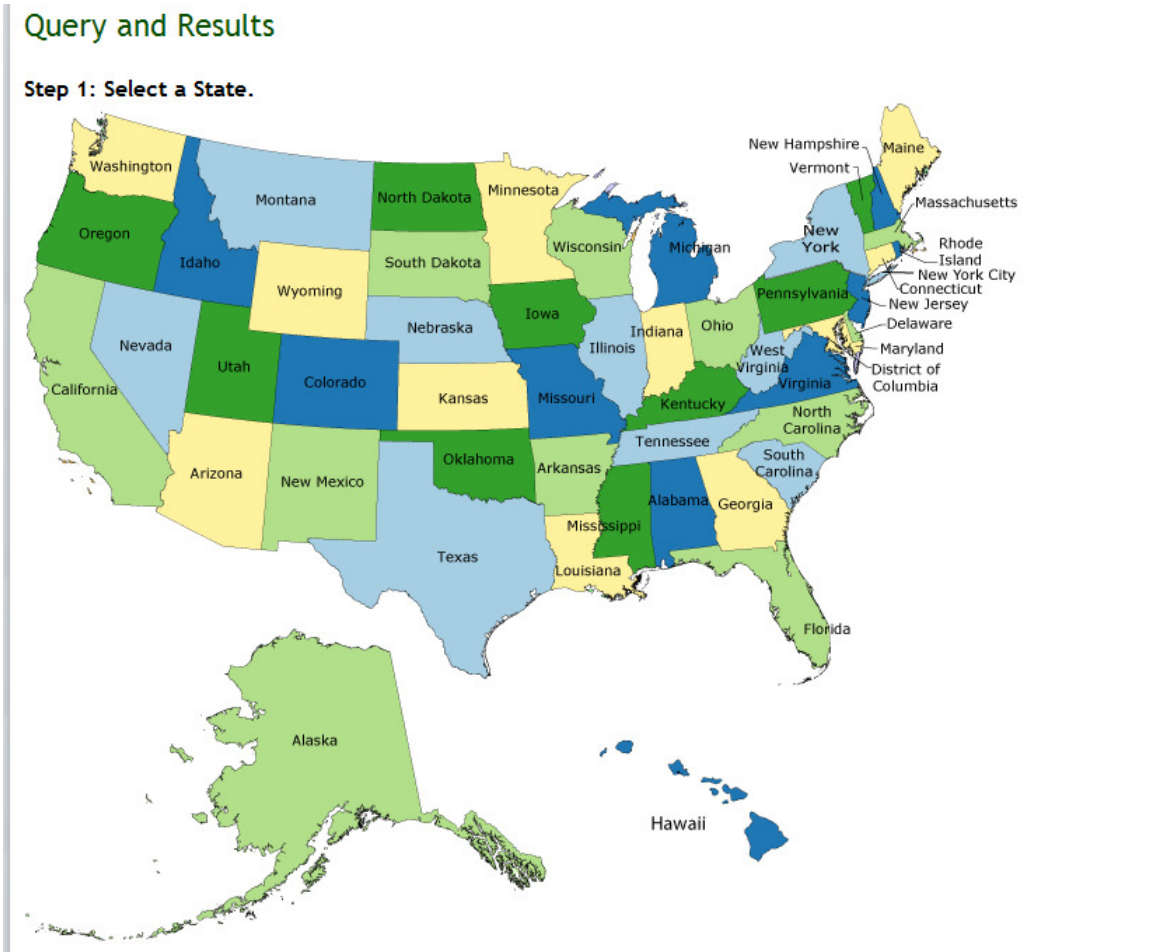


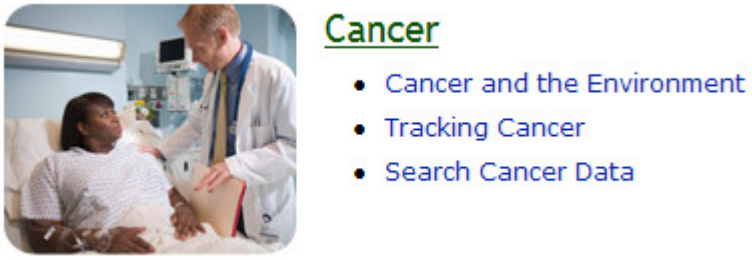
Figure 47. The Info by Location geography and content area selection screen

3.5.3 What kind of cancer information and data are on the Network.

Step 1. From the home page, click the *Health Effects* Tab. (Figure 48)

Figure 48. The Health Effects tab

Step 2. From the Cancer subheading, click *Tracking Cancer.* This will take you to information about how cancer data is tracked and provided to the Network.



3.5.4 I want to see the Tracking Network Public Portal for New Mexico.

Step 1. From the Quick Links, click *State & Local Tracking Portals*.

Figure 49. Tracking home page quick links

Step 2. Click on the image or link for New Mexico

New Mexico

3.5.5 I want to find asthma metadata.

Step 1. From the Quick Links click I*ndicators and Data*.

Figure 50. Tracking home page quick links

Step 2. In the *Search for Data* box—enter asthma as a keyword. (Figure 51)

Step 3. Click *GO* to view results.

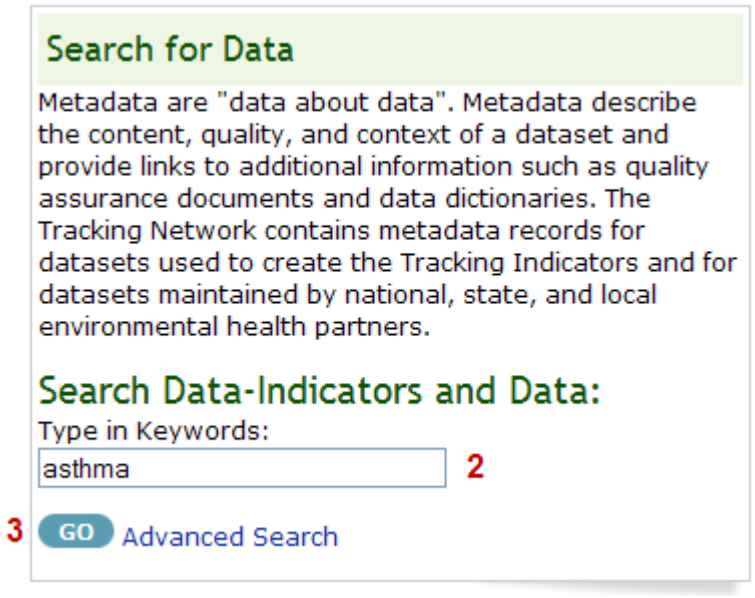


Figure 51. The *Search Data-Indicators and Data area*

4. The Secure Portal

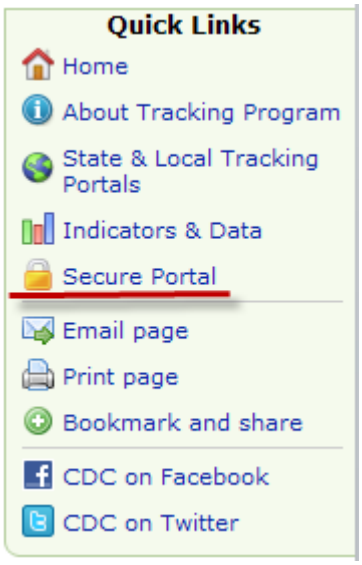


Figure 52. Tracking home page quick links

What is it?

The Tracking Network's secure portal is a Web-based system that houses the Tracking Networks nationally consistent data and measures. Through the secure portal you can view data available to the Tracking Network at a more detailed level. You can also extract the data and synthesize it in your own way, in addition to the way the Tracking Network has presented it to you through the Data Query and Results panel.

What is its purpose?

To support the implementation of the Tracking Network's nationally consistent data and measures and provide a secure, online resource center for grantees, partners, and other public health practitioners.

Who can use it?

It is intended for use by grantees, partners, public health practitioners, and researchers.

How secure is it?

To protect potentially private and confidential health information, the secure portal employs rigorous security measures.

The CDC Secure Data Network (SDN) protects content on the secure portal. The SDN, which protects sensitive CDC data, has security measures that include:

- rigorous identity proofing conducted by the CDC's registrar,
- electronic security certificates installed on accessing computers,
- role-based security measures implemented in the portal itself.

Secure users will be responsible for establishing access to SDN and installing any required security certificates. These measures are in accordance with appropriate guidance issued by the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

How can I register?

To become a registered user you must have an appropriate professional need to access the data and resources in the secure portal. (Figure 53)

Step 1 - To begin the process, fill out the Application for Access. If you are approved, you will receive an email that contains a web link to the SDN site and a password. This is your access to download the digital certificate.

Step 2 – The Digital Certificate and CDC Programs manual contain instructions for the SDN Enrollment Process, including instructions for installing the digital certificate.

Step 3 – Fill out the Data Request Form. Include a description of how the requested data will be used. The Tracking Program will forward this to the appropriate state or local Tracking Grantee who must approve your request.

Step 4 - After you are authorized to use the restricted data, you must sign a Data Use Agreement with the CDC, which will subject you to the terms of the relevant agreements between the CDC Tracking Program and data stewards or state and local Tracking Grantees.

Step 5 - When this process is complete, you can login to the Secure Portal.

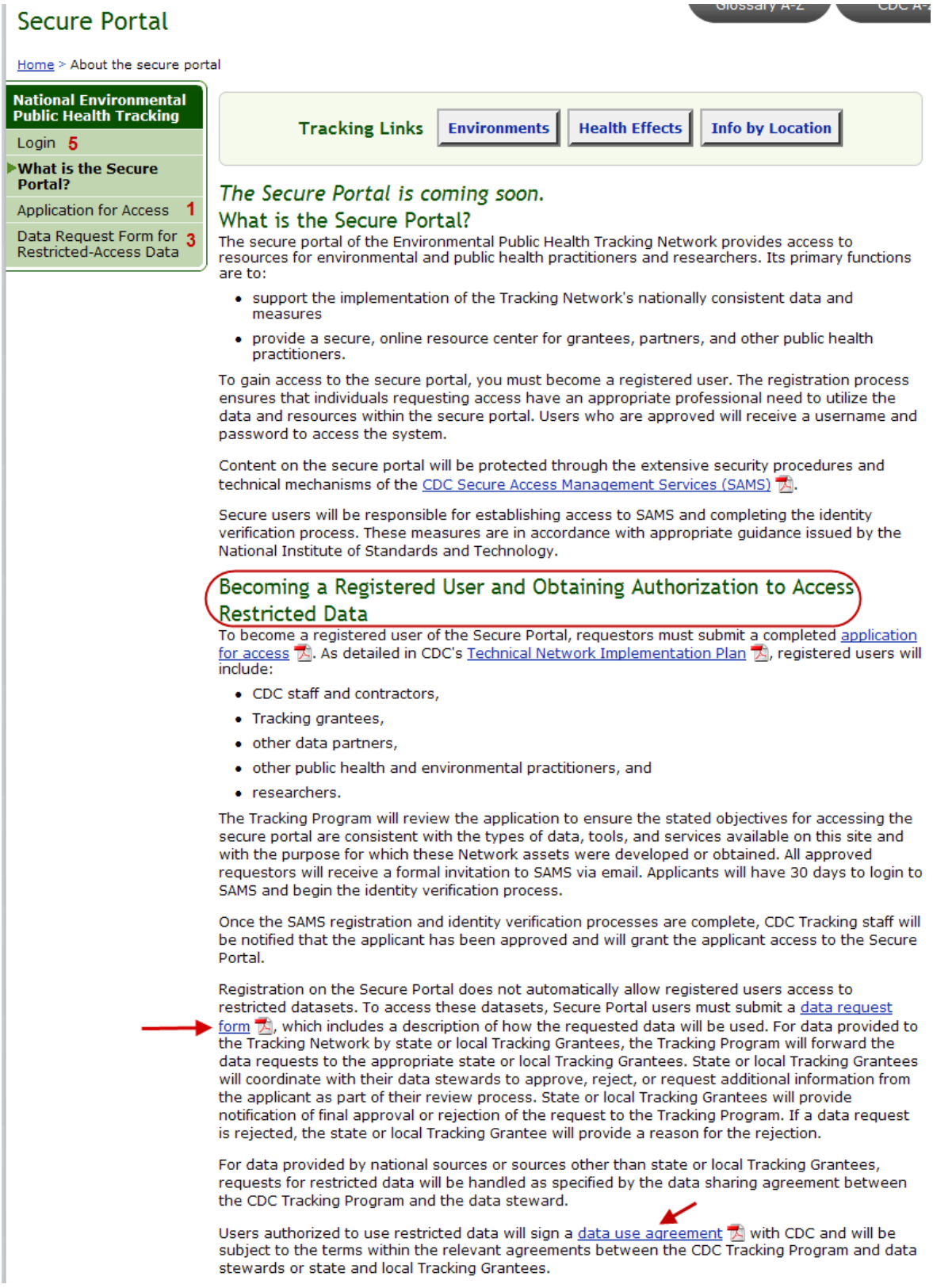


Figure 53. The Secure Portal screen

5. Frequently Asked Questions

Data and Content Updates

Q: How often is new data added to the Tracking Network?
A: Usually data updates or new data are added to the Tracking Network 3 to 4 times per year. We perform periodic data calls throughout the year. The data updates come from both our grantee and national datasets and occur as data is released throughout the year.

Q: Where can I find more information about the Tracking Network's data sources?
A: There is a document titled *Data Sources Overview* in the Communication Materials section of the Communication Features page on the network. It is a quick view of where data comes from for the Tracking Network.

Data and Query Results Page

Q: How do I export data?
A: From the query results click on the CSV icon in the upper right hand side of the page. Follow the prompts to download and save the file.

Q: On the query panel, when I query data for one state it returns a map of all the states. Why?
A: In order to make the maps more useful and provide proper class breaks we need to include as many states as possible. Otherwise, we would not be able to display a map. The reason for it not displaying the way you are expecting is because our maps are available at specific scales and the system determines the ideal scale on its own. The map may need to zoom a little farther out to display properly. This scaling will change as updates are added to the system.

Q: Where can I find more information about how displayed data is calculated?
A: Each content area has a detailed indicator page. You can find these under the Indicators & Data tab. Many of the indicator pages include a section titled *Derivation of Measure(s)* that describe the calculations.

Q: Why do some of the query results display "No Data" in the charts?
A: The missing data is actually correct. Not all states submit the same years of data, because their data stewards give them the data at different times. You'll find that some states have all the way up to 2009, but some only to 2006. Also, a few are missing 2000-2003 as well.

Secure Portal

Q: What is the difference between the secure portal and the public portal?
A: The public portal is designed for use by the general public. In addition to data, it also contains important information about risk, exposure, and possible prevention behaviors.

The secure portal is designed for use by environmental public health practitioners. On the secure portal more detailed data, analysis, visualization, and reporting tools are provided. The secure portal is also used to pilot and refine the information and information resources that will be provided on the public portal.

Q: How do I gain access to the secure portal?
A: The secure portal is currently under development. Detailed information for accessing the secure portal is available on the public portal and in Chapter 4 of our User Guide. The User Guide in the Document Library under the Resources section of the Public Portal.

Get Help

Q: I have been exposed to a dangerous substance, what should I do?
A: If you need immediate medical attention, call your doctor or 911. If you are looking for information about how this substance may affect your health, call or email CDC Info at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) or cdcinfo@cdc.gov.

Q: How can I submit questions, comments, or suggestions to the Tracking Network?
A: We are very interested in your comments and suggestions. You can email us at trackingsupport@cdc.gov or call us at 1-877-923-TRACK (8722)

Get Involved

Q: Who are the Tracking Network grantees?
A: Grantees are state and local health departments that receive grants to help underwrite the collection and submission of data to CDC's Tracking Network. Our current grantees are:

California	Colorado	Connecticut
Florida	Iowa	Kansas
Louisiana	Massachusetts	Maryland
Maine	Minnesota	Missouri

New Hampshire	New Jersey	New Mexico
New York	Oregon	Pennsylvania
South Carolina	Utah	Vermont
Washington	Wisconsin	New York City

Q: How can I collaborate with the Tracking Network if I am not a Grantee?
A: When you contact us at trackingsupport@cdc.gov we will put you in contact with one of our Project Officers. Project Officers collaborate with states, universities, and non-government organizations directly. The Project Office will assist you in determining how we can work with you.

Q: How can I be updated on Tracking Network news and information?
A: You can subscribe to subscribe to our list-serve by emailing us at epht@cdc.gov. Please include your name, email address, and the agency or organization for which you work.