



Utah Environmental Public Health Tracking Network

Issue 12

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What's New: EPHT 101

Department of Health



EPHT 101 Now Available:

The online independent study course “Environmental Public Health Tracking 101” is now available. This course can be viewed free of charge for informational purposes or can be purchased at a discounted rate for Continuing Education Credits.

“If you want to learn about the health of a population, look at the air they breathe, the water they drink, and the places where they live.”
 -Hippocrates,
 the Father of Medicine,
 5th century BCE

EPHT 101 Introduction

Environmental public health has been fundamental to public health in the United States throughout history. Many early efforts to ease the burden of disease on the U.S. population have been environmental health efforts; in fact, the 30-year increase in life expectancy from 1900 to 1998 has been attributed to environmental public health monitoring and regulation of the water supply, sewage systems, and food quality, as well as to immunizations and primary preventive care. As these fundamental environmental health issues were being addressed, the progression of industrial science and technology led

to the development and use of many new chemical compounds, which often made their way into the air, water, food and soil. At the same time, urban growth (and the related urban sprawl) led to increasing levels of pollution from automotive traffic throughout the country. As more governmental resources were devoted to such environmental concerns, environmental and public health efforts were often carried out by different agencies, and consequently environmental health became somewhat less integrated into general public health efforts than it had been in the past.

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EPHT 101 (Continued)

In recent years, the burden of non-infectious health conditions on the American public has grown substantially. Many of these health conditions are suspected to be linked to environmental hazards; however, it is difficult to study these possible linkages effectively in the absence of a national environmental public health tracking system.

This course, Environmental Public Health Tracking 101, gives an overview of the major components of Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT). The course is divided into 12 modules. Each module focuses on a different subject. The modules are described on page 3.

Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT) is the ongoing collection, integration, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of data on environmental hazards, exposures to those hazards, and the health effects that may be related to the exposures. The goal of tracking is to provide information that can be used to plan, apply, and evaluate actions to prevent and control environmentally related diseases.



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is leading the initiative to build a National EPHT Network, which will integrate hazard, exposure and health effects data into a standardized electronic network. The network will provide valid scientific information on environmental exposures and adverse health conditions, as well as the possible ways they may be related temporally and spatially.

To register for EPHT 101:

1. Go to www.utah.train.org
2. Log onto U-TRAIN or Create an Account
3. Search Course ID #1009900
4. Enter Discount Code: **EHT50**

EPHT 101 Introduction (Continued)

EPHT 101 Modules:

- *Module 1-* Introduction: This module gives a basic overview of the course, its purpose, layout, and navigational structure.
- *Module 2-* The National EPHT initiative: This module gives an overview of the ways in which CDC is leading the development of the National EPHT Network.
- *Module 3-* The National EPHT Network: This module describes the way the National EPHT Network, which is currently being developed, will be structured.
- *Module 4-* The Basics of Public Health Surveillance: This module gives an introduction to public health surveillance through the use of examples to illustrate how surveillance tracking is used to help improve public health.
- *Module 5-* Environmental Hazard Data and Information: This module describes some of the major sources of environmental data as well as some of the major laws that govern how environmental data is collected. It also describes different kinds of hazard and environmental data, how they are collected, and what the differences and similarities are between them.
- *Module 6-* Introduction to Biomonitoring: This module describes different types of exposure data and how they are collected, with a focus on biomonitoring.
- *Module 7-* Basics of Health Effects Data: This module describes different sources and types of health effects data and how they are collected.
- *Module 8-* Environmental Public Health Indicators: This module describes Environmental Public Health Indicators and their use.
- *Module 9-* Introduction to Geographic Information Systems: This module gives an overview of GIS and describes how they are useful to EPHT.
- *Module 10-* Introduction to Epidemiology: This module gives an overview of epidemiology and discusses the role it plays in the public health approach.
- *Module 11-* Policy and Practice: This module discusses current policies that affect environmental public health tracking and the ways EPHT will help policymakers by providing data to support the decision-making process.
- *Module 12-* Communication: This module discusses risk perception and the importance of risk communication, and then outlines some approaches to and strategies for developing risk communication messages. It also discusses communication efforts made by CDC's EPHT Program and its partners.



Updates

- New EPHT Program Marketing and Outreach Packets are now available. The packet includes a bound presentation, pamphlet, Frequently Asked Questions, CDC At-A-Glance, and EPHT contact information, all contained in one convenient folder. Contact Alison Cox at amcox@utah.gov to receive this packet.
- EPHT 101 is now available at no cost for informational purposes, or at a discounted rate for Continuing Education Credits. See page 2

Upcoming Events

- The next Environmental Public Health Tracking Network Grantees' meeting will be held November 12-15 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.
- EPHT Program Marketing and Outreach Workgroup will meet Monday, October 8.
- EPHT Risk Communications Workgroup will meet Monday, October 15.

Training Opportunities

The Environmental Epidemiology Program is Currently Offering Training In:

- *GIS*: A 4-hour course on the basics of the ESRI ArcView software. This includes lessons on the features of ArcView, how to navigate the software, how to load, create or modify map data, how to create, manipulate, enhance and publish maps, and how to organize and store projects. Other lessons include an introduction to the many tools and extensions in ArcView and a brief introduction to customization.
- *Cluster Investigation*: A 2-hour course on common methods used to detect, characterize and evaluate potential disease clusters.
- *Advanced Cluster Investigation*: A 4-hour course on advanced methods of cluster analysis that includes lessons on spatial autocorrelation, and modeling to control for confounding and multiple risks.
- *Disease Mapping*: A 2-hour course on common methods used to compute, standardize and smooth disease rates and compare rates as rate ratios.
- *Advanced Disease Mapping*: A 4-hour course on advanced methods of disease mapping that includes methods of spatial filters, interpolation, spatial surfaces and lattice.
- *SaTScan*: A 2-hour course on the basics of the SaTScan software. This includes lessons on the various models implemented in the SaTScan software, how the statistics work, how to create and load data for the software and how to interpret the results. Lessons also include methods for presenting SaTScan results graphically within ArcView software.
- Indicator-Based Information System for Public Health (IBIS)

Trainings That Are Coming Soon:

- Risk Communications
- Lessons on Bayesian methods using the WinBugs tool, focal risk analysis and risk modeling in a GIS environment.

Contact Alison Cox if you are interested in any of these trainings: amcox@utah.gov

Just Joining the EPHT Newsletter?

Basic Information

What is the EPHTN?

The Environmental Public Health Tracking Network (EPHTN) will be a nationwide network for bringing together information on environmental hazards, human exposures to hazards and health outcomes. This network will be the first of its kind and will contain local, state and national data.

Why an EPHTN?

Both the Institute of Medicine and the Pew Charitable Trust have reported that there is too little attention given to the health consequences of environmental hazards. Environmental and health data are often collected separately, in different places, and in different formats. Lack of coordination in the data makes it difficult to monitor and study relationships. A comprehensive tracking network will allow experts to more effectively link environmental hazards to disease outcomes.

Who is Building the EPHTN?

CDC began the effort of building the network in 2002. CDC is funding 16 state health departments, including the Utah Department of Health, to develop model systems. CDC also funds four universities of public health. Funded partners are working with communities and other organizations to identify and evaluate sources of information. CDC is working with federal agencies such as the EPA and NASA as well as many smaller organizations and advocacy groups.

EPHTN Contacts

Sam LeFevre, Project Manager
slefevre@utah.gov

Lew Jeppson, Research Analyst
ljeppson@utah.gov

Brittney Carver, Technical Support
blcarver@utah.gov

Alison Cox, Health Educator
amcox@utah.gov

New Faces in EPHT

Welcome Alison Cox:

Alison is the new health educator for the Environmental Public Health Tracking Network. She is a recent graduate from Utah State University with a degree as a Health Education Specialist with an emphasis in Community Health and a minor in Art History. She has completed internships in Kenya, Africa in AIDS prevention, the Cancer Control Program, and the Asthma Program at the Utah Department of Health. She is married with no children and comes from a large extended family. She enjoys being with her family, watching movies, hiking, playing the piano and more. Welcome Alison to the Environmental Public Health Tracking Network.





Environmental Public Health Tracking Project
Office of Epidemiology
288 North 1460 West
P.O. Box 142104
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-2104
Phone: 801-538-6191
Fax: 801-538-6564
www.health.utah.gov/ephtp

WE'RE ON THE WEB WWW.HEALTH.UTAH.GOV/EPHTP

Utah Environmental Health Tracking Network

Mission: To develop a state-wide, standards-based, Web-enabled tracking network information system in Utah to enable information and knowledge dissemination and improve public health in the realm of chronic diseases related to environmental factors.

Contact Alison Cox at amcox@utah.gov if you have an article or news you would like in the upcoming Utah EPHTN newsletter

