Utah Department of Health

Promote Prevent Protect

Environmental Public Health Tracking

Spring 2009 Issue 18

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Upcoming TNAC and SRB Meeting: Thursday, April 29th from 2:00-4:00 in room 125 of the Cannon Building

National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network Conference in Washington D.C.

In February of 2009, the Utah Tracking Team had the opportunity to attend the National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network Conference in Washington D.C. At this conference the Utah Tracking Team was able to meet with other Tracking states and Tracking Network partners from across the nation. This included representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency, United States Geological Survey, national political program supporters, and many more. The Utah Tracking Team was able to participate in a variety of presentations and a poster. The presentations the Utah Tracking Team were involved in include:

- Metadata Creation Training
- Rapid Inquiry Facility Training
- Promoting Environmental Public Health Tracking Through a Coordinated Communication Campaign…Not as Easy as it Sounds!
- Adapting IBIS Software for Environmental Public Health Tracking: Three States Demonstrate a Solution to Presenting Indicators and Querying Data
- Integrating Biomonitoring Results and Tracking
- Utah Tracking Encounters GRID Technology
- A National Surveillance and Prevention Approach for Hazardous Substances
- Cancer Surveillance Data on Tracking Portals: CDC and State and Local Examples

The Poster that the Utah Tracking Team Contributed to the conference was titled:

- An Investigation of Cancer Among Students Attending Schools with Cell Towers

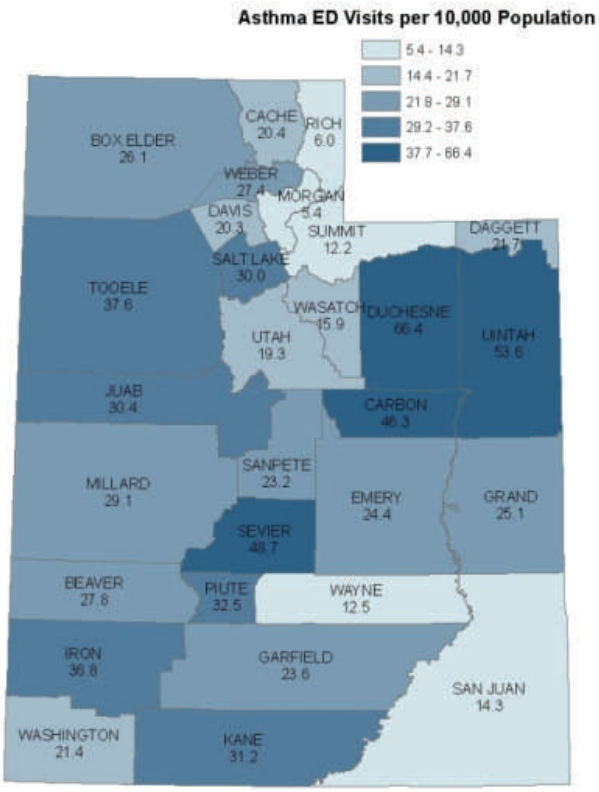
New Tracking Network IBIS-PH Indicators

The Tracking Network has added a variety of new graph views and indicators into the IBIS-PH system. These indicators are either environmental data used to assess possible exposure to hazards, or health outcome data that can be related to environmental contaminants. Among the new additions are:

- Drinking Water: Public Water System Use
- Hazardous Substance Releases
- Bladder Cancer by Year and Sex
- Cancer of the Brain and Central Nervous System by Year and Sex
- Leukemias By Year and Sex
- Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma by Year and Sex
- Thyroid Cancer by Year and Sex

"Mapping is a great, user-friendly way to visually display data"

Mapping Indicator Data in IBIS-PH



Mapping is a great, user-friendly way to visually display data. Map-makers should use care when creating data maps to ensure that data is represented accurately, and with proper risk communication in mind. There are a variety of ways to map the same data which may create many different data "stories" for the user. For example, depending on the interval break method used, a mapper mapping birth data could be seen as portraying a drastically high birth rate, or it can be made to look like the overall fertility in an area is dangerously low. Currently the Tracking Team is working with program and data partners to map data as accurately as possible. Take a look at one of the maps that we have added to the Asthma Emergency Department Visits Indicator.

Environmental Public Health Tracking Across the Nation

Environmental Public Health Tracking is happening across the nation. This exciting new program has recently launched a variety of data portals in different states. Some of these states have adopted Utah's IBIS-PH system as their Environmental Public Health Tracking Network, while others have used other interesting ways to portray their data. Although the National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network that contains information for the entire nation in one location has not yet launched, we are excited to view what other states have created and are anxiously awaiting the launch of the National Network. **Click on the links below** to see Tracking Networks across the nation.

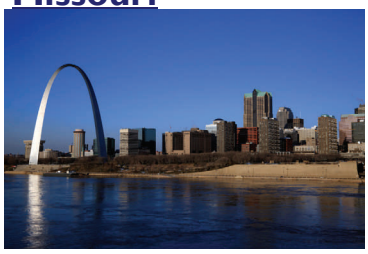
California

Florida

Maryland

Pennsylvania

Missouri

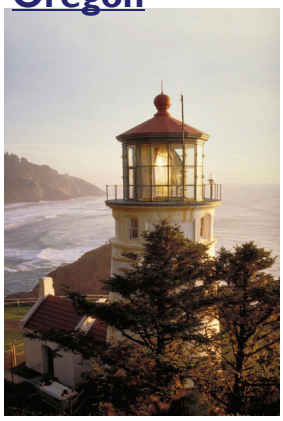


Washington

New Mexico

New Jersey

Oregon



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The Environmental Public Health Tracking Network (Tracking Network) 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. Our mission is 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.