Environmental Health Services & Outreach

Division of Environmental Health
Phone: 515-281-0921
www.idph.state.ia.us/eh/env_health.asp

Promoting & Protecting the Health of Iowans

IDPH Iowa Department of Public Health

We live in a time when it's easy to take many things for granted. Clean water, safe food, and proper waste disposal are things we expect. However, it takes properly trained people at the local level to carry out the work needed to ensure the basics we've come to expect are there consistently. IDPH works to ensure the same services and knowledge are delivered statewide, regardless the size of the community.

IDPH supports local boards of health and their employees in providing environmental health programs. Since 2001, over 1,375 attendees from local public health agencies have participated in more than 40 training programs. That's an estimated 7,960 hours of professional training! These trained individuals are key in performing routine inspections on regulated facilities as well as providing technical assistance and guidance to local public health officials and Iowans who have concern regarding environmental exposures and their health.

Did you know?

In state fiscal year 2012, over 5,700 private wells in Iowa had their water tested for coliform bacteria and nitrate through the Grants to Counties program.

Why is Environmental Health Services and Outreach important to promoting and protecting the health of Iowans?

- Concerns about environmental conditions continue to increase, but the level of environmental health services is not consistent across the state.
- Environmental health affects every Iowan every day. The environmental health workforce is vital to making sure Iowans are safe where they live, work, and play.
- Environmental hazards may affect Iowans in a public health emergency or natural disaster. These include food safety, availability of clean drinking water, management of waste, and air quality.
- Iowa's environmental health workforce is aging and it is important to recruit new graduates to the field of environmental health.
- During public health emergencies and natural disasters, federal resources are typically not available for the first 72 hours. Local health agencies must be prepared to respond until additional assistance arrives.

Which Iowa Public Health Goals are we working to achieve?

Strengthen the public health infrastructure

Protect against environmental hazards

Prepare for, respond to, & recover from public health emergencies

What do we do?

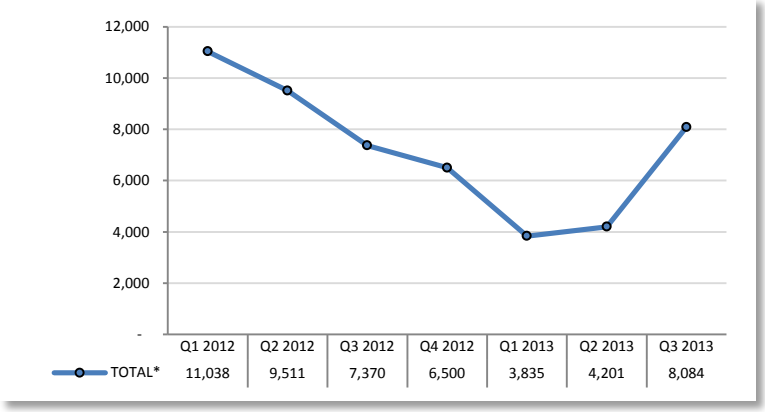
- Offer consultation to local boards of health and boards of supervisors on their role in providing environmental health services. This includes finding and hiring qualified environmental health specialists.
- Provide training and consultation services to local environmental health staff and public on issues including indoor air quality, water quality, tattoo inspections, and more.
- Provide technical assistance and consultation during a food or water related illness outbreak investigation.
- Facilitate coordination between state agencies and local public health agencies.
- Provide equipment, assistance, and back-up staff for local emergency response plans.
- The Grants to Counties Water Well program provides funding to local health departments for private well testing, plugging abandoned wells, and renovating existing wells.

How do we measure our progress?

❶ **Number of consultations provided on environmental health related issues.**

Data Source: Division tracking logs. Data are available monthly.

How are we doing? The Division of Environmental Health implemented a new tracking system in July 2011. During the first 18 months, the division provided over 42,000 consultations to Iowans and others on issues such as indoor air quality, water quality, lead poisoning, and radiological health and safety, which is an average of approximately 2,300 per month.



*Values based on State Fiscal Year

What can Iowans do to help?

1. All Iowans should develop a personal or family disaster plan. For more information, go to www.ready.gov.
2. Iowans can contact their county environmental health office if they would like a free water test for their private well, or if they need help paying for the cost of plugging a well.
3. Local public health officials, elected officials and board of health members should call 515-281-0921 with questions about the delivery of environmental health services in Iowa.
4. Public health administrators, local boards of health, environmental health directors, and practitioners should attend regional trainings. For more information, go to www.idph.state.ia.us/EHS/Calendar.aspx.

Expenditures

General fund, federal funds, & intra state receipts* (Dept of Natural Resources): K09-0963; K13-1303/1402/1404; 0153-1904.

	State Fiscal Year 2011 Actual	State Fiscal Year 2012 Actual	State Fiscal Year 2013 Estimate
State funds	$338,448	$351,181	$314,314
Federal funds	$96,053	$21,783	$0
Other funds*	$1,456,942	$1,614,845	$2,080,000
Total funds	**$1,891,443**	**$1,987,809**	**$2,394,314**
FTEs	4.62	4.07	4.30

Note: Funding information is intended to provide an overview of funding related to the program area. It does not include all federal and state requirements and/or restrictions for the use of funds. Contact the program area for more detailed budget information.

Iowa Department of Public Health ◆ Division of Environmental Health ◆ Environmental Health Services & Outreach
Phone: 515-281-0921 ◆ Fax: 515-281-4529 ◆ www.idph.state.ia.us/eh/env_health.asp
5th Floor, Lucas Building ◆ 321 E. 12th Street ◆ Des Moines, IA 50319-0075