

# Building Environmental Health Capacity

## **Project Title and Amount Requested**

\$2,000,000 to the National Center for Environmental Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for “Building the Capacity of State and Local Environmental Health Departments” project.

## **Background**

- National and state level environmental health infrastructure has been weakened by a combination of factors, including funding and workforce capacities that have not kept up with expanding needs.
- In 2001, the National Center for Environmental Health at CDC started an initiative entitled “Building Environmental Health Capacity for State and Local Environmental Health Departments.”
- The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) was one of only five state/local programs to be funded for a three year project period under this new program. In 2004 another competitive application was issued under the same program and IDPH is the only state level department in the nation who submitted a successful application for a second three-year project period.
- Mini-grants to local health departments totaling \$337,662 (60% of total funds received) over a four-year period have been used to support training/education needs of local staff, to purchase needed equipment and technology to better collect and maintain records/data, and to conduct other activities not otherwise available due to a lack of funding.
- Numerous “best-practices” for environmental health services have been generated from this program. These “best-practices” are projects/activities that can be easily replicated in other areas of the nation with appropriate funding.
- Iowa is truly leading the nation in the area of environmental health capacity building and has received such recognition by the National Center for Environmental Health at CDC and the American Public Health Association.

## **Proposal**

- \$2,000,000 directed annually to the NCEH for building the capacity of state and local environmental health departments will allow Iowa and others to continue to compete for much needed money to support basic needs of environmental health programs.
- The National Center for Environmental Health at CDC, through this funding program, has demonstrated that significant advancements in environmental health services can be made by providing relatively small grants to state and local programs.
- The proposed increase in funding will allow the National Center for Environmental Health at CDC to expand and positively impact many more local environmental health programs.
- This proposal supports a \$15 million request by national public health organizations (American Public Health Association, National Environmental Health Association, National Association of County and City Health Officials, and Association of State and Territorial Health Officers) for enhancing environmental public health services.