The Protect Against Environmental Hazards standards were designed to:

- Clarify the legal and program expectations for environmental health. Specific programs are listed to clarify the responsibility of local boards of health for the provision of safe food, water, air, and shelter.
- Emphasize the need for health and outcome data in addition to program data to determine environmental health service needs.
- Enforce rules and regulations that help make sure the environment and human health are protected.
- Define standard continuing education and professional development expectations for all environmental health staff, in addition to the environmental coordinator/supervisor requirements spelled out in the workforce standards.

What are the benefits and outcomes for Iowans?

- A minimum set of environmental health programs will be available to all Iowans.
- Useful health and outcome data to justify the need to support, modify, or eliminate environmental health programs.
- Appropriate enforcement of rules and regulations that help minimize or eliminate risks to human health.
- A well-trained staff to address the environmental health needs of the county.

How will the local public health system change?

- The most significant impact is that counties will need to evaluate how to meet the staffing requirements defined in these standards as well as the workforce standards. This may result in counties forming partnerships to fulfill those obligations. Strong partnerships already exist for others to look to as models.
- Another significant impact is the need for local programs to improve their use of health and outcome data in determining program needs of the county. Counties will have to shift from counting the number of inspections to look more at outcome data to show what impact they are having on environmental risks to human health.

For more information about the Protect Against Environmental Hazards standards, contact committee co-chairs:

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The control of environmental and sanitary living conditions is a foundation of public health practice. The environmental health standards emphasize the importance of monitoring environmental conditions of risk and enforcing health rules and regulations that minimize or eliminate those risks.