

99-13

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Integration of Environmental Health and Public Health Practice

Policy

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) considers environmental health practice to be an essential discipline of public health practice as it complies with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) definition of Public Health as “fulfilling society’s interest in assuring conditions in which people can be healthy.”¹

- NACCHO considers the term environmental public health practice to be the most appropriate term in describing this area of public health practice.
- NACCHO advocates for resources, programs, policies, and legislation that promote the integration of environmental public health into public health practice.
- NACCHO endorses the use of the ten essential public health services for environmental public health practice.
- NACCHO endorses the development and/or enhancement of coordinated training for the environmental public health workforce in public health sciences such as epidemiology, land use planning, and the social and behavioral sciences and similar training for other public health workers in environmental sciences, such as contaminant fate in the environment and food and water biology.
- NACCHO does not support the separation of environmental public health practice from other public health practices either physically or by leadership.

Justification

The Institute of Medicine’s report 1988 report *The Future of Public Health* states that “The removal of environmental health authority from public health has led to fragmented responsibility, lack of coordination, and inadequate attention to the public health dimensions of environmental health issues.”²

Environmental public health is inherently a public health activity even though political decisions at state and local levels have separated the two practices.

Record of Action

Adopted by NACCHO Board of Directors



November 7, 1999

Updated September 2003

Updated July 29, 2009

1. Institute of Medicine. *The Future of Public Health*. (1988).
2. Institute of Medicine. *The Future of Public Health*. (1988).