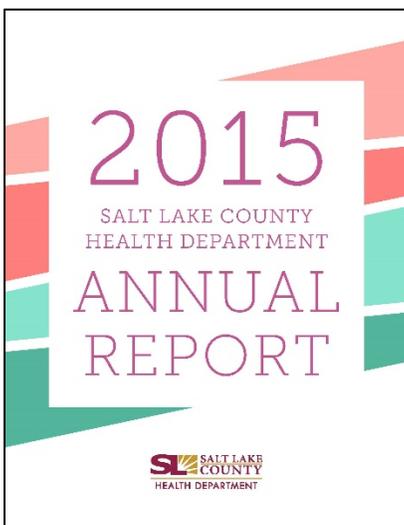


Local Health Departments are preparing for the Health Effects of Climate Change

Salt Lake County Health Department, Utah

Background

Salt Lake City is the capital of Utah and is located on the Wasatch Mountain Range. According to the most current census data, Salt Lake County's estimated population is 1,034,989 out of 2,817,222 in the entire state. Salt Lake County consists of 16 incorporated cities and an unincorporated area comprised of various townships and communities, all under the jurisdiction of the agency.



The release of greenhouse gases into the earth's atmosphere has set the climate on a course to change drastically in the near future, and these changes are having a significant impact on human health in Salt Lake County. There is broad scientific consensus that climate change is occurring at a rate faster than previously anticipated, and is causing warmer temperatures, droughts, and more frequent extreme weather events in the region. It is important that we take action now, both to mitigate the impacts of climate change and to develop adaptation strategies that enhance the region's resiliency to the inevitable changes it will experience. Many responses to climate change could positively impact the region in multiple ways, simultaneously reducing the burden of disease, saving money, protecting the environment, developing community, and addressing inequality.

Salt Lake County's development of a regional Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Health will provide an organized plan for the county to respond to the health impacts of climate change, serving to build a healthier, more resilient community, and setting an example for other local health departments in Utah. The goal of this document is to provide a framework for the adaptation plan, laying out the predicted climate-related health risks and the actions that can be taken to improve the county's resiliency.



Goal

To collaborate with agencies across Salt Lake County in developing a simplified, unified Climate Adaptation Plan for Health. By partnering with local stakeholders, we believe we can put together a comprehensive plan to protect the health of our population from the heat waves, water shortages, water quality issues, outbreaks of new diseases, poor air quality, and extreme weather events that we will need to address in the coming decades.

Objectives

- Completion of a framework Climate Change Adaptation for health document
- Hosting stakeholder forums for inclusive participation in completing the planning document
- Continued hosting of annual Climate and Health Symposium to provide education on climate issues
- Continued participation (as initial convening member) of the Utah Climate Action Network

Achievements and Successes

- Hosting of Climate and Health Symposium in 2014, 2015, & 2017
- Partnership initiative with the National Weather Service to provide health impact information included in regional weather forecasts
- Development of the [Utah Climate Action Network](#) in partnership with Salt Lake City Sustainability Department, University of Utah, park City, & Alta Ski Area
- Participation in fact-finding sessions with Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D - Rhode Island) on regional climate impacts



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice with local health departments.

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