



Local Health Departments Promote Healthy and Safe Environments

Local health departments protect people from environmental hazards that can be present in the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the communities in which we live. Local health departments are involved in a wide array of environmental health activities including tracking and preventing vector-borne disease, protecting groundwater, safeguarding the food supply, preventing pollution, and monitoring hazardous waste disposal.

According to the World Health Organization, nearly 25% of all diseases are caused by exposures to the environment.

NACCHO Recommendations

To increase the ability of local health departments to protect people from environmental hazards, the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) recommends the following in fiscal year (FY) 2020:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases

FOOD SAFETY

FY19: \$60 million

President's FY20 Budget: \$54 million

FY20 NACCHO Request: \$66 million

CDC funds 57 state and local health departments to enhance national surveillance, outbreak detection and response, and food safety prevention efforts. CDC provides technology, expert advice, guidance, and training to help local health departments more quickly identify and stop outbreaks of foodborne disease.

VECTOR CONTROL

FY19: \$39 million

President's FY20 Budget: \$51 million

FY20 NACCHO Request: \$129 million

Local health departments are on the front lines to protect the public from diseases spread by mosquitoes (e.g., Zika, West Nile Virus) and ticks (e.g., Lyme Disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever). CDC's Division of Vector Borne Diseases' goals include implementing disease diagnostics, surveillance, control, and prevention programs. CDC funds 5 Regional Centers of Excellence in Vector-Borne Diseases to help prevent and rapidly respond to emerging vector-borne diseases across the United States.

National Center for Environmental Health

CLIMATE AND HEALTH

FY19: \$10 million

President's FY20 Budget: Eliminated

FY20 NACCHO Request: \$10 million

Local health departments are charged with addressing the health effects of a changing climate. CDC's Climate and Health program funds 16 state and two city health departments (New York City and San Francisco) to create and implement climate and health adaptation plans. CDC funding improves the readiness of communities to respond to extreme weather events, floods, droughts, and increases in climate-related infectious diseases that affect public health. These successful projects can provide models for others to adapt for their needs.

CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING PREVENTION

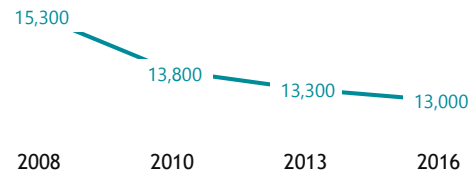
FY19: \$35 million (\$17 million from Prevention and Public Health Fund (PPHF))

President's FY20 Budget: \$17 million

FY20 NACCHO Request: \$50 million

Lead poisoning still is a major public health threat in the United States today. Over half a million children have blood lead levels high enough to threaten their health. CDC funds 29 state and five city health departments (Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington, DC, Houston, and New York City) to identify families with harmful exposure to lead, track incidence and causes, inspect homes and remove environmental threats, connect children with appropriate services, and educate the public and healthcare providers.

The number of environmental health full-time equivalents in local health departments has **decreased since 2008**



Common environmental health services **provided directly by LHDs** include the following:



Epidemiology & surveillance



Food safety education & inspection



Schools & daycare inspections



Recreational water inspection



Septic systems inspection



Private drinking water inspection



Lead inspection



Vector control

Source: NACCHO Profile Study: Environmental Health, 2016

Local Health Departments Educate the Public and Protect the Environment

Some of the most common environmental health services provided by local health departments are food safety education, control of animals and insects that carry disease (vector control), and measures to promote clean air. Environmental health services provided may vary by local health department and size of population served.

Years of stagnant or decreased budgets have taken a toll on environmental health services provided by local health departments. The Zika virus outbreak in 2016 highlighted the need for more seamless protection across the United States from diseases that are carried by mosquitoes. Increases in temperatures have also produced more hospitable habitats for ticks, leading to increased Lyme and other tick-borne diseases. NACCHO research has found that budget pressures have in some cases caused a slowdown in the provision of environmental health services and reduced the level of public health protection.

About NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials is the voice of nearly 3,000 local health departments across the country. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to ensure the safety of the water we drink, the food we eat, and the air we breathe.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to improve the health of communities by strengthening and advocating for local health departments.

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