

New Year's Greetings

As the new year begins, we want to look back and reflect on some of our accomplishments from the last year. Whether serving as a model for community air monitoring efforts and sickle cell disease surveillance legislation or providing critical data to ensure safe drinking water, we aim to inform actions for healthier communities. Below are some highlights from 2018.

Community air monitoring

Last year marked a turning point for our program in this area, as we transitioned away from the more hands-on work of developing a community air monitoring network to focus on sharing our knowledge to support other communities interested in setting up their own networks.

- We completed our 5-year project to establish a community air monitoring network in Imperial County with our partners Comite Civico del Valle (CCV) and University of Washington. The network (**IVAN AIR**) continues to be operated by CCV.
- We published a ***Guidebook for Developing a Community Air Monitoring Network*** to share steps, lessons learned, and recommendations with other community groups around the state.



Guidebook for Developing a Community Air Monitoring Network

Steps, Lessons, and Recommendations from the
Imperial County Community Air Monitoring Project

- We began partnerships with several environmental justice groups around the state to provide technical assistance as they implement their own community air monitoring networks.

Sickle Cell Disease

Did you know we track more than just the environment? Our Sickle Cell Data Collection Program (SCDC) is in its fourth year of gathering data on the health impacts, healthcare utilization, and access to care issues faced by the 7,000 Californians living with sickle cell disease.



This important work is part of **our larger effort** to track rare and neglected non-notifiable diseases in California. This year, our program served as a model for **approved and signed federal legislation** to create public health surveillance programs for this disease in up to 20 states.

Harmful algal blooms

We joined with more than 25 other states to track the health impacts of exposure to harmful algal blooms (HABs) in California using the CDC's One Health Harmful Algal Bloom System. Our program teamed with three state agencies to conduct outreach to healthcare providers, local health agencies and organizations, veterinarians, lake managers, and others who come into contact

with HABs. As a result, we were able to **collect reports** and inform relevant agencies on human health issues as well as wildlife and pet health impacts.



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Drinking water



Our **Water Boundary Tool** (WBT) continues to be the only collaborative data collection platform used to map drinking water systems throughout the state, providing essential data to the CA Water Resources Control Board and other entities focused on the provision and regulation of safe, accessible, and affordable drinking water.

Data from the WBT have been used for a variety of efforts including:

- Identifying drinking water systems within the wildfire perimeters during emergency response efforts
- Preventing food and waterborne outbreaks
- Informing drinking water system consolidation and permitting activities

- Investigating perchlorate contamination in drinking water

We have also demonstrated the tool with other state and federal agencies, resulting in the recent launch of a similar tool in Texas that was inspired by the WBT.

Looking ahead

In 2019, we will continue to gather, analyze, and disseminate data to shine a spotlight on hazards that impact health in California, particularly within communities disproportionately burdened by environmental hazards. In the near future, we'll be sharing announcements about our community air monitoring workshops and updated website.

Finally, all of our work has only been possible with the guidance and support of our Tracking Implementation Advisory Group and our relationships and collaborations with communities, government, academia, and non-profit and private institutions. We thank you for your partnerships and support, look forward to continuing our work with you, and wish you all the best in the new year.



*The California Environmental Health Tracking Program is a program of the **Public Health Institute** and part of a national initiative coordinated by the **National Environmental Public Health Tracking Program**.*



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