Guide to Community Outreach
Tips to Raise Visibility of Environmental Health

Use the tools in this guide to build relationships with local groups and organizations to raise the visibility of the environmental public health workforce and help build the next generation of the profession.

Benefits
Connecting with local groups is a simple and friendly way to build awareness and collaboration across the community. Specifically, outreach allows you to:

- Increase local visibility of your environmental health programming
- Share your resources and learn about other resources in the community
- Give new opportunities to staff for public speaking or youth engagement
- Uncover new opportunities and funding
- Get young people interested in the profession

Process
Many community organizations are looking for presentations from local professionals.

1. Brainstorm organizations that can support or help build the environmental health profession.
   - Examples include: science clubs, 4-H, FFA, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, after school programs, One Health groups, environmental groups, nature and conservation groups, STEM organizations, career fairs.

2. Email or call the organization.
   - Most contact information is available on organization websites or social media. Follow up with a phone call after 5 business day. (Sample email on page 6.)

3. Prepare by localizing the NEHA template presentation.
   - Include local stories and anecdotes to make it relevant.
   - Replace stock photos with local environmental health events, issues, and experiences, if possible.
   - Include personal stories and anecdotes. Refer to community specific events, issues, and experiences.

4. Present!
Diversity

Outreach to diverse communities can help to build a diverse workforce and support communities that are most impacted by environmental health risks.

Tips for Inclusive Outreach

• Build trust by connecting with community leaders and listening before informing
• Identify how individual communities prefer communication (e.g. text, email, flyers, school programs etc.)
• Collaborate with organizations that have related goals
• Seek to understand the community’s needs and how environmental health plays a role and/or has not supported the community in the past

Additional steps you can take to incorporate environmental justice into your daily work include:

• Researching how environmental health issues disproportionately affect local communities and talk to those communities about their experiences.
• Elevating the voices of affected communities by providing opportunities for them to voice their thoughts and experiences.
• Including communities in decision making when developing interventions, solutions, and policies.
• Speaking up against environmental injustices to leaders in the community
Sample Outreach Email

Dear [First Name],

I’m writing in hopes of setting a time to present to your [members/participants] about environmental health.

Environmental health is the science and practice of preventing human illness by limiting exposures to hazardous physical, chemical, and biological agents in environment. Environmental health professionals protect us from hazards in the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, the land we walk on, and more!

Raising awareness about environmental health is especially important right now because:

1. In the next 5 years the profession will lose half of its workforce.
2. As the climate continues to change, environmental health professionals are essential to keeping communities safe from environmental harms from floods, fires, hurricanes, and epidemics.

To that end, I would love to share the exciting and meaningful world of environmental public health with your [participants].

Please let me know when you are available to talk further and/or set up a presentation for your [participants/organization/members].

I look forward to partnering with you.

In health,

Your name