

▶ DIRECT FROM CDC ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES



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The Environmental Health Nexus: A Communication Hub

Editor's Note: The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) strives to provide up-to-date and relevant information on environmental health and to build partnerships in the profession. In pursuit of these goals, we feature this column on environmental health services from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in every issue of the *Journal*.

In these columns, authors from CDC's Water, Food, and Environmental Health Services Branch, as well as guest authors, will share tools, resources, and guidance for environmental health practitioners. The conclusions in these columns are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of CDC.

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Introduction

Environmental health affects everyone. The air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink, and other aspects of the environment in which we live, work, and play all have a direct impact on our health. The Environmental Health Nexus (EH Nexus) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a new communication network for sharing information about environmental public health topics. It is managed by the associate director for the communication team in the Division of Environmental Health Science and Practice (DEHSP). "CDC's EH Nexus communicates about environmental health projects across the agency such as environmental justice and climate and health, providing partners and the public with information, guidance, and recommenda-

tions. We look forward to collaborating with environmental health practitioners, academia, and our local, state, federal, territorial, and international partners about these important issues," stated CDR Anna Khan, associate director for communication for DEHSP within the National Center for Environmental Health at CDC.

The network was created to help CDC actively communicate about environmental public health with interested members of the public and public health colleagues whose work involves environmental health concerns. It promotes the communication work of the branches within DEHSP, as well as collaborates with internal and external partners. Our network can be divided into four pillars: webinars and conferences, newsletters, communication partners, and expanded outreach activities.

Background

Environmental health specialists work in many different public health fields such as food and water safety, air quality improvement, emergency management, climate change adaptation, and childhood lead poisoning prevention. They work in a wide range of organizations, including health departments at all levels, federal agencies, international public health agencies, private industry, and nongovernmental organizations. They have acquired skills and insight from academics and on-the-ground experience that cannot be simulated. The depth and breadth of their knowledge is an incredible resource for colleagues, decision makers, and the public.

The Environmental Health Nexus

The CDC EH Nexus is a hub for a variety of communication activities that connect resources, tools, and people involved in environmental public health work. Environmental health professors, subject matter experts, environmental health specialists, and interested members of the public are able to share their insight and guidance through the EH Nexus.

The COVID-19 pandemic and other recent events have created an unprecedented demand for these skills. We created the EH Nexus to bring together subject matter experts and practitioners to share skills, lessons learned, useful tools, and other critical knowledge. We are not just sharing with each other, we are also sharing with interested members of the public and key stakeholders.

EH Nexus webinars provide applicable content for professionals and the public about important environmental health topics, such as climate change and its impact on

public health. These webinars are designed to explain specific environmental health concerns, events, and resources, in collaboration with EH Nexus partners. Attendees are provided actionable information and additional resources to support them. Webinars are recorded and attendees are encouraged to share the recordings with their colleagues, partners, and communities.

The EH Nexus also hosts conferences. These events provide a more interactive knowledge-sharing environment through breakout sessions, open discussions, and presentations. We have covered topics on extreme heat and climate change and working with partners such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and National Institute of Standards and Technology.

EH Nexus newsletters include a timely monthly topic, helpful tools, guidance, announcements of upcoming EH Nexus and partner webinars, and public health events across the globe such as World Food Safety Day. The newsletter also provides information that the audience can use to protect themselves, their families, and their communities.

The EH Nexus partnerships are a collection of partner organizations committed to sharing environmental health information with audiences who have an interest in environ-

mental public health issues. EH Nexus partner organizations are diverse and come from all sectors and jurisdictions. The common thread among the partners is a commitment to environmental health communication.

As partners, we work together on communication activities, such as a webinar in March 2022 about climate change and how clinics can plan and prepare for its impact. We partnered with the Health Resources Services Administration on this event. We also collaborated with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on webinars for National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week in October. We are planning many more upcoming collaborative activities with our partners.

Environmental Health Nexus Outreach

The EH Nexus is actively expanding its partnerships. All organizations that have an interest in promoting environmental health activities are welcome to join. Joint webinars and other communication activities help our partners reach new audiences and expand their outreach. The EH Nexus is also strengthening its connections with academic environmental health institutions. These institutions have strong connections with their local environ-

Join the Environmental Health Nexus!

Be part of the Environmental Health Nexus (EH Nexus) as we work together to share knowledge, save lives, and protect public health. Healthy environment, healthy you.

- Reach out to us at ehnxus@cdc.gov to sign up as a partner.
- View the EH Nexus at www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehsp/ehnxus/index.htm.
- Subscribe to the monthly newsletter at https://tools.cdc.gov/campaignproxyservice/subscriptions.aspx?topic_id=USCDC_2150.

mental health communities and can help share information widely. To learn more, visit www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehsp/ehnxus/index.htm. 🌍

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