Overview of the CDC’s Safe Water for Community Health Program

Raquel Sabogal
Epidemiologist
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
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Today’s Presentation

- **Background**
  - CDC’s Role with Private Wells and Unregulated Drinking Water Systems and Public Health

- **Past work**

- **Safe Water for Community Health Program**
  - Accomplishments to Date
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Environmental Health

Division of Environmental Health Science and Practice (DEHSP)

- Asthma and Community Health Branch
- Lead Poisoning Prevention and Environmental Health Tracking Branch
- Emergency Management, Radiation, and Chemical Branch
- Water, Food, and Environmental Health Services Branch
Water, Food and Environmental Health Services Branch

- Food Safety
- Vessel Sanitation
- Safe Water
- Performance Improvement
CDC’s Role

- CDC convened two 2-day workshops
  - State and local public health practitioners
  - East coast and West coast states

- Identified areas of concern for state and locals:
  - Inadequate resources
  - Complacent consumers
  - Lacked technical assistance

- Requested CDC assistance
Unregulated Drinking Water and Public Health

- **Safe Drinking Water Act does not regulate systems**
  - serve fewer than 25 individuals
  - Less than 15 connections

Background

- Past Work

2005 2010 2015 2020

- EHSNet
- EHS-Net
- Private Well Initiative
  - Enhancing Capacity for Environmental and Public Health for Unregulated Drinking Water Sources
  - Improving state and local capacity with PW and Unregulated Drinking Water Systems
- Safe Water for Community Health
Goal

- Reduce exposures to contaminants from wells and other private water sources
  
  - Identify gaps using the 10 Essential Environmental Public Health Services

  https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/envphps/docs/envphpsv2.pdf
Safe Water for Community Health (Safe WATCH)

State Health Departments
- Arizona Department of Health Services
- Connecticut Department of Public Health
- Indiana State Department of Health
- Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
- Missouri Department of Health and Human Services
- New Jersey Department of Health
- New Mexico Department of Health
- New York State Department of Health
- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
- Oregon Health Authority
- Tennessee Department of Health
- Vermont Department of Health
- West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources

Local Health Departments
- Delta County (CO) Environmental Health
- Gaston County (NC) Department of Health and Human Services
- La Crosse County (WI) Health Department
- Madison County (NY) Health Department
- Tacoma-Pierce County (WA) Health Department
Safe Water for Community Health

Ten Essential Environmental Public Health Services

- Activities based on the Environmental Public Health Performance standards

- Partners designed their own program using the 10 Essential Environmental Public Health Services as the framework
ES1: **Monitor** environmental and health status to identify and solve community environmental public health problems.

### New Mexico Department of Health

**Arsenic Distribution in New Mexico Private Wells**

- Wells Sampled November 1973 – October 2018
- Interpolated Groundwater Arsenic Concentrations (mcg/L) from Private Wells Data

[https://nmtracking.org/environment/water/private_wells/ArsenicData.html](https://nmtracking.org/environment/water/private_wells/ArsenicData.html)

### Louisiana Department of Health

**“Areas of Concern” Mapping**

Accomplishments to Date

ES2: Diagnose and investigate environmental public health problems and health hazards in the community.

Arizona Department of Health – Well Water Quality

- Test Your Well
- Rules and Regulations
- Emergencies
- Maintain Your Well
- Resources
  - Labs Certified to Test Drinking Water Samples – English
  - Laboratorios de Arizona Certificados para Tomar Muestras de Agua Potable
  - Nitrates in Arizona Private Wells – English
  - Nitratos en Agua de Pozos Privados en Arizona

Accomplishments to Date

ES3: Inform, educate, and empower people about environmental public health issues.

La Crosse County Health Department
- Media campaign—postcards, TV and radio ads, water bottles

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=85vBHySCf58

Arizona Department of Health Services
- Arizona Well Owners Guide

Accomplishments to Date

ES4: Mobilize community partnerships and actions to identify and solve environmental health problems.

- **Connecticut Department of Health**
  - Private Well Task Force
- **New Jersey Department of Health**
  - Private Well Consortium
- **Madison County Health Department**
  - Individual Water System Workgroup
Accomplishments to Date

ES5: Develop policies and plans that support individual and community environmental public health efforts.

- Technical assistance to grantees on developing policies
- Developed guidance and four case stories as examples

Accomplishments to Date

ES6: Enforce laws and regulations that protect environmental public health and ensure safety.

New Mexico Department of Health and Office of the State Engineer

- Changed the Administrative Code in 2016 to tag newly drilled wells. NMDOH will tag older wells. https://nmtracking.org/environment/water/private_wells/WellIDTag.html

Madison County (NY) Health Department

- Standard testing for individual wells Appendix 75C 10 NYCRR Part 75: Coliform, nitrates, nitrites, turbidity, iron, manganese, hardness, alkalinity, pH and sodium now includes arsenic and lead

https://regs.health.ny.gov/node/55768
Accomplishments to Date

ES7: **Link** people to needed environmental public health services and assure the provision of environmental public health services when otherwise unavailable.

- **Michigan Department of Health and Human Services**
- **Vermont Department of Health**
Accomplishments to Date

ES8: **Assure** a competent environmental public health workforce. Focus on developing a competent workforce for environmental health or related programs that manage UDWSs

La Crosse County Health Department
- Laboratory certification – arsenic, lead
- Vernon County - lab services
Accomplishments to Date

ES9: Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based environmental public health services.

- Develop priority activities and their resultant outputs
- Describe how to develop strong process objectives
- Activity + output + timeline
- Describe how to develop output indicators and standards for success

Year 1
- Align Performance Improvement areas with activities and outputs
- Create clear, well-aligned evaluation plan

Year 2-4
- Begin tracking process evaluation indicators
- Begin tracking outcome indicators
- Align outputs with short, intermediate, and long-term objectives

Year 5
- Finish collecting long-term outcome indicators
- Complete a rich, informative evaluation report
Accomplishments to Date

ES10: Research for new insights and innovative solutions to environmental public health problem

- **New Mexico Department of Health**
  - Developed relationship with local university
  - Involvement with graduate thesis development and professional research projects

- **New Jersey Department of Health**
  - Partnerships through the Consortium – stakeholder meeting
  - Reducing hazardous drinking water exposures from private wells

- **Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department**
  - Improve well testing rates – barriers to testing
  - Reviewed current fees, application process, staff time
Safe Water for Community Health - Additional Support

- Partnerships through Office of State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support
Conclusion

What is our goal for the future?

- Recognize the challenges, lessons learned
- Develop framework for state, local, territorial, tribal programs
  How to....
  https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/safe-watch/steps-to-improve.html
- Private Well Network
Thank You!

For more information, contact NCEH
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