



# RHODE ISLAND'S ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING NETWORK

*Making the Connection Between Health and the Environment*

## WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING?

Environmental public health tracking is the ongoing collection, integration, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of data related to environmental hazards, exposures to those hazards, and related health effects. The Tracking Network is crucial to providing insight into the role the environment plays in human development, detecting unusual trends in health and exposure to hazards, identifying populations at risk, facilitating policy development, and guiding public health actions.

## MISSION

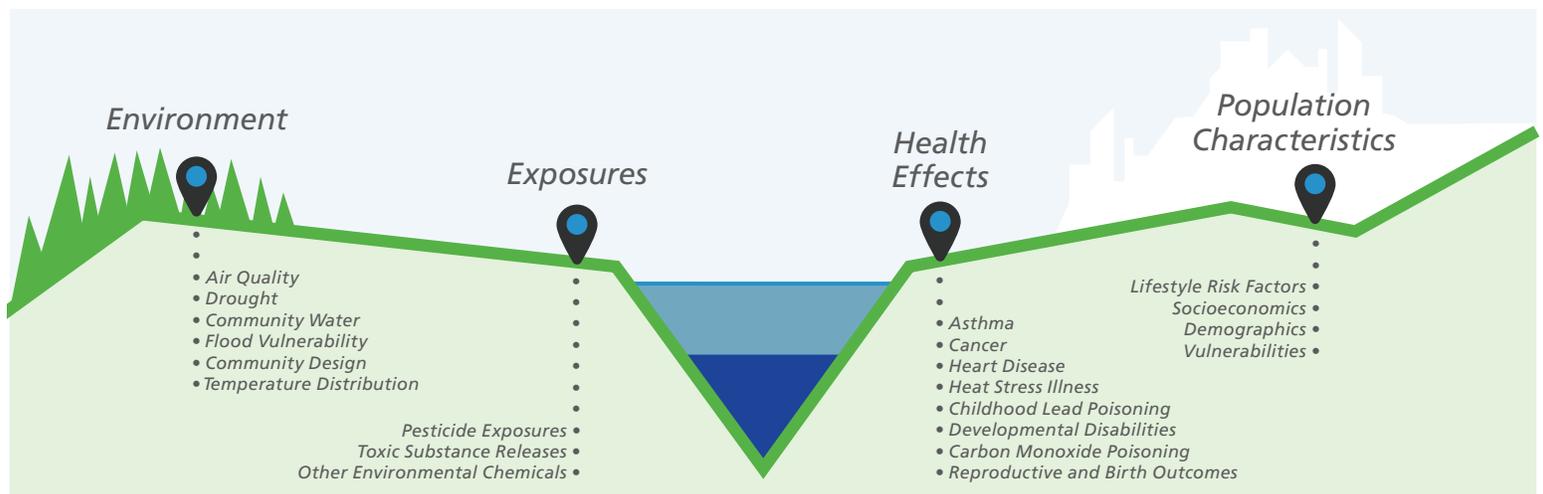
The mission of the Rhode Island Environmental Public Health Tracking Network is to translate environmental and public health data into meaningful information and increased knowledge and apply that knowledge to improve community health.

## WHY TRACK ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH DATA?

By making health and environmental data available through the Rhode Island Tracking Network, more people have access to information they need to make connections between health outcomes and conditions in the environment.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH IN RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island's dense urban populations and growing suburbs mean that the environment in which we live has major impacts on the health of our residents. Rhode Island has a long history of manufacturing and its waterways were at one time heavily contaminated with industrial waste. Major strides have been made in cleaning up Narragansett Bay and our local neighborhoods, but legacy pollutants remain. In addition, climate change is making issues like extreme heat and flooding more acute. Community design also plays an important role in social vulnerability and environmental exposure.



## DATA YOU CAN USE

The Tracking Network displays environmental health data which can be viewed in customized maps, tables, and charts, including things like:

- **Health conditions and diseases**, like asthma and heart disease
- **Environmental contaminants**, like air and water pollution
- **Climate change**, like extreme heat events and rainfall
- **Community design**, like access to parks and proximity to highways
- **Population characteristics**, like age and income



## THE DATA IN THE TRACKING NETWORK ARE USEFUL FOR MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE:

- **Public health professionals** can explore data to monitor trends and help make connections between environmental hazards and public health outcomes to design interventions.
- **Decision makers** can use the data to inform and support public policy.
- **Students and professors** can use the data as teaching material and in studies and projects.
- **Individuals, parents, and families** can use the data to discover environmental health issues in their communities.
- **Healthcare professionals** can advise patients based on environmental and health data specific to their community.

## CDC'S NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING NETWORK

Rhode Island is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Tracking Network. In 2006, Congress provided funding to the CDC to implement a National Tracking Network and to fund health departments in states and cities to build local networks. These local networks provide information to the national website which allows comparisons among counties and states and discovery of emerging health or environmental issues.

Learn more at: [health.ri.gov/data/epht](http://health.ri.gov/data/epht) and: [cdc.gov/ephttracking](http://cdc.gov/ephttracking)

Health Information Line:  
401-222-5960 / RI Relay 711  
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