



# *Making the connection between health and the environment*

*Colorado Environmental Public Health Tracking*

*Megan Snow, MS, CHES*

*Health Communications Specialist*



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment



# What is Environmental Public Health?

An area of public health that is concerned with understanding how the environment affects human health.

The environment is where you live as well as the water and air you breathe.

Understanding how we interact with the environment is complicated, as is understanding how the environment may affect our health.

Example: Healthy Homes Coalition



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

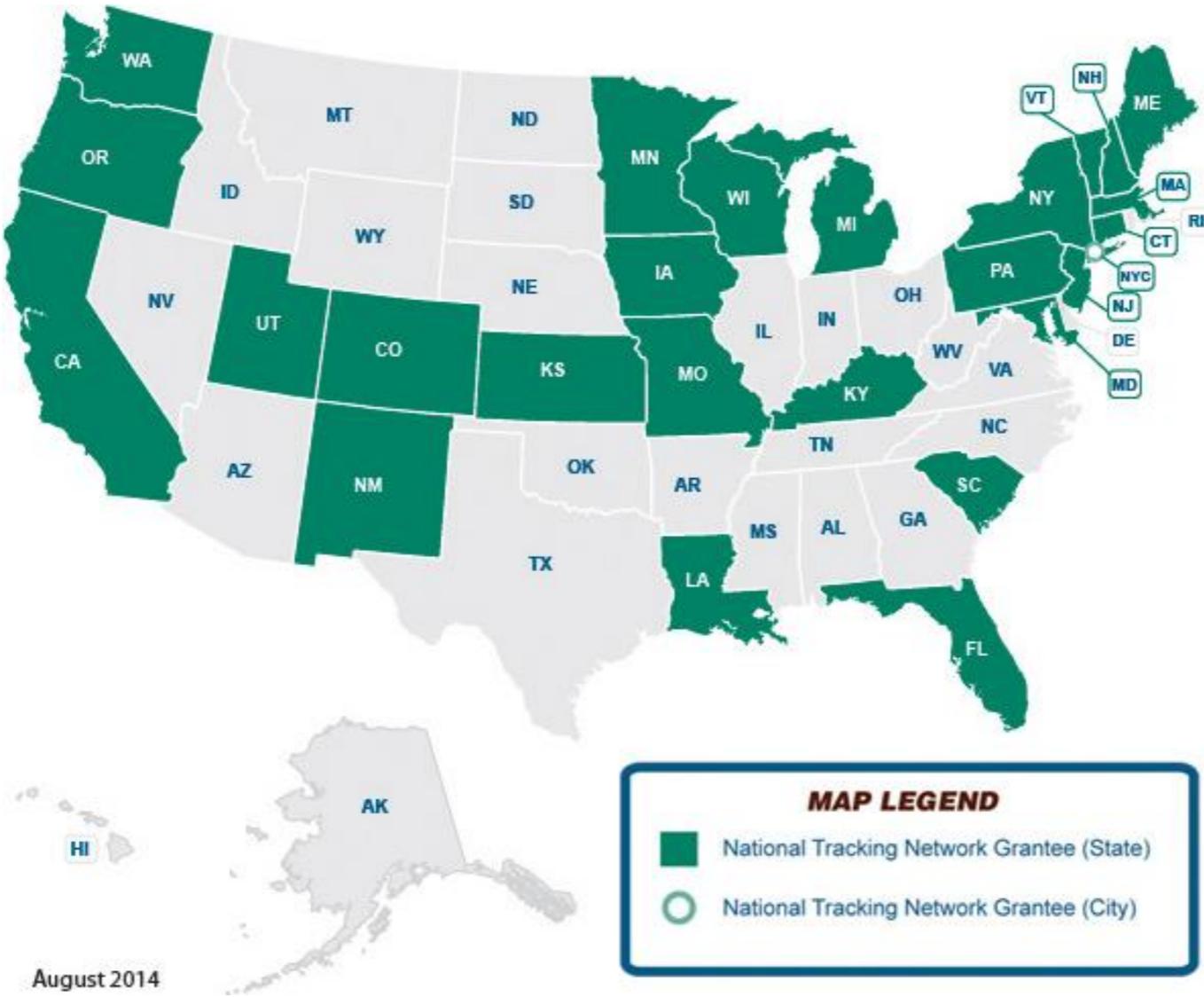
# National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network

- In 2000 a PEW report showed the need to track environmental hazards and health effects.
- In 2002, Congress appropriated funds to CDC to establish a national environmental public health tracking network. Colorado started receiving funding in 2009.
- CDC provides funds to 26 state and local health departments to develop local tracking networks. These networks feed into the National Tracking Network.



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public Health & Environment

# What is Environmental Public Health Tracking?

At the CDC, the National Network facilitates the ongoing collection, integration, analysis, and interpretation of data on a portal about the following factors:

- (1) environmental hazards
- (2) exposure to environmental hazards
- (3) health effects potentially related to exposure to environmental hazards



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# What is Environmental Public Health Tracking?

These data can be used to:

- Quantify the magnitude of a public health problem
- Detect unusual trends in health, exposures, and hazards
- Identify populations at risk of environmentally related diseases or of exposure to hazards
- Generate hypotheses about the relationship between health and the environment
- Direct and evaluate control and prevention measures and individual actions
- Facilitate policy development and decision making



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# Making the Connection

- Environmental hazards & public health
- Where we live & what environmental hazards could make us sick
- People with environment
- Communities & information
- Scientific data & people who want it
- Decision makers & information

# The Need for Tracking

- Most environmental and health information is collected separately
- The information is scattered in a number of places and formats
- In this situation, it is difficult to study and monitor relationships



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

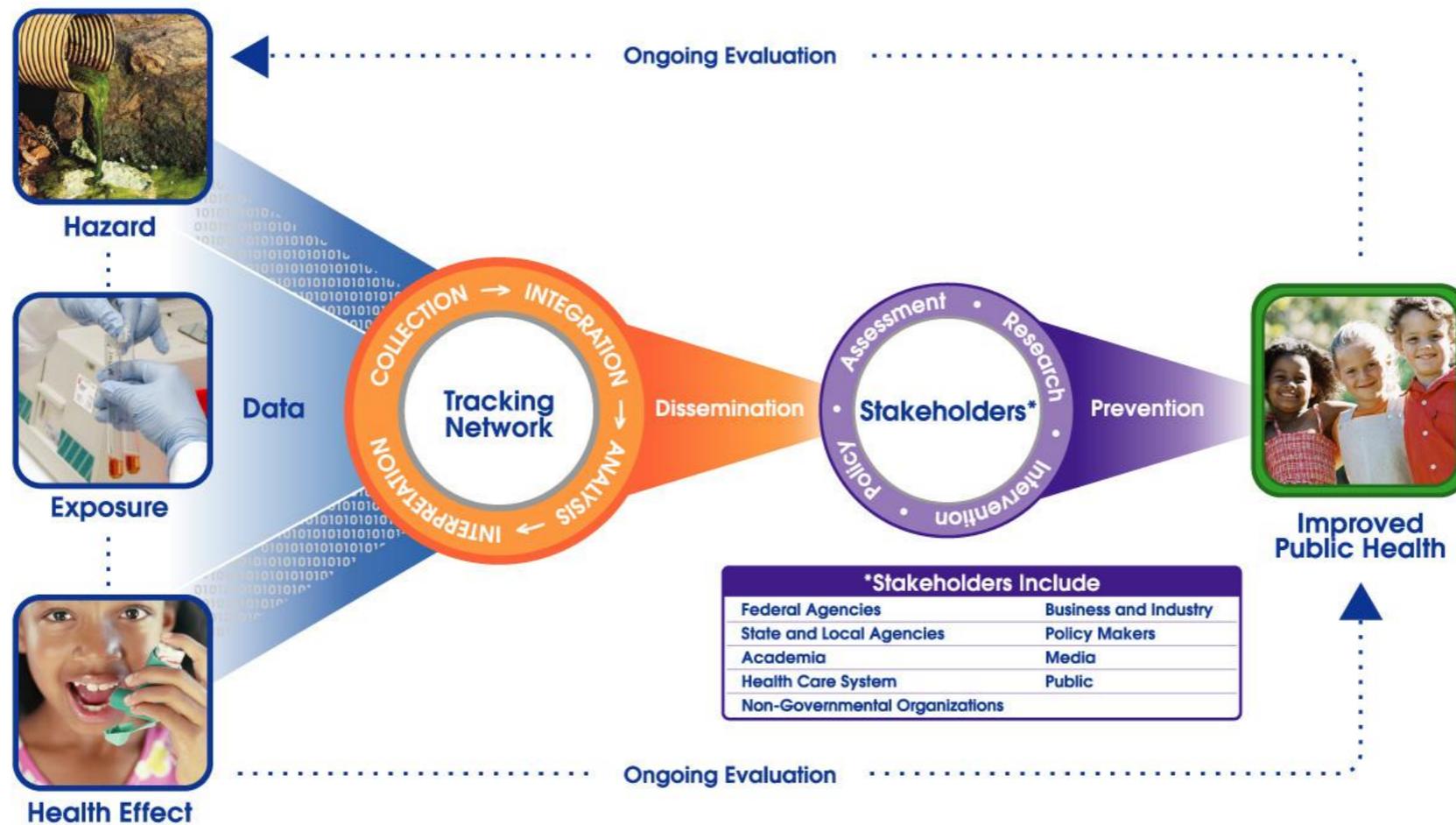
# The Need for Tracking

- Detect and monitor trends
- Identify populations at risk
- Identify exposure to hazards
- Examine the relationship between hazards and disease
- Assess positional disease clusters or exposures
- Track progress
- Enhance surveillance
- Improve access to quality data



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING



**\*Stakeholders Include**

Federal Agencies	Business and Industry
State and Local Agencies	Policy Makers
Academia	Media
Health Care System	Public
Non-Governmental Organizations	



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION  
SAFER • HEALTHIER • PEOPLE



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# Types of data

Different types of data are used to learn how the environment affects people's health. The Tracking Network provides information, maps, tables, and charts with data about:

- Health effect data: Data about health conditions and diseases, such as asthma and birth defects.
- Environmental hazard data: Data about chemicals or other substances such as carbon monoxide and air pollution in the environment.



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# Types of data

- Exposure data: Data about the amount of a chemical in a person's body, such as lead in blood.
- Other data: Data that helps us learn about relationships between exposures and health effects. For example, information about age, sex, race, and behavior or lifestyle choices that may help us understand why a person has a particular health problem. Examples: social determinants of health and built environment



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# Tracking Network Content

- Air quality
  - ozone, particulate matter
- Drinking water quality
  - arsenic, nitrate, disinfection byproducts
- Childhood lead exposure
- Cancer
- Birth defects
- Vital statistics - birth outcomes
- Morality Data
- Hospitalizations
  - asthma, carbon monoxide poisoning, heart attack



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# Colorado Tracking Goals

- Provide data in an easily accessible way on our portal
  - Query capability, with results displayed in tables, charts and maps; data can be exported
- Provide context for the data
  - Information on each topic, including how health and environment are related and links to additional resources
  - Making information available to a non-expert audience



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# Colorado Tracking Components

- Use existing data to develop consistent measures to share with the National Tracking Network
- Explore and develop measures of interest to Colorado
  - Build on previous work of environmental indicators workgroup
- Provide public and secure websites to share data and health risk information
- Collaborate with academic partners on linkage projects



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

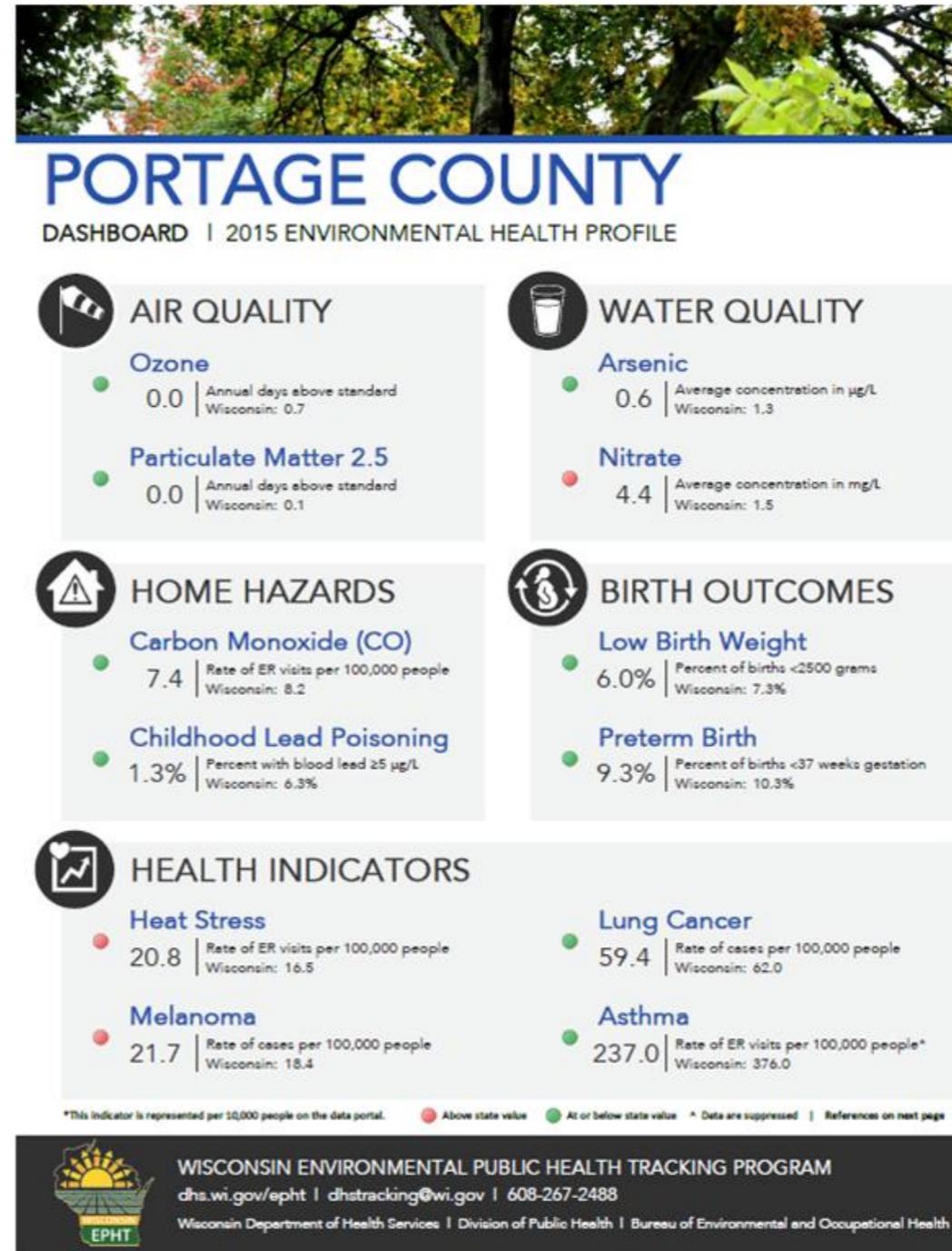
# How is Colorado Tracking Data Being Used?

- Community Health Assessments
- Education and outreach
- Policy development
- Grant proposals



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# Community Dashboards



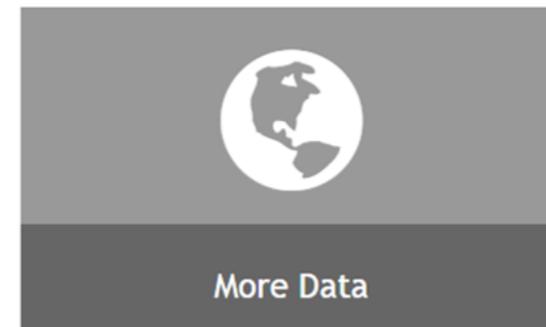
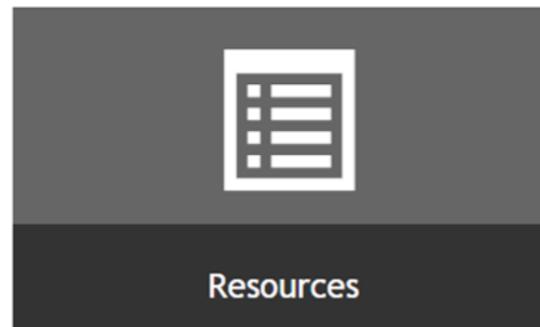
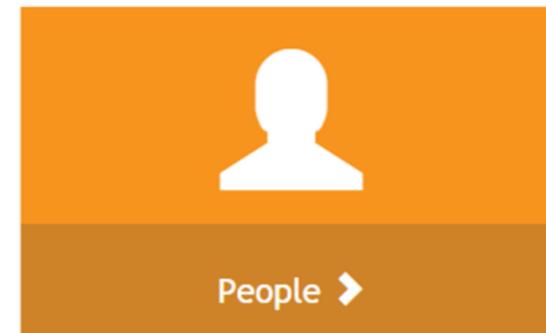
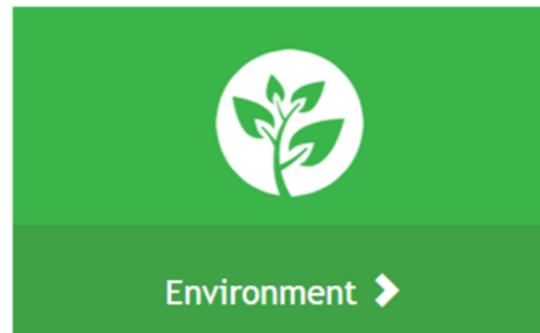
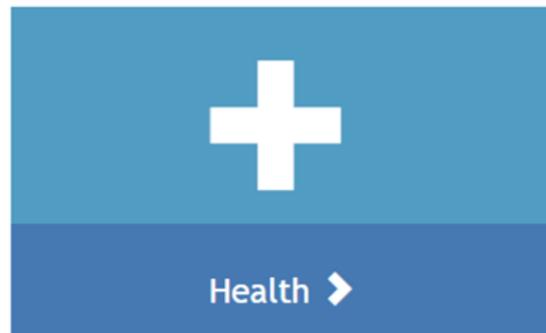
**COLORADO**  
Department of Public Health & Environment



**COLORADO**  
Environmental Public Health  
Tracking

[Home](#) [Colorado Health and Environmental Data \(CHED\)](#) [Data Request System](#) [About Colorado Environmental Public Health Tracking](#)

## Making the Connection between Health and Environment



 Our environment affects our health, and we affect our environment.

[www.Colorado.gov/coepht](http://www.Colorado.gov/coepht)



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# Questions?



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment