

## Essential Local Public Health Activities Framework – Part 4 of 6

### **Area of Public Health Responsibility:**

### **Protect Against Environmental Health Hazards**

**E**nvironmental quality is one of the 10 Leading Health Indicators from Healthy People 2010. The essential local activities for environmental health as defined in this framework for Minnesota are based on a work product of the Environmental Health Leadership Team entitled, *The Universe of Environmental Health Activities.* They fall into five areas: Clean Air, Clean Water and Sanitation, Safe Food, Healthy Communities, and Preparation for Disasters.

The activities listed are intentionally broad and are for statewide application. Each activity offers flexibility in the way they are implemented and the level of effort in accomplishing them. In several cases, an activity can be carried out by communications between an MDH regional office or a consulting sanitarian. Some activities may be carried out by agencies other than a local or tribal health department or Community Health Board. An activity may be carried out, for example, by a Planning and Zoning Office that administers an Individual Sewage Treatment System (ISTS) program or tribal environmental health services.

These activities emphasize the partnership between state, local and tribal public health agencies in working on environmental health activities, and underscore the need for MDH and local and tribal health agencies to work together. They are designed for state, local and tribal public health programs to hold one another jointly accountable.



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## Public Health Responsibility: Protect Against Environmental Health Hazards

<b>Essential Local Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ See Appendix D for list</li> <li>▪ Numbers listed below correspond with appropriate essential local activities</li> </ul>	<b>Ten Essential Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developed at the national level</li> <li>▪ See Appendix E for list</li> <li>▪ Numbers listed below correspond with appropriate essential service</li> </ul>	<b>Statutory References</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Must = legislative requirement</li> <li>▪ May = legislative permission</li> <li>▪ See Appendices A and F for brief descriptions</li> </ul>	<b>MDH Contributing Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What has to happen at MDH in order for the activity to occur at the local level</li> </ul>	<b>Examples From Local Public Health</b>
<p><b>EH1. Provide</b> the general public and policy leaders with information on health risk, health status, and environmental health needs in the community as well as information on policies and programs regarding environmental health threats to humans.</p>	<p><b>#3 Inform</b>, educate, and empower people about health issues.</p>	<p><b>MS145A.10, subd.5a</b>, Powers and duties of Community Health Boards (must)  <b>MS 145.882 subd.7</b>, Maternal and Child Health Block Grant distribution (may)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Provide</b> environmental health education and other information and materials.</li> <li>- <b>Provide</b> direct services to citizens as appropriate.</li> <li>- <b>Assist</b> in the referral of citizens to environmental health services provided by local, state or federal agencies.</li> </ul>	<p>- <b>For</b> some agencies, these activities are shared responsibilities with other state and local agencies: clean air, safe food, clean water and sanitary conditions, public health nuisances, lead poisoning, and hazardous and solid waste.</p>
<p><b>EH2. Identify</b> the federal, tribal, state, or local agencies with regulatory authority and bring people together to address compliance with public health standards.</p>	<p><b>#6 Enforce</b> laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.</p>	<p><b>MS145A.10, subd.5a</b>, Powers and duties of Community Health Boards (must)  <b>MS 145.882 subd.7</b>, Maternal and Child Health Block Grant distribution (may)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Assist</b> in the identification of the regulatory authority. Provide information on regulatory activities where MDH is the regulatory authority.</li> </ul>	<p>- <b>Public</b> health regulatory services include those regarding clean air, safe food, clean water and sanitary conditions, public health nuisances, lead poisoning and other hazardous and solid waste issues.</p>
<p><b>EH3. Develop</b> public health nuisance policies and plans, and assure enforcement of public health nuisance requirements.</p>	<p><b>#5 Develop</b> policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.  <b>#6 Enforce</b> laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.</p>	<p><b>MS 144.05</b>, General duties of Commissioner (must)  <b>M.S. 145A.04, subd.8</b>, Powers and duties of Board of Health (must)  <b>MS 145A.05, subd.7</b>, Local ordinances (must)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Maintain</b> public health nuisance guidance currently available on the MDH website. Consult as requested.</li> <li>- <b>Maintain</b> environmental health enforcement training manual currently available on the MDH website. Consult as requested.</li> <li>- <b>Provide</b> consultation as requested on public health nuisance guidance and/or the environmental health enforcement training manual.</li> </ul>	<p>- <b>Minnesota</b> Statutes 145A, subdivision 17 defines a public health nuisance as “any activity or failure to act that adversely affects the public’s health.” Examples can include garbage houses, animal hording, abandoned methamphetamine drug labs and abandoned water wells.</p>

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<p><b>EH4. Monitor</b> the community for significant and emerging environmental health threats, and develop strategies to address these threats.</p>		<p><b>MS 144.05</b>, General duties of Commissioner (must)  <b>MS145A.10, subd.5a</b>, Powers and duties of Community Health Boards (must)  <b>MS 145.882 subd.7</b>, Maternal and Child Health Block Grant distribution (may)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Maintain</b> childhood lead poisoning case management and clinical treatment guidelines currently available on the MDH website.</li> <li>- <b>Provide</b> direct services to citizens affected by lead poisoning as appropriate.</li> <li>- <b>Consult</b> with or train local agency staff as requested.</li> <li>- <b>Provide</b> information, education and other materials on emerging environmental health threats.</li> <li>- <b>Link</b> local agencies to regional, state, tribal, federal or international programs or models.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Human</b> activities or changing environments can bring communities in contact with new environmental health hazards capable of causing disease or injury. Newly recognized threats include illegal use of pesticides, abandoned methamphetamine labs, the rapidly increasing incidence of asthma, and the threat of terrorist attacks with chemicals or radioactive materials.</li> </ul>