

Climate and Health Adaptation Plan

The effects of climate change already can be seen in Oregon's marine environments, forestlands, agriculture, and transportation infrastructure. It is likely that more severe impacts from climate change will begin to affect the state, including the overall health of its residents. **As part of a two-year collaboration, North Central Public Health District (NCPHD) and the Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division worked to develop a climate change adaptation plan to protect the health of its community.** The Centers for Disease Control's five-step Building Resilience Against Climate Effects (BRACE) framework was implemented, which allowed NCPHD to provide an overview of local climate change and health projections, and for the development of possible interventions that would allow communities and identified vulnerable populations to adapt to predicted changes.



NCPHD provides services to Wasco, Sherman, and Gilliam counties located in the mid-Columbia River Gorge

Role of public health

The North Central Public Health District (NCPHD) has a history of taking unique approaches to meeting goals and serving its constituency. NCPHD is the only three-county health district in the state of Oregon, allowing for many advantages associated with coordinating efforts and pooling resources in a rural area. In alignment with the "10 Essential Public Health Services," NCPHD plans to inform, educate and empower people about climate and health issues; mobilize community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems; and promote services provided by many community partners so that

people know where they can turn for help.

The opportunity to formulate this plan has led NCPHD to explore what already is being done relative to climate change in the region, and what gaps exist. It also has led the district to consider novel ways of reaching out to their rural populations.



Injury/Morbidity/Mortality

- Extreme weather and storm events
- Rising temperatures



Water and Vector-borne Diseases

- Insect and pest outbreaks
- Higher precipitation levels and flood events
- Increased algal blooms due to warming waters
- Changes in habitat and species



Respiratory Diseases

- Degraded air quality
- Rising temperatures
- Increased pollen counts
- Increased mold exposure
- Increased in wildfires



Malnutrition and Food Security

- Rising sea levels
- Rising temperatures and drought events
- Threatened food supplies



Mental Health

- Extreme weather threats and displacement
- Economic stress
- Environmental degradation

Statewide risks to human health

Key local climate variable: **Drought**

There are many possible health effects related to a changing climate. The NCPHD planning team utilized existing local plans and the Climate Change Health Risk Assessment Model to determine key local climate variables. This assessment, conducted in 2012 by North Central Public Health District staff, analyzed the potential impacts of climate change on local public health, response capacity and regional systems. A high probability, coupled with sweeping potential impacts and local vulnerabilities, elevated **DROUGHT** to the highest hazard in the NCPHD area.



Recommended actions

- Participate in future drought mitigation planning efforts by joining the Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning process.
- Create a Web page and brochure on the public health effects of drought.
- Assist in public education message formation, ensuring inclusion of public health messages or concerns and culturally appropriate campaigns.
- Provide public health technical assistance to advisory committees and specific guidance to residents around drinking water safety and drought.
- Educate well water owners about NHMP drought mitigation strategies during encounters with NCPHD Environmental Health.

Get informed about:

- Local historical drought data
- Natural resources information
- Personal preparedness
- Stress management and drought
- Private wells
- Water testing
- Drought mitigation strategies

For more information and/or the full report, contact North Central Public Health District at 541-506-2600 or email PublicHealth@co.wasco.or.us.

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) is one of nine agencies across the country that received a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Environmental Health (CDC-NCEH) as part of the Climate-Ready States and Cities Initiative. This program is intended to help agencies address the public health effects of climate change related events. The Climate and Public Health Program is part of the Public Health Division of the Oregon Health Authority.