

CLIMATE ACTION TEAM Public Health Working Group

Near-Term Implementation Plan Strategy 4: Surveillance and Data Collection

CAT Working Group Overview: The Public Health Working Group of the Climate Action Team was established to address cross-cutting issues related to climate change and health. The purpose of the Working Group is to provide a forum for communication, coordination, and education across agencies and with stakeholders. The Working Group is responsible for providing public health input into the AB 32 implementation process, as well as other public health issues related to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Climate change will significantly increase disease burden in California. Public health impacts will result from more severe extreme heat and other weather events, a decline in air quality, increases in allergenic plant pollen, more frequent wildfires, altered environmental conditions that foster the spread of communicable and vector-borne diseases, and impacts on food supply, water quality, shelter, and mental health. Public health has important roles in preventing the most catastrophic climate outcomes through engagement in climate change mitigation, in ensuring that climate change adaptation efforts address likely public health impacts, and in public health preparedness for response to climate-related emergencies.

Working Group Agencies: California Department of Public Health (designated lead), California Air Resources Board, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, California Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Pesticide Regulation, California Natural Resources Agency, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection, California Department of Water Resources, California Department of Conservation, California Energy Commission, California Department of Food and Agriculture, California Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Local Health Departments, and Stakeholder Organizations.

Measure / Strategy

- A) **Description:** Through this Strategy, CDPH shall monitor climate-related health outcomes across California by maintaining and improving surveillance mechanisms. In the near-term, surveillance will focus on impacts of extreme heat events. All heat-related morbidity/mortality is preventable, yet heat waves are the leading cause of weather-related deaths in the United States and climate change is predicted to increase the frequency and intensity of heat waves. In the long-term, surveillance efforts will be expanded to other climate-related extreme events.
- B) **Agencies Involved:** California Department of Public Health, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, University of California, Stakeholder Organizations.
- C) **Scoping Plan/Adaptation Plan Reference:** This strategy is drawn from Public Health Strategy 4 (Establish, Improve, and Maintain Mechanisms for Robust Rapid Surveillance of Environmental Conditions, Climate-Related Illness, Vulnerabilities, Protective Factors, and Adaptive Capacities), Near-Term Action (a), Monitor Outcomes at State and Local Level, in the 2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy.
- D) **Metrics:** The metrics used to define success for this Strategy are process measures that vary with each Task (see enumerated Deliverables below).

- E) Crosscutting Issues: Intersections with the Research Working Group will be addressed through participation of CDPH staff on the Research Working Group.
- F) Tasks and Deliverables:

Task 4.1: California Environmental Health Tracking Program

1. Description: The California Environmental Health Tracking Program (CEHTP) tracks many of the exposures and health effects that may be related to environmental hazards, including the effects of climate change on the health of Californians. CDPH will maintain CEHTP and begin to incorporate environmental health indicators of climate change specific to heat into the data tracked by the Program. CDPH will enhance the state’s surveillance capacity to respond to heat impacts related to climate change by providing data and information on excess morbidity and mortality due to heat waves via the CEHTP web portal.
2. Deliverables: Web-based query system for heat-related indicators on the CEHTP web portal developed.
3. Agency Roles: CDPH is the lead agency. The Center for Environmental Public Health Tracking at University of California, Berkeley School of Public Health is project partner. CEHTP is supported by grant funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
4. Timeline: Web-based query system to be begin to be developed by December 31, 2010. Initial data on the web portal by summer 2011.

Task 4.2: Post-Event Surveillance

1. Description: Climate-related extreme events include extreme heat, floods, droughts, and wildfires. These events have direct impacts on human health. Public health researchers measure these impacts through post-event surveillance.
2. Deliverables: Are determined on an event-by-event basis. In general, conduct post-event surveillance of climate-related extreme events and publicly report findings.
3. Agency Roles: CDPH
4. Timeline: Post-event surveillance is done on an as-needed and resource-permitting basis.

G) SUMMARY TABLE:

Deliverable	Agencies	Deadline
Web-Based Query System for Heat-Related Indicators	CDPH	Develop by December 31, 2010
Post-Event Surveillance	CDPH, OEHHA	As needed