US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT
Environmental Health Workgroup
Working Session

Border 2012 National Coordinators Meeting
Tucson, Arizona
March 9, 2005
Protection of public health is a key element of the Border 2012 program and is an integral part of all program activities. The Environmental Health Work Group (EHWG) serves as the main conduit for addressing bi-national environmental health concerns, such as increases in disease rates along the US-Mexico border. We are committed to increasing collaboration between environmental and public health entities to identify and improve community health issues.

In the past several years, we have conducted a number of projects in the border region related to surveillance, research, training/education and communication. More recently, the workgroup focus has shifted to also look at the development and application of indicators to assess changes in specific human exposure and health conditions. For a list of ongoing projects regarding border environmental health, visit our projects and publications page.
In conjunction with the above objectives, the Environmental Health Workgroup (EHWG) is committed to achieving goal #4 of the Border 2012 program – Improve Environmental Health. This will be accomplished by working in the four program objectives outlined in the US-Mexico Border 2012 Framework (PDF, 38 pp, 1.15 MB, About PDF).

Objective 1: Air
By 2006, evaluate various measures of respiratory health in children that might be tracked to assess changes that may result from actions to improve air quality in border communities.

Objective 2: Water
By 2006, evaluate various measures of gastrointestinal illness that might be tracked to assess changes that may result from actions to improve water quality in border communities.

Objective 3: Pesticides
Objective 3A: By 2006, an assessment and pilot program will be completed that explores the feasibility of harmonizing a binational system for reporting acute pesticide poisonings.

Objective 3B: By 2007, reduce pesticide exposure by training 36,000 farmworkers on pesticide risks and safe handling, including ways to minimize exposure for families and children.

Objective 4: Capacity Building
Objective 4A: By 2006, establish a "distance-learning", post-graduate degree program to support advanced training on environmental health in conjunction with Pan American Health Organization regional offices and academic institutions.

Objective 4B: By 2004, extend current efforts in binational environmental health training for 100 health care providers each for pesticides and water.
US-Mexico Border 2012 Environmental Health Workgroup

PROJECTS & PUBLICATIONS

ONGOING

Air
Effects of Diesel Exposure and Traffic Related Air Pollution on Asthmatic Children in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua

Water
Safe Drinking Water Demonstration Project for South Texas

Pesticides
Longitudinal Variability in Urinary Pesticide Metabolites Among Children
Pilot Study Evaluating Symptomatic Children for Organophosphate Pesticide Exposure
Urinary Biomarker Data Analysis and Study Design for Children Along the U.S.-Mexico Border
Urinary Metabolites in Environmental Media: A Scoping and Feasibility Study

Multimedia
Intentional Tracking Network of Environmentally Related Diseases
Environmental Health Indicators Initiative

COMPLETED

Air
El Paso Children's Respiratory Health Study
US-Mexico Border 2012 Environmental Health Workgroup

PROJECTS & PUBLICATIONS

SAFE DRINKING WATER DEMONSTRATION PROJECT FOR SOUTH TEXAS

Start Date: 6/3/2002  Completion Date: 1/31/2005  Download PDF (2 pp, 28 kb, about PDF)

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this contract is to develop and implement training activities for health professionals, community health workers (promotores) on safe drinking water concepts.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Deliver a health education and intervention program to several communities in Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr and Webb Counties. In addition, a process was implemented to assess the effectiveness of the health education and intervention program for encouraging behavioral changes in the population. Provide continuing medical education courses to open discussions between physicians and the Texas Department of Health regarding methods to increase usage and improve the efficiency of the current web-based tracking system.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Six promotores serving two counties are employed by the project and have been trained in the Safe Drinking Water module. Project promotores have delivered the health education module on Safe Drinking Water to 71 families. Continuing Medical Education Sessions have been provided to 22 health care professionals. Presentations of Safe Drinking Water curriculum were conducted to 147 nurses. Safe Drinking Water curriculum has been presented to 12 schools in the Texas border region. Approximately 228 students.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1) Training promotores in Texas and Mexico to deliver health education modules; total number should not exceed 12, (2) delivery of safe drinking water education to 200 families in colonias in Hidalgo and Webb Counties; (3) delivery of Continuing Medical Education curriculum in Safe Drinking Water to 50 health care professionals in Cameron, Webb, Starr and Hidalgo Counties; (4) delivery of educational programs...
Current Projects: HRSA

Continue work through an interagency agreement

- Establish an electronic forum (E-group) for environmental health information exchange for health professionals
- Create a methodology to evaluate the effectiveness of environmental health education and training interventions
Current Projects: Pesticides
(See pesticides presentation from EHWG meeting [http://www.epa.gov/ehwg/] for complete update)

- Continuous train-the-trainer workshops throughout Mexico
- Expand to include training for doctors in Mexico on recognition & management of poisonings
- Opportunities for trainer & researcher exchange programs
- Border Pesticide Poisoning Tracking System: CA DPR & Mexico on reporting system for acute pesticide incidents
- Arizona/Sonora Children’s Environmental Health Campaign: to reduce exposures to environmental contaminants
Environmental Health Indicator Development
2005-2006 Action Plan
MATERIALS FROM EHWG/BITF MEETING
FEBRUARY 2-4, 2005

ABOUT PDF FILES

General Meeting Information
Meeting Agenda (PDF, 4pp, 27KE)
Reunión Agenda (PDF, 4pp, 28KE)
Strategy for Indicator Development (PDF, 24pp, 122KB)
Estrategia para el Desarrollo de los Indicadores (PDF, 25pp, 130KB)
Meeting Minutes (PDF, 6pp, 50KB)
Minutos de Reunión (PDF, 6pp, 51KB)
Meeting Participants (PDF, 10pp, 22KB)

Regional Priorities
Region 6 EH priorities (PDF, 24pp, 225KB)
Norma L. Duran, Ph.D.
USEPA, Region 6 El Paso Border Office
Arizona-Sonora priorities (PDF, 8pp, 164KB)
Ward Jacobs - Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
Edith Frias Bustos - SEMARNAT - Sonora
USMBHC (PDF, 22pp, 1.9MB)
Eva Moya, LMSW
USMBHC U.S. Section Executive Director
Common issues of EH TF (PDF, 5pp, 14KE)

Future Plans
EHWG Action Plan (PDF, 4pp, 17KB)
Hal Zenick
EPA/Office of Research and Development
BITF Workshop (PDF, 7pp, 100KB)

EHWG and BITF Partner Experiences
Lessons Learned (PDF, 12pp, 383KB)
Fiedad Huerta, Health Promotion Officer, PAHO/WHO
Alma Galvan, Environmental Health Consultant, PAHO/WHO

The Role of Environmental Public Health Indicators (PDF, 10pp, 38KB)
Michael A. McGeehin, Ph.D., M.S.P.H.
Director, Division of Environmental Hazards and Health Effects
National Center for Environmental Health
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Red Binacional de Monitoreo de Enfermedades Relacionadas con el Medio Ambiente (PDF, 20pp, 1.1MB)

Other EHWG Activities
Past EHWG priorities (PDF, 9pp, 291KB)
Hal Zenick,
EPA/Office of Research and Development
EHWG with USMBHC (PDF, 18pp, 571KB)
Update on pesticide activities (PDF, 28pp, 219KB)
Kennon Ganey
EPA/Office of Pesticide Programs
Yellow pages to e-group (PDF, 12pp, 417KB)
Kirstin Crowder
Association of Schools of Public Health
Fellow at the USEPA Office of Research & Development
Strategy for Indicator Development

Purpose:
• to provide a foundation for the identification, development, and use of a basic set of indicators for the Border 2012 program
• will guide the development of border indicators
• provides common terminology
• describes a conceptual framework to facilitate the organization and interpretation of indicators
• defines indicator selection criteria
DPSIR Model

- Driving forces
- Pressures
- State
- Impact
- Response
- Effect
- Exposure

Health-Based Environmental Indicators only
EHWG ACTIONS

• Form two working teams on Air and Water
• Develop Action Plan with indicators as a major element
• EHWG co-chairs will appoint a U.S. and Mexico facilitators for each group
• Group will also have a representative from the Air and Water Policy Forums and from each Border Environmental Health Taskforces and PAHO (SCERP?)
EHWG ACTIONS

• Team will apply the Strategy model to:
  - align current indicator efforts (by taskforces, workgroups, etc)
  - identify commonalties and
  - delineate major data/information gaps
  - prioritize the linkages\(^1\) toward which efforts and resources should be directed

\(^1\)Highest priority to linkages that have broadest value and impact
EHWG ACTIONS

Value of Action Plan

• Provide forum for the various groups to share on going efforts, data etc
• Guide directions for proposal solicitations and other mechanisms and funding
• Provide plan that the Commission requested on which to build partnerships and leverage resources
• Contribute key elements to EHWG overall 2005 (and beyond) work plan.
Next Steps for Action Plan

• Gain consensus on what is being proposed
• Identify who will participate
• Discuss how the technical groups will function