

Local Climate and Health Interventions

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Climate and Health Collaborative(OCHC) is comprised of 5 local health jurisdictions supported and coordinated by the PHD Climate and Health Program: Benton County Health Department, Crook County Health Department, Jackson County Health Department, Multnomah County Health Department, and North Central Health District.

In late 2016, the OCHC members received a \$28,000 1-year grant to implement interventions prioritized in their respective Climate and Health Adaptation Plans (these existing plans were made possible by a previous grant with our program, via 2010-13 CDC funding).

LOCAL SUCCESS STORIES:

“We were able to implement a program that paid for nearly 50 well water quality tests for bacteria and nitrates. We mapped the results to help inform future public health interventions. With support and technical expertise from the Climate and Health Program at the Oregon Health Authority, we were able to develop and disseminate new educational materials on drought health risks in both English and Spanish to program participants. Having the autonomy to design our interventions as we saw fit and the monthly check-in calls with the State enabled our success...As a small, rural county health department, NCPHD is not able to dedicate any other funding specifically to doing climate and health work, so I'm worried that the momentum we have created in the region will slow down as the grant funding period ends. However, I will continue to try to insert public health into local climate-related work whenever possible.”

– *Jeremy Hawkins, North Central Health District*

“We received overwhelming positive feedback from the community residents regarding the new Workshop Series we piloted. We were able to provide community members with valuable information on the relationship between climate and health.”

– *Holly Wenzel, Crook County Health Dept.*

“I appreciated the trainings we received along with the State’s support with developing and evaluating our work. Through this grant we were able to develop new partnerships and relationships between County departments and ultimately, our County Commissioners adopted a new resolution to further support climate adaptation work in Benton County.”

– *Mac Gillespie, Benton County Health Dept.*

“We successfully developed guidance for large sporting events held on hot days and distributed it to key events, reaching thousands of participants. Our work measuring social vulnerability informed statewide efforts to integrate environmental justice into climate policy and we developed familiarity with tools for explaining co-benefits of climate change.”

– *Brendon Haggerty, Multnomah County Health Department*

“The support from OHA was outstanding. Our greatest success this year was being part of the City of Medford's natural hazard mitigation planning process and contributing to the inclusion of climate and health aspects.”

– *Tanya Phillips, Jackson County Health Department*

IN ONE YEAR IMPLEMENTING INTERVENTIONS, OCHC MEMBERS MADE:

8 CHANGES IN POLICIES, including:

- The integration of climate change into health department strategic plans (Crook, Benton)
- The integration of climate adaptation strategies into emergency preparedness plans and natural hazard mitigation plans (Jackson, Multnomah)
- A new proclamation by county commissioners to address climate change (Benton)
- Climate and health focused testimony on state legislation on carbon pricing and transportation (Mult.)
- Public health representation on regional air quality committees (Crook, Jackson)
- The integration of climate and health equity concepts into a county's comprehensive plan (Benton)
- Provided climate and health data to inform city and county resolutions to move to 100% renewable energy by 2050. (Multnomah)

11 CHANGES IN SYSTEMS, including:

- A new system for sharing water contamination results with water resource planners (NCHD)
- The development of a new cross-sector climate change planning group (Benton)
- The development of new climate and health decision-support tools (Multnomah, NCHD)
- The development of new extreme heat guidance for large organized athletic events (Multnomah)
- An updated severe weather operating protocol (NCHD, Jackson)
- An updated protocol for considering climate factors in unusual communicable disease reports (NCHD)
- Integrating more climate considerations into syndromic surveillance activities (NCHD, Multnomah)
- Integration of climate considerations into healthy homes programs (Crook)
- New air quality information was integrated into WIC and Home visiting programs (Crook, Multnomah)

10 CHANGES IN WORKPLACE CULTURE, including:

- A new protocol for providing updates during all-staff meetings on climate news and information
- New internal partners within health departments were engaged in climate projects, including helping to recruit intervention participants and with the dissemination of risk communications.
- Climate and Health Adaptation Plans are now regularly referenced and advanced by various public health programs
- Climate change has become a new focus of a public health promotion team
- Stronger linkages made between environmental health, health equity and climate justice
- Ongoing participation in the NW Climate and Health Network
- An intern was hired to engage on climate and health issues within the health department
- Identification of climate champions within partner departments

PROGRESS ON COMMUNICATIONS, Including:

- Hosted community workshops
- Sent mass e-mail messages
- Produced social media posts
- Sent out press releases
- Utilized citizen alert warning system
- Work featured in local radio and newspaper stories
- Convened partners for presentations and events
- Published online information, including updated maps of vulnerability
- Had more public health representation at external meetings