



**INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE
ALBUQUERQUE AREA
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND ENGINEERING**

DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**PERFORMANCE PLAN
January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2009**

Submitted By:

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The Division of Environmental Health Services (DEHS) program of the Albuquerque Area Indian Health Service (AAIHS) provides comprehensive environmental health services to American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities through a network of community-based environmental health professionals.

DEHS Program Mission

The AAIHS-DEHS is a critical part of the IHS preventive care programs. The purpose of the DEHS program is to address a wide range of environmental conditions in AI/AN homes and communities that contribute to high morbidity and mortality among Indian people. The environment, which includes the home, community, and the workplace, as well as the natural surroundings, is recognized as a vital factor in a person's overall health and well being. To guide this purpose, the DEHS program operates under the following mission statement:

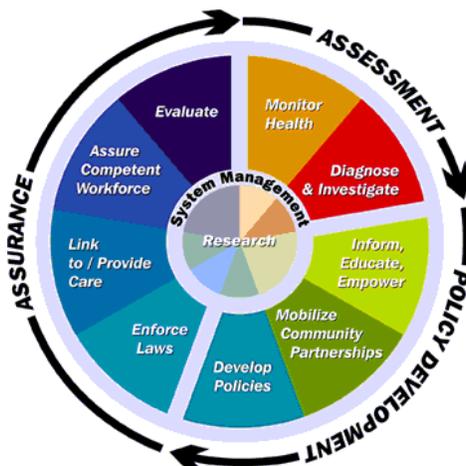
“Our exceptional, passionate and collaborative community-based Environmental Health program utilizes innovative approaches, enhances tribal capacity, and effectively uses resources to improve the lives of American Indians/Alaska Natives by eliminating environmentally related disease and injury through model public health practices.”

DEHS Program Management Philosophy

The Ten Essential Public Health Services provide a nationally-accepted framework to describe public health activities needed to achieve the goal of healthy people in healthy communities. The Albuquerque Area IHS-DEHS has adopted the Ten Essential Public Health Services and modified them to be the Ten Essential Environmental Health Services to define our program, clarify our role in public health, and plan our activities to achieve maximum public health benefits.

The Division of Environmental Health Services has three programmatic focus areas:

- General Environmental Health
- Institutional Environmental Health
- Injury Prevention



1. Monitor health status to identify community environmental health problems:

The DEHS considers front-line, disease prevention activities our best tool for improving community environmental and public health. DEHS staff conduct routine monitoring and surveillance of environmental conditions utilizing three primary data sources: WebEHRS, WebCIDENT, and a new database being developed for the AAIHS-DEHS. Consultative, risk-based surveys assess the potential of health hazards associated with environmental exposures. Survey reports identify problems and present recommended corrective actions. Examples of DEHS monitoring include,

- Plague and hanta virus surveillance using the wild rodent population as the primary indicator;
- Food service sanitation surveys at establishments and events;
- Comprehensive environmental health and safety surveys of childcare, healthcare, and sanitation facilities; and
- Injury and communicable disease surveillance and intervention strategies.

2. Diagnose and investigate environmental health problems and health hazards in the community:

Community health problems and hazards are commonly identified through a referral system. This system is a network of public health professionals in community or regional health care centers and state health departments. Community health problems and/or health hazards are also identified as reported by the service population.

In addition, DEHS monitoring and surveillance activities identify environmental health hazards. In partnership with other IHS staff and local/state health departments, DEHS staff investigate epidemics and/or individual human disease cases. This is accomplished as part of "epidemiological response teams" or via surveillance activities to identify potential exposures, diagnose the cause of the illness, and develop intervention strategies.

3. Inform, educate, and empower people about environmental health issues:

The DEHS enhances tribal program capacity through training, health promotion activities, and opportunities for funding. Examples include,

- Technical assistance and education to administrative, health care, and utility staff during routine surveys or visits;
- Providing or sponsoring training courses such as food handlers' training, West Nile virus education, and child passenger safety, etc;
- Identifying training needs for Tribal environmental health-related staff and providing information on offered courses from external sources; and
- Soliciting applications for community-managed injury prevention and environmental project awards.

4. Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve environmental health problems:

DEHS staff routinely work with existing Tribal programs, such as Tribal EPA environmental programs and the Community Health Representatives, as well as Injury Coalitions, to identify health problems and implement solutions. A community-based intervention is the only sustainable solution to a community-based problem.

5. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community environmental health efforts:

The DEHS staff provide advice and consultation to Tribal decision-makers who are tasked with developing public health policy. All community-wide and/or Tribal program organizational policies, codes, or ordinances should convey health promotion and protection measures.

6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety:

The IHS is not a regulatory agency; the DEHS provides consultative assistance and activities. However, DEHS does work with Tribal enforcement agencies by providing survey (“inspection”) results to the appropriate officials who may take action if deficiencies or violations require. DEHS also conducts routine sanitary surveys of water, sewer, solid waste, and other facilities to assist Tribes in maintaining compliance with EPA regulations.

DEHS staff work with healthcare facilities to ensure OSHA, NFPA Life Safety Code, and accrediting body regulations and codes are being adhered to in design and operation.

7. Link people to needed environmental health services and assure the provision of environmental health services when otherwise unavailable:

The DEHS often serves as a liaison between Tribes and federal or state environmental and public health agencies in order to provide external (local, state, and other federal agency) environmental health services to the community.

8. Assure a competent environmental health workforce:

The national IHS-DEHS program has developed a “Career Development” document and AAIHS-DEHS staff have annual individual development plans to provide guidance to staff and assure staff receive necessary training. The DEHS provides wide availability, opportunity, and support for continuing education, training, and professional development in order to retain a highly qualified workforce.

9. Evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based environmental health services:

Each field office depends on an informal system of community feedback as a method of assessing customer satisfaction. The Albuquerque Area provides a formal process of evaluating each field program, based on goals, objectives, and achievements. The objectives and indicators presented in this work plan will serve as measures to evaluate the DEHS program over the next years.

10. Conduct new research for new insights and innovative solutions to environmental health problems and issues:

The DEHS communicates with other IHS Areas, state health and environment departments, the Albuquerque Area Epi-Center, as well as universities and other agencies, to review activities and research developments. DEHS staff conduct on-going reviews of current scientific literature and belong to several listservs in order to receive information on the latest innovations in environmental health.

DEHS Organizational Goals and Performance Measures

Current resources do not permit the AAIHS-DEHS program to accomplish anywhere near the estimated need for environmental health services. Priorities must be established to obtain the maximum benefit from the available resources. The DEHS has determined that service emphasis areas will revolve around the *Healthy People 2010* Objectives of Environmental Health, Food Safety, Injury and Violence Prevention, and Occupational Safety and Health. Environmental health and injury indicators and measures are specific to the AAIHS-DEHS program.

The Albuquerque Area DEHS supports the 2007 National IHS-DEHS Strategic Plan.

1. GOAL: Maintain an effective monitoring system(s) that can measure community and individual health status.

- Performance Measure: Utilizing WebEHRS, complete and maintain an 80% rate of the environmental health facility surveys. This includes water, sewer, solid waste, food service, institutional, and school and child care facilities [Facility codes 12 – 80].
- Performance Measure: Utilizing WebEHRS, complete and maintain a 90% survey rate of the healthcare facility surveys. This constitutes Hazard Surveillance Surveys, hazardous vapor surveys, surveys of x-ray units, and quarterly indoor air quality monitoring.

- Performance Measure: Develop a system for collecting community-based health data of environmentally-related disease and injury.
- Performance Measure: Enlist two additional Head Starts to report illness and injury data into the Albuquerque Area Head Start Injury and Illness Database.

2. GOAL: Community health and environmental data are analyzed, interpreted, and reported. This set of core measures tracks data over time to signal changes in priority environmental health issues.

- Performance Measure: At least one community environmental health profile (CEHP) will be conducted in 2008, and this model will be used to conduct additional CEHPs in 2009.

3. GOAL: Control and prevent adverse health events resulting from communicable diseases and outbreaks; chronic diseases; environmental health hazards; biological, chemical, and radiological threats; and large-scale disasters.

- Performance Measure: Develop standard operating procedures for waterborne disease and vectorborne disease (including plague and hanta virus) investigations.
- Performance Measure: Develop Asbestos Management Plans for each of the thirteen healthcare facilities in the Area.

4. GOAL: Ensure culturally-appropriate and consistent environmental health education is provided to individuals and the community.

- Performance Measure: Develop standard environmental health issue materials and presentations for distribution and delivery. Material and presentations will be developed for the following issues:
 - Head Start Training Requirements
 - Food Handler Training
 - Grab Day Safety
 - Fire Safety
 - Zoonotic and Vectorborne Disease Prevention
 - Climate Change

5. GOAL: Facilitate partnerships and processes that engage the community in identifying, prioritizing, and solving environmental health problems.

- Performance Measure: Select at least one school to work with for implementation of the USDA School Food Safety Program.

6. GOAL: Develop policies and plans to support environmental health efforts.

- Performance Measure: Develop evidence-based best practice guides for Injury Prevention issues. Model guides will be developed for the following issues:
 - Motor Vehicle Crashes (including child safety seats, adult occupant restraint use, alcohol impaired driving, teen driver safety)
 - Elder Falls
 - Animal Control (dog bites, livestock fencing)
 - Fire Safety
 - Bike Safety
 - Playground Safety

7. GOAL: Support the adoption and enforcement of sovereign tribal public health laws/regulations/ordinances.

- Performance Measure: Develop model codes which tribal governments can easily adapt and implement for their community needs. A model tribal food code and a model occupant restraint law will be developed.

8. GOAL: Serve as liaison and lead or "go to" agency for tribal communities to increase access to culturally competent health services, including preventive and health promotion services.

- Performance Measure: Develop an environmental health web page. This site will include EHS program services and activities data, staff contact information, current topics, and links to outside environmental public health and tribal sources.

9. GOAL: Assure the highest level of competency and capacity in the environmental health workforce by maximizing the recruitment, retention, and professional development of the EHS staff.

- Performance Measure: Develop individual career development plans for all staff, based on individual needs assessments for training and the environmental health core competencies.

10. GOAL: Assess the quality and effectiveness of DEHS programs and activities and implement quality improvement plans where needed.

- Performance Measure: Conduct at least 3 DEHS program reviews in 2008, and implement improvement plans over 2008 – 2009.

- Performance Measure: Conduct formal project evaluations of the current injury prevention projects in Nambe and Taos Pueblos.

11. GOAL: Support research and collaborate on projects to define effective approaches to environmental health problems and develop an evidence-based EHS program.

- Performance Measure: Identify at least one priority environmental health issue and conduct a formal research study / project.

Conclusion

This work plan was developed with full participation and input by the AAIHS Division of Environmental Health Services staff. Planning sessions were held at each district (addenda).

This plan will serve as a foundation on which to elicit more involvement from the tribes in prioritizing and planning our activities, and identifying scientifically sound solutions to environmental health issues. By completely and effectively using the 10 Essential Environmental Health Services as the guiding principle, the AAIHS-DEHS will strive to deliver a comprehensive environmental public health program that improves the public health and quality of life for the American Indian population, and serves as a model for other health departments.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE #1 - GOAL: Maintain an effective monitoring system(s) that can measure community and individual health status.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TYPE OF INDICATOR	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MEASURE	PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT/OUTCOME
Complete and maintain an 80% rate of the environmental health facility surveys.	Intervention (sanitary survey) indicator.	Percentage of water systems without critical deficiencies.	Safe and healthy public water supplies.
	Intervention (food survey) indicator.	Percentage of restaurants and kitchen facilities without critical deficiencies.	Safe retail / public food service.
	Intervention (facility survey) indicator.	Percentage of daycares and Head Starts without critical deficiencies.	Safe and healthy child care environments.
Complete and maintain a 90% rate of the healthcare facility surveys.	Intervention and hazard (radiation exposure) indicator.	Percentage of x-ray units operating in compliance with radiation protection standards.	Safe healthcare facility environments.
	Intervention and hazard (air flow/pressure to reduce exposure to biogens) indicator.	Percentage of rooms/departments in compliance with ASHRAE recommended and/or OSHA mandated air exchange rates.	Safe healthcare facility environments.
Develop a system for collecting community-based health data of environmentally-related disease and injury.	Health effect indicator: Environmentally-related disease and severe injury rates.	Threshold disease and injury rates will be developed and compared with appropriate health data standards. Rates decline over time.	Reduced morbidity and mortality related to environmental disease and severe injury.
Enlist two additional Head Starts to report illness and injury data into the Albuquerque Area Head Start Injury and Illness Database.	Health effect indicator: Environmentally-related disease and severe injury rates.	Percentage of Head Starts reporting into system.	Safe and healthy child care environments.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE #1 - GOAL: Community health and environmental data are analyzed, interpreted, and reported. This set of core measures tracks data over time to signal changes in priority environmental health issues.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TYPE OF INDICATOR	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MEASURE	PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT/OUTCOME
At least one community environmental health profile (CEHP) will be conducted in 2008, and this model will be used to conduct additional CEHPs in 2009.	Health effect, exposure, intervention, and hazard indicators.	Percentage of communities that have a current CEHP.	Healthy people in healthy communities.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE #2 - GOAL: Control and prevent adverse health events resulting from communicable diseases and outbreaks; chronic diseases; environmental health hazards; biological, chemical, and radiological threats; and large-scale disasters.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TYPE OF INDICATOR	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MEASURE	PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT/OUTCOME
Develop standard operating procedures for waterborne disease and vectorborne disease (including plague and hanta virus) investigations.	Intervention indicator.	Percentage of programs with written policies and training on policies.	Policies addressing preparedness and response to disease or hazardous situation events are in place.
Develop Asbestos Management Plans for each healthcare facility in the Area.	Intervention (policy) and hazard (eliminate exposure to asbestos) indicators.	Percentage of facilities with written policies and training on policies.	Policies addressing preparedness and response to disease or hazardous situation events are in place.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE #3 - GOAL: Ensure culturally-appropriate and consistent environmental health education is provided to individuals and the community.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TYPE OF INDICATOR	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MEASURE	PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT/OUTCOME
Develop standard environmental health issue materials and presentations for distribution and delivery. Material and presentations will be developed for the following issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Head Start Training Requirements - Food Handler Training - Grab Day Safety - Fire Safety - Zoonotic and Vectorborne Disease Prevention - Climate Change 	Intervention indicator.	Percentage of the population who receive environmental health and injury prevention educational messages.	Education and information is easily accessible.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE #4 - GOAL: Facilitate partnerships and processes that engage the community in identifying, prioritizing, and solving environmental health problems.			
PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TYPE OF INDICATOR	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MEASURE	PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT/OUTCOME
Select at least one school to work with for implementation of the USDA School Food Safety Program.	Intervention indicator.	Percentage of schools which have implemented the USDA School Food Safety Program.	Safe and healthy child care environments.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE #5 - GOAL: Develop policies and plans to support environmental health efforts.			
PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TYPE OF INDICATOR	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MEASURE	PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT/OUTCOME
Develop evidence-based best practice guides for Injury Prevention issues. Model guides will be developed for the following issues: - Motor Vehicle Crashes (child safety seats, occupant restraint use, alcohol impaired driving, teen driver safety) - Elder Falls - Animal Control (dog bites, livestock fencing) - Fire Safety - Bike Safety - Playground Safety	Intervention indicator.	Percentage of community-based injury prevention projects utilizing best practice guides.	Effective plans and policies that protect health are in place.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE #6 - GOAL: Support the adoption and enforcement of sovereign tribal public health laws/regulations/ordinances.			
PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TYPE OF INDICATOR	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MEASURE	PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT/OUTCOME
Develop model codes which tribal governments can easily adapt and implement for their community needs. A model tribal food code and a model occupant restraint law will be developed.	Intervention indicator.	Percentage of communities which have policies implemented.	Effective laws and policies that protect health are in place.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE #7 - GOAL: Serve as liaison and lead or "go to" agency for tribal communities to increase access to culturally competent health services, including preventive and health promotion services.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TYPE OF INDICATOR	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MEASURE	PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT/OUTCOME
Develop an environmental health web page. This site will include EHS program services and activities data, staff contact information, current topics, and links to outside environmental public health and tribal sources.	Intervention indicator.	Percentage of the population who receive environmental health and injury prevention educational messages.	Education and information is easily accessible.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE #8 - GOAL: Assure the highest level of competency and capacity in the environmental health workforce by maximizing the recruitment, retention, and professional development of the EHS staff.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TYPE OF INDICATOR	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MEASURE	PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT/OUTCOME
Develop individual career development plans for all staff, based on individual needs assessments for training and the environmental health core competencies.	Intervention indicator.	Percentage of the workforce who are professionally certified and adequately trained.	Effective programs that address environmental health issues.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE #9 - GOAL: Assess the quality and effectiveness of DEHS programs and activities and implement quality improvement plans where needed.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TYPE OF INDICATOR	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MEASURE	PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT/OUTCOME
Conduct at least 3 DEHS program reviews in 2008, and implement improvement plans over 2008 – 2009.	Intervention indicator.	Percentage of programs that are operating effectively, as determined through a formal assessment.	Effective programs that address environmental health issues.
Conduct formal project evaluations of the current injury prevention projects in Nambe and Taos Pueblos.	Intervention indicator.	Percentage of projects that successfully met outcomes, as determined through a formal evaluation.	Effective plans and policies that protect health are in place.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE #10 - GOAL: Support research and collaborate on projects to define effective approaches to environmental health problems and develop an evidence-based EHS program.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TYPE OF INDICATOR	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MEASURE	PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT/OUTCOME
Identify at least one priority environmental health issue and conduct a formal research study / project.	Intervention indicator.	Project result(s) show that intervention(s) applied are proven to produce positive outcome.	Effective programs that address environmental health issues.