



Santa Barbara County
Public Health Department
345 Camino del Remedio
Santa Barbara, CA 93110
805-681-5280
FAX: 805-681-4069

Health Matters Newsletter

www.sbcphd.org

August 2017

Environmental Health Services

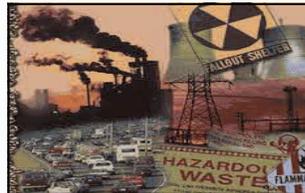
What is Environmental Public Health?

Environmental Public Health is the branch of public health that focuses on the interrelationships between people and their environment, promotes human health and well-being, and fosters healthy and safe communities. As a fundamental component of a comprehensive public health system, environmental health works to advance policies and programs to reduce chemical and other environmental exposures in air, water, soil and food to protect residents and provide communities with healthier environments.

Why is Environmental Health Important?

Maintaining a healthy environment is central to increasing quality of life and years of healthy life. Globally, nearly 25 percent of all deaths and the total disease burden can be attributed to environmental factors. Environmental factors are diverse and far reaching. They include:

- Exposure to hazardous substances in the air, water, soil, and food
- Natural and technological disasters
- Physical hazards
- Nutritional deficiencies
- The built environment



Poor environmental quality has its greatest impact on people whose health status is already at risk. Therefore, environmental health must address the societal and environmental factors that increase the likelihood of exposure and disease.

What Does Santa Barbara County Environmental Health Do?

The primary role of Environmental Public Health in Santa Barbara County is a regulatory one. The division permits and inspects over 2,000 food service establishments (restaurants, fast food places, markets and grocery stores to name a few), more than 600 public pools and spas as well as approximately 2,000 businesses that have hazardous materials onsite or generate hazardous wastes. The Division permits and inspects the construction of water wells and small water systems that serve everything from single homes to communities with up to 200 service connections. There are about 12,000 homes in the county that use onsite sewage treatment systems (septic systems) that are regulated by Environmental Health. Solid waste facilities including landfills, transfer stations, composting operations and the still in the works waste recovery system that the County is planning are all permitted and inspected by the division. The division oversees the clean-up and remediation of lands that have been contaminated from chemical releases such as leaking gasoline



Van Do-Reynoso, MPH, PhD
PHD Director

Charity Dean, MD, MPH
Health Officer/TB Controller

Susan Klein-Rothschild, MSW
Deputy Director

Paige A. Batson, MA, PHN, RN
Disease Control Manager

Lawrence D. Fay, Jr.
Environmental Health Services Director

Adrienne Starr, RDN, CDE, CSG
Public Health Nutrition Services

Michelle Wehmer, MPH
Epidemiologist

tanks and past industrial activities. Public ocean beaches are sampled weekly for bacterial contaminants and advisories are posted as needed.

All these activities are directed at minimizing the risk of exposure to the public to chemical or bacterial agents that can cause illness and disease thereby promoting healthy living conditions and improved quality of life.

Please visit some of our frequently viewed pages:

- [Food Facility – Retail](#)
- [Drinking Water](#)
- [Liquid Waste Program](#)
- [Recreational Health](#)
- [Solid Waste](#)
- [Cottage Food Operation](#)



Magnesium Deficiency

Magnesium (Mg) is an important electrolyte which participates in many reactions and functions in the body. Magnesium's roles in the body include; muscle contraction and relaxation, nerve function, bone development, and glucose metabolism. Magnesium participates in over 300 different and very important chemical reactions inside your body! It is found in many plant and animal sources. A table of food sources can be found here: <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Magnesium-HealthProfessional/> and include green leafy vegetables, nuts, legumes and whole grains.

It is difficult to assess Mg status because most of it is inside bone or cells. So what happens if we become deficient? Deficiencies can be caused by health conditions, alcoholism and use of some medications. Symptoms include weakness, numbness, muscle cramping, twitching, irregular heart-beat, and dizziness. True deficiencies due to low dietary intake is rare; however, inadequacies can occur when dietary intakes are low, absorption is reduced, and with GI disorders, Type II Diabetes, alcohol dependence, and older age. People who experience migraine headaches have been found to have lower magnesium levels. Chronic Magnesium inadequacy can cause changes to the bodies' chemical pathways and may increase our risk for cardiovascular disease, type II diabetes, and osteoporosis and migraine headaches.



To insure a good intake of magnesium from your diet eat a variety of whole foods - fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nuts and legumes and avoid processed foods as much as possible.

Epidemiology Program Updates

- 2017 Second Quarter Reportable Communicable Diseases Counts for the County: <http://cosb.countyofsb.org/phd/epi.aspx?id=23610>
- Updated reports available on the Epidemiology Reports webpage: <http://cosb.countyofsb.org/phd/epi.aspx?id=40517>
 - ◇ Santa Barbara Hepatitis C report of 2015 data compiled by California Department of Public Health now available online

