

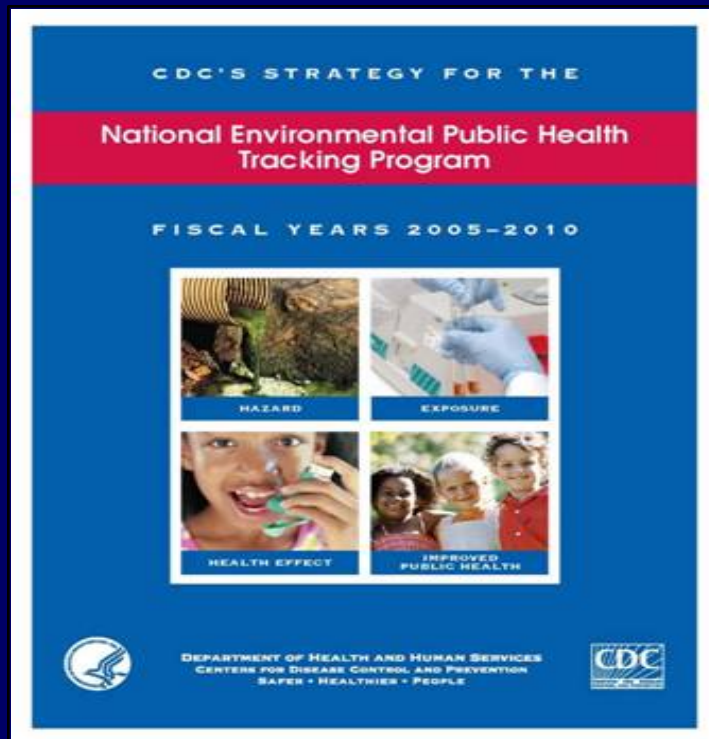
# **Environmental Public Health Tracking: Information to Guide Practice and Policy**

**APHA Annual Meeting & Exposition  
November 6, 2007**

**Heather Strosnider & Anne Venner  
Environmental Health Tracking Branch  
Division of Environmental Hazards and Health Effects  
National Center for Environmental Health  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**



# Tracking Program

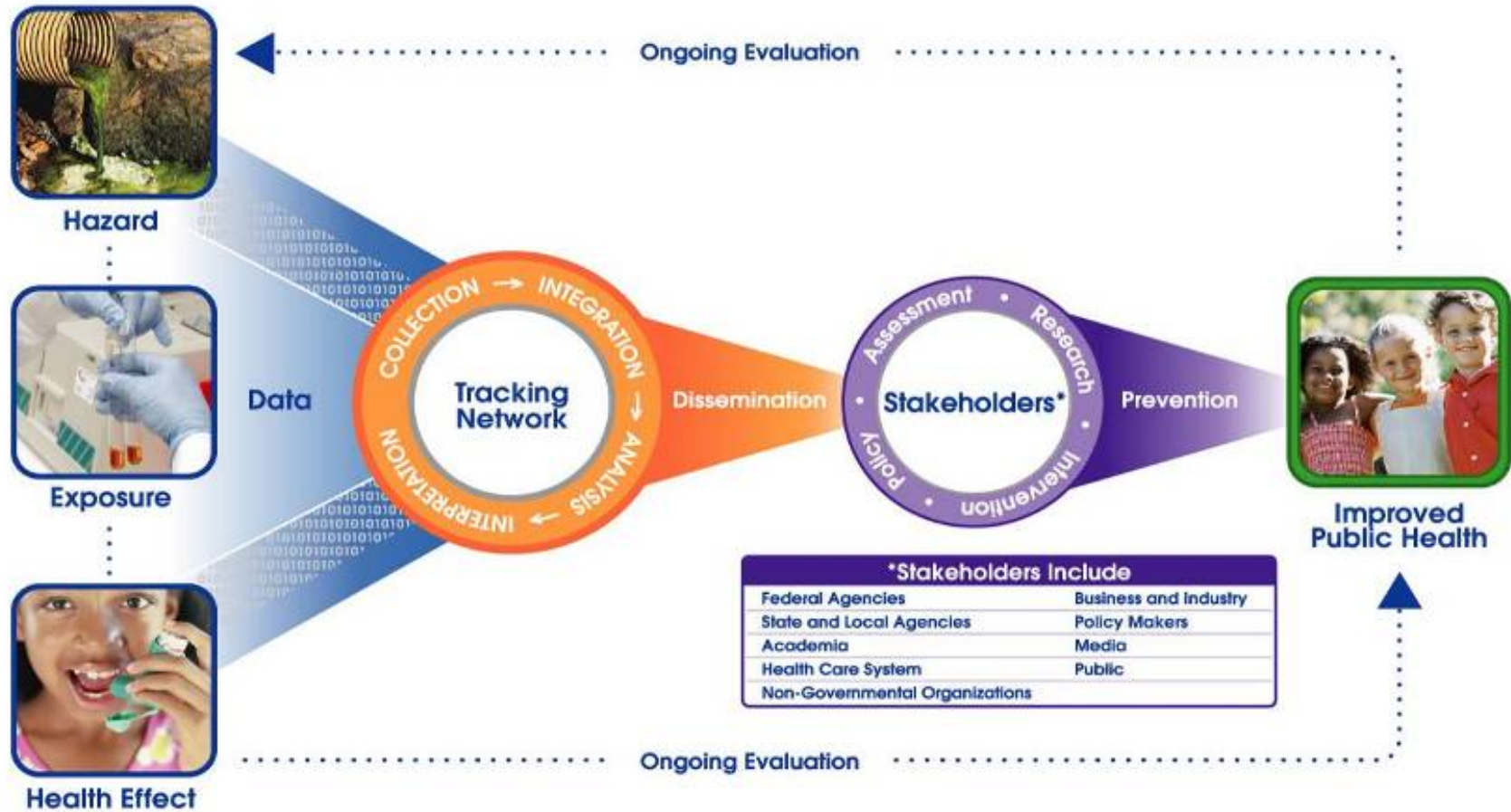


- ❖ Created in response to Pew Commission report
- ❖ Recommended a “Nationwide Health Tracking Network for diseases and exposures”
- ❖ 16 States and 1 City

*To provide information from a nationwide network of integrated health and environmental data that drives actions to improve the health of communities*



# ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING



**\*Stakeholders Include**

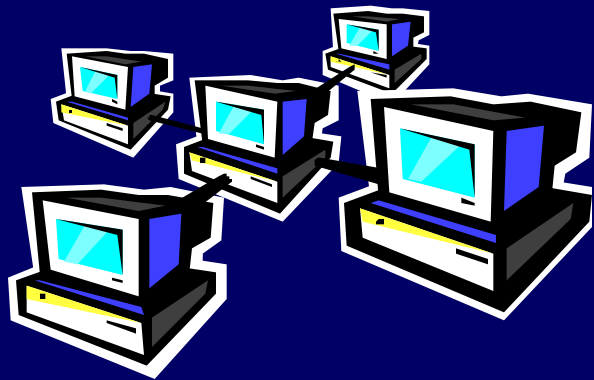
Federal Agencies	Business and Industry
State and Local Agencies	Policy Makers
Academia	Media
Health Care System	Public
Non-Governmental Organizations	



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION  
SAFER • HEALTHIER • PEOPLE



# Tracking Network



- ❖ Web-based information system that exists at the local, state, and national level
- ❖ Provides access to data and measures of environmental health status
- ❖ Serves the public, environmental public health agencies, health care providers and researchers



# *Surveillance as Information for Decision-Making*



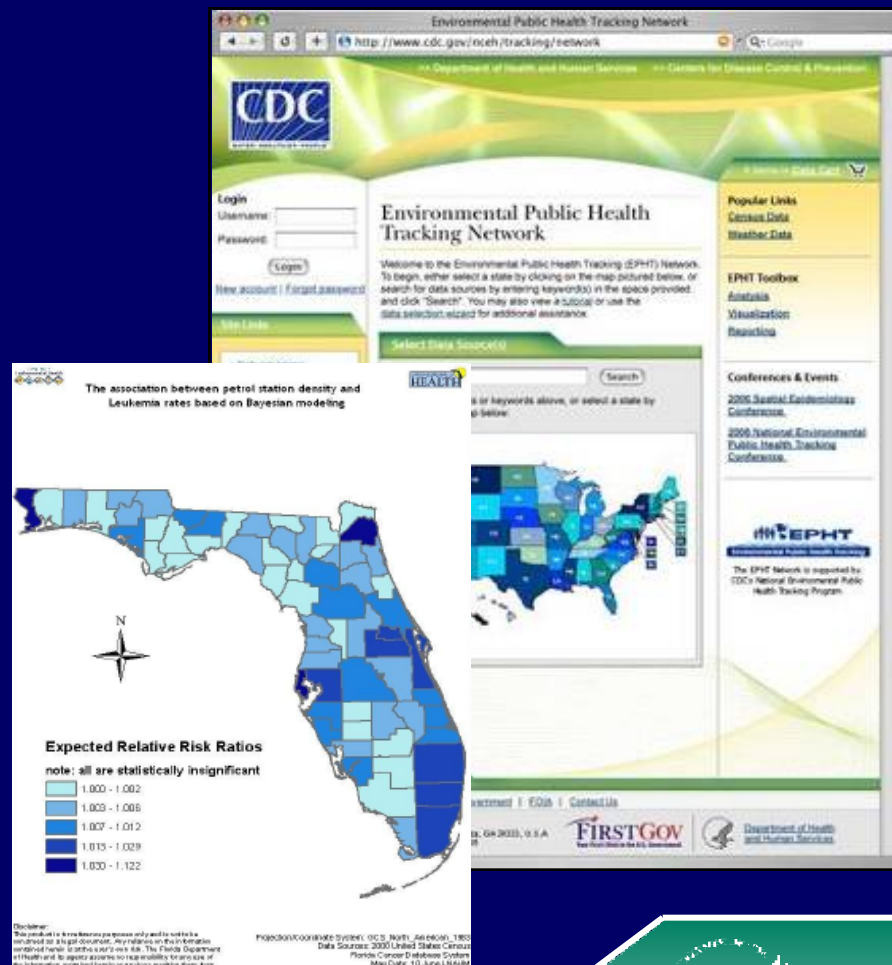
# Decision-Making

- ❖ Complex process
- ❖ Choosing one alternative from a number of alternatives
- ❖ Assumed that the effects of those alternatives can be measured
- ❖ Often involves some uncertainty and a trade-off between one alternative and another

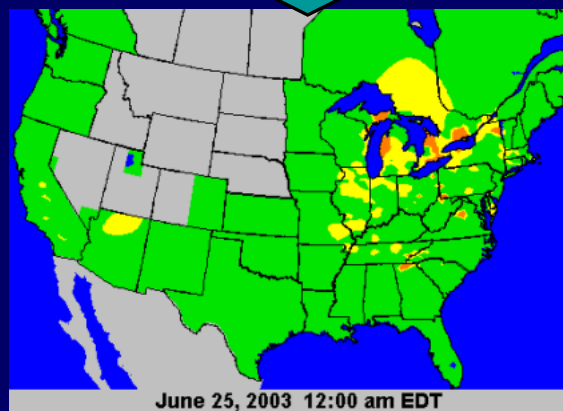
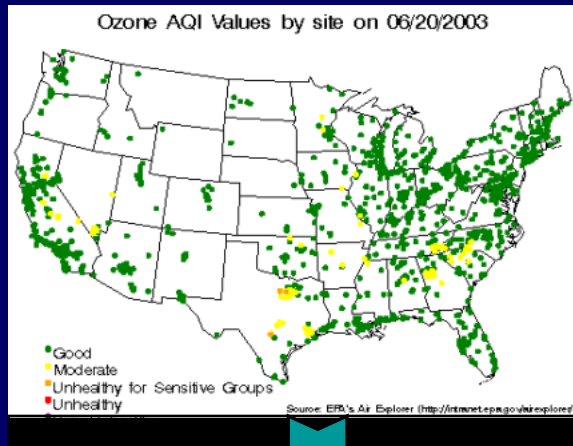


# Information Needs for Decision-Making

- ❖ Timely
- ❖ Valid
- ❖ Relevant
- ❖ Clear and easy to understand
- ❖ Comparable across time & place
- ❖ Sensitive, yet robust
- ❖ Accessible
- ❖ Actionable



# Surveillance as Information



- ❖ Data must be transformed into information
- ❖ Limitations of data must be noted
- ❖ Know your audience and their information needs





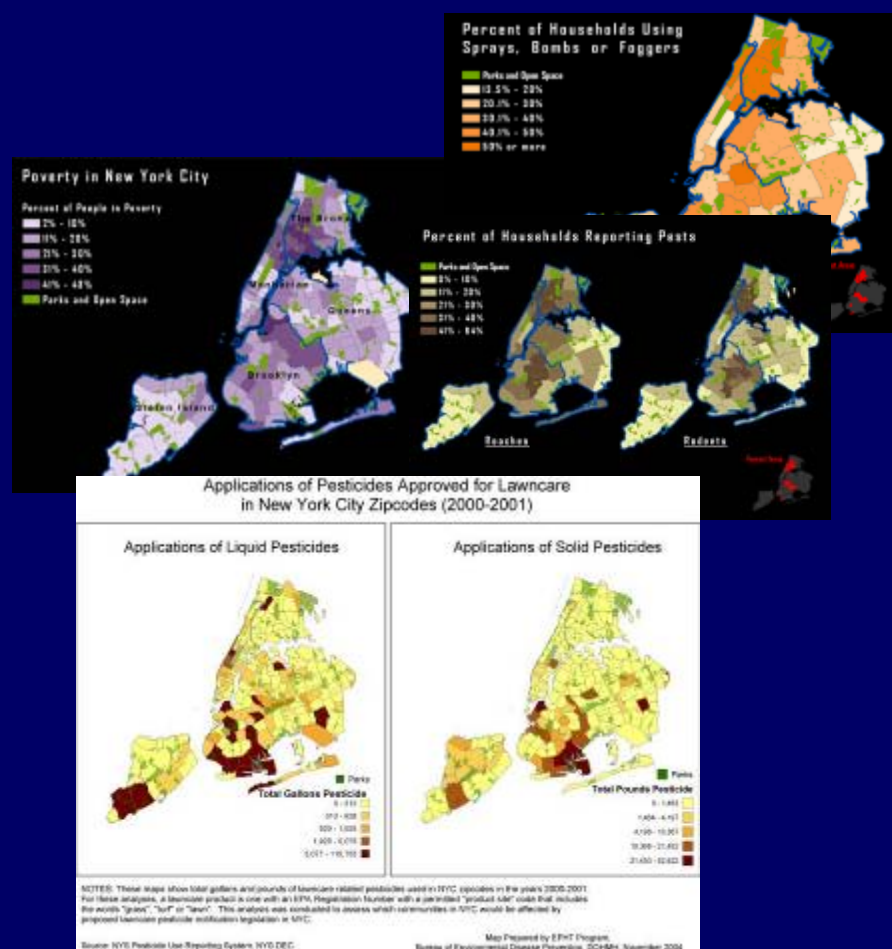
# *Tracking in Action*



# Informing Environmental Policy

## *Pesticide Use in NYC*

- ❖ NYC counties among the highest users of pesticides
- ❖ Urban Pesticide Tracking System
- ❖ Comprehensive Assessment
- ❖ Science and data guided legislative initiatives:
  - ❖ NYC Council Intro 328: Lawn care Pesticide Application Notification Requirement
  - ❖ NYC Council Intro 329: Municipal pesticide use reduction



# Informing Industrial/Business Policy

## *Reducing Emissions in WI*

- ❖ Regional Air Impact Modeling Initiative
  - ❖ Toxic air pollutant concentrations and community cancer risk
  - ❖ Developed by EPA, implemented by DNR & DHFS
- ❖ Community expressed concern about TCE emissions
- ❖ DHFS presented factory with information
- ❖ Factory reduced emission, though already compliant with regulations



# Informing Health Policy

## *Tracking Disease in MA*

- ❖ 2001, Tracking directed to establish SLE surveillance system & estimate rates of autism
- ❖ Limited by lack of uniform data collection system
- ❖ 2004, Notifiable disease list amended to include “surveillance of diseases possibly linked to environmental exposures”
  - ❖ asthma
  - ❖ aplastic anemia
  - ❖ SLE
  - ❖ myelodysplastic syndrome (MDS)
  - ❖ autism
  - ❖ scleroderma
  - ❖ ALS
  - ❖ MS



# *Supporting Decision-Making*

## Role of the National Tracking Network



# Secure Tracking Network

- ❖ Supports secure communication and collaboration among multiple partners
- ❖ Integrates health, exposure, hazard, and other data
- ❖ Allows for sharing of methods, tools, and ideas
- ❖ Serves as drawing board for turning data into information

Air  
Drinking Water  
Childhood Lead Exposure  
Birth Defects  
Birth Outcomes  
Asthma & MI  
Cancer  
CO



# Public Tracking Network



- ❖ Place to disseminate information
- ❖ Provides the public and policy makers with integrated one-stop access to health and environment information
- ❖ Allows for feedback and input from information users



# Turning Data into Information

## *Remaining Questions*

- ❖ Reaching local levels
- ❖ Linking health, exposure, & hazard data
- ❖ Providing information for “gray areas”
- ❖ Evaluating usefulness of information
- ❖ Obtaining feedback from users





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**For more information: [www.cdc.gov/nceh/tracking](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/tracking)**

**Contact us: [EPHT@cdc.gov](mailto:EPHT@cdc.gov)**

