INVESTIGATING ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS TO ADVANCE COMMUNITY HEALTH
ATSDR Improves the Quality of Life in Communities Across America

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) works to protect Americans from the dangerous health effects of toxic substances in the environment. ATSDR responds to requests from federal, state, and local governments to help identify environmental hazards, recommend actions to reduce exposures, and educate the public about how to prevent harmful exposures that can lead to harmful health effects in their communities.

ATSDR IMPACTS OVER A MILLION LIVES NATIONWIDE

In 2017 alone, we conducted health activities and investigations in nearly 40 states and territories. Nearly 1.2 million people were potentially impacted by exposures at sites where ATSDR worked.
**Respond**
We collaborate with local, tribal, state, territorial and federal agencies to address environmental emergencies across the country and partnering with communities. In 2017, ATSDR responded to over 500 requests for assistance across the United States.

**Investigate**
ATSDR investigates environmental hazards that have the potential to affect anywhere from a few individuals to more than 100,000 people. Not every ATSDR investigation discovers harmful levels of contaminants. In fact, only about 44% of our investigations in 2017 discovered harmful levels of contaminants (53 out of 121 investigations).

**Protect**
ATSDR invests in protecting people and saving lives by ensuring clean air to breathe, water to drink, and food to eat. To accomplish this, we evaluate exposure problems in communities, identify risk factors, develop prevention strategies, and support adoption of these strategies by other federal, state, and/or local agencies, to prevent and reduce exposure to the health threat.

**Prevent**
ATSDR cares for the communities it serves by making long-term investments that lead to sustainable community impacts.
Investigations by Pathway

Each pathway may carry different contaminants and negative health outcomes.
**AIR**

Individuals can inhale contaminants when they're released into the air from contaminated sources.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

- ATSDR Conducted: 37 Investigations
- Across: 16 U.S. States and Territories
- And Assessed: 560K People for Potential Exposures

**WATER**

Man-made chemicals and naturally occurring elements and minerals can get into groundwater, surface water, and drinking water in various ways. For example, manufacturing processes or improper disposal of chemicals can lead to them leaching into groundwater or surface water.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

- ATSDR Conducted: 49 Investigations
- Across: 20 U.S. States and Territories
- And Assessed: 425K People for Potential Exposures

**SOIL**

People may come into contact with contaminants when natural elements found in rocks and fertilizer as well as man-made chemical compounds make their way into the soil. Sometimes contaminants may also naturally occur in soil.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

- ATSDR Conducted: 45 Investigations
- Across: 24 U.S. States and Territories
- And Assessed: 327K People for Potential Exposures

**FOOD**

Contaminants can accumulate in food sources such as the tissue of animals, fish, fish eating birds, or contaminated soil where food is grown.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

- ATSDR Conducted: 29 Investigations
- Across: 13 U.S. States and Territories
- And Assessed: 552K People for Potential Exposures
Success Stories

ATSDR Helps Harvey and Maria Survivors Get Much-Needed Disaster Relief

In 2017, ATSDR was asked to help support the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and CDC’s efforts in Hurricane affected areas. ATSDR staff worked with state and federal agencies to aid hurricane survivors and support recovery efforts in hurricane stricken areas including Florida, Puerto Rico, Texas, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

ATSDR Leads Charge to Reduce PFAS Exposure

PFAS are man-made chemicals that have been used in industry and consumer products worldwide since the 1950s. They have been used in non-stick cookware, water-repellent clothing, stain resistant fabrics and carpets, some cosmetics, some firefighting foams, and products that resist grease, water, and oil.
Summary

In responding to concerns about the effect toxic substances have on at-risk populations, ATSDR successfully:

- **Addresses issues** found in air, water, soil, and food pathways.
- **Customizes** recommendations that can improve health in a specific community.
- **Increases awareness** of environmental issues affecting public health.
- **Empowers residents** to keep their communities safe from future exposures to environmental hazards.

Good health is the foundation upon which thriving communities are built, making them more productive, engaged, and resilient. **ATSDR and its partners work to help communities that have been impacted by harmful chemical exposures to thrive again.**

Learn more about what ATSDR does to make a positive health impact in communities all across the country.
Learn More

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www.atsdr.cdc.gov

800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
TTY 888-232-6348

WWW.CDC.GOV/CDC-INFO