



# ATSDR's Public Health Assessment Process

## ATSDR's Public Health Assessment Process Steps

1. Review available environmental data at a site.
2. Identify ways people might come in contact with chemicals, such as through water, air, soil, sediment, etc.
3. Determine if people are being exposed.
4. Determine how that exposure might effect public health.
  - Not harmful
  - Cannot be determined
  - Harmful
5. Provide conclusions and recommendations.

## Factors Considered in Determining Exposure

Who are the exposed people?



How often did the exposures occur?

How were these people exposed?



How much of the chemical were people exposed to?



How long did the exposures last?

## What Is ATSDR?

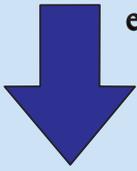
The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) is a federal public health agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is ATSDR's responsibility to determine, as best as possible, whether people have harmful health effects from their exposure to hazardous substances.

## ATSDR's Mission

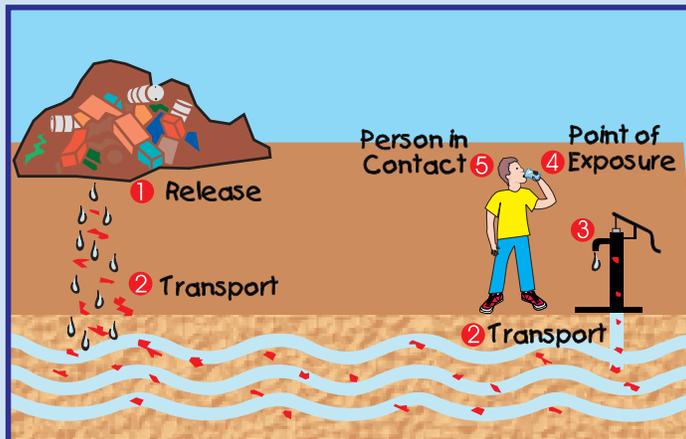
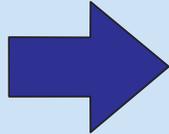
The mission of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry is to serve the public by using the best science, taking responsive public health actions, and providing trusted health information to prevent harmful exposures and disease related to toxic substances.

# How Are People Exposed?

**1** A chemical is released into the environment.



**2** The chemical is carried through the environment by water, air, soil, sediment, plants, animals, or humans.



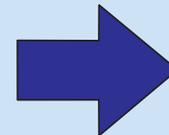
**3** The chemical ends up where people could come in contact with it. These “points of exposure” might include homes, gardens, wells, playgrounds—anywhere the chemical has traveled.

Person in contact.

**5**



At the point of exposure, people could get the chemical in their bodies by, eating, drinking, breathing, or if it touches their skin.



**4**

## ATSDR's Commitment to Communities

- Encourage people to join in ATSDR's activities.
- Listen so we can better address the communities' health concerns.
- Give people the tools and information they need to participate in ATSDR's activities.



For more information,  
contact ATSDR's toll-free information line:

1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)

ATSDR's Internet address is <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov>