

# ATSDR Public Health Investment

## Colorado

### CDC/ATSDR support helps Colorado reduce exposure to hazardous substances in the environment

Colorado is one of 25 states using ATSDR cooperative agreement funds to help build their capacity to assess and respond to site-specific issues involving human exposure to hazardous substances in the environment.

### Public Health in Action

**Redevelopment of Historic Ute Ulay Mine and Mill Site** — The Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment (CDPHE) partnered with ATSDR to participate in historic preservation of the old town and mill site for heritage tourism and recreational use, using health protective strategies. This 10-acre parcel is now in a multi-year process of environmental assessment, stabilization work, historic preservation on structures, and re-development of commercial enterprise as a heritage tourism destination site. Thanks to CDPHE and ATSDR work, the site will fully open in 2017. The Bureau of Land Management estimates up to 600,000 annual visitors could pass the site on Alpine Loop.

### Colorado

**Award amount:**

\$385,472 per year

**Term:** 3 years

**Grantee since:** 1987

### About ATSDR

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), based in Atlanta, Georgia along with 10 regional offices, is a federal public health agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. ATSDR serves the public by using the best science, taking responsive public health actions, and providing trusted health information to prevent harmful exposures and diseases related to toxic substances.

### Key projects

- **Hazen Research Inc. and Fairmont neighborhood** — This Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) site is contaminated with tetrachloroethylene (PCE) in groundwater in the Fairmont neighborhood. Since 2007, CDPHE has evaluated health implications of exposures in indoor air, private wells, and homegrown fruits and vegetables and addressed community concerns in Fairmont. Groundwater clean-up resulted in connecting Fairmont to city water, although residents can use private well water for other purposes. ATSDR supports this work by providing scientific and technical expertise during the health assessment process.
- **Gold King Mine Spill** — CDPHE collaborated with local, state, and federal partners (ATSDR and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) to address the public health concerns about the recent spill and bring about the state's time-critical response.
- **Colorado Smelter** — This site was proposed to the NPL in 2015. CDPHE is currently working to determine contaminants and potential for health effects. ATSDR works to support Colorado's recommend actions to protect the public's health.

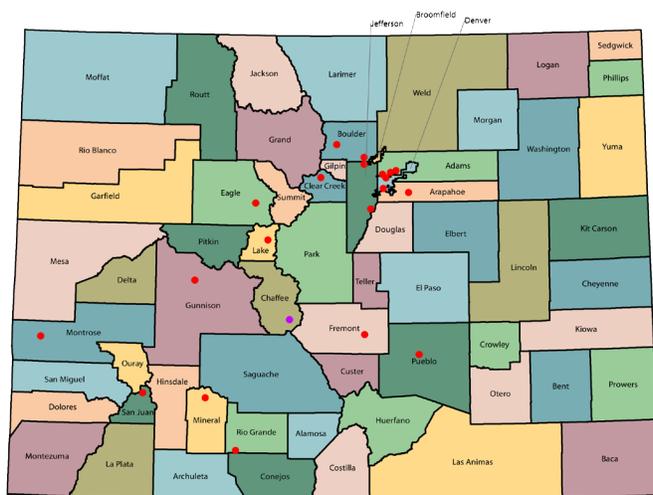
### State Priorities

- **Land Re-use and Redevelopment (Brownfields)** — Revitalizing Brownfields using health risk based approach. ATSDR's Brownfields program provides assistance as necessary.
- **Indoor Air Quality** — Evaluating sites for potential vapor intrusion of chemicals from contaminated groundwater and soils into indoor air.
- **Safe Drinking Water** — Evaluating potential human health effects of water containing perfluoro-alkylated substances (PFAS), lead, and nitrate. ATSDR regional staff and PFAS subject matter experts ensure the proper application of the latest federal health advisories.

"We are excited to have this site now protected due to ATSDR assistance so our community won't realize any adverse effects from previous operations upstream," says Commissioner Susan Thompson, who participates on the Ute Team.

## Did You Know?

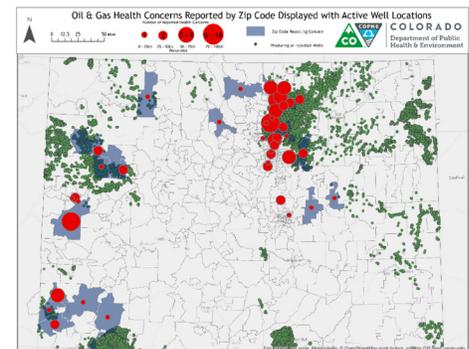
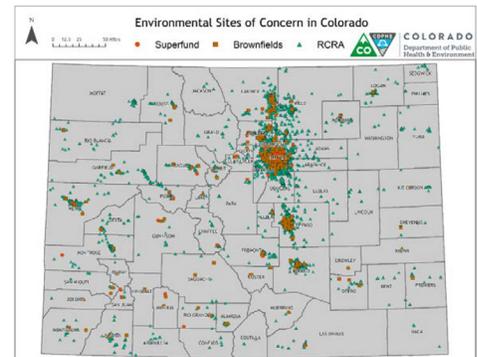
- Thousands of hazardous waste sites in Colorado fall under different regulatory authorities, such as National Priority List (NPL) Superfund sites (about 18 active sites), Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) (844 sites), RCRA (over 400 sites), and "brownfields" (thousands).
- A recent upswing in oil and gas mining in Colorado has resulted in over 50,000 oil and gas wells in the state, with an average of 4,600 drilling permits issued per year (see picture below)
- Colorado has established risk-based action levels for indoor air vapor intrusion pathways. Now, hazardous waste sites with vapor intrusion pathways are required to install a vapor mitigation system to protect public health.



Sites on Final National Priorities List (NPL)  
as of September 9, 2016

- On Final NPL
- Proposed for NPL

Data sources: Esri, U.S. EPA "Search Superfund Site Information" query (2016), U.S. EPA SEMS (2016), U.S. EPA Facility Registry Service (2016).



## Learn more

Follow these links to learn more about programs protecting public health in Colorado:

ATSDR <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/>

Division of Community Health Investigations (DCHI) — <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hac/index.html>

ATSDR Public Health Assessments and Consultations for Colorado — <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hac/pha/HCPHA.asp?State=CO>

CDPHE — <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe>

Safe Drinking Water — <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/categories/services-and-information/environment/water-quality>

CDPHE lead Program — <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/categories/services-and-information/environment/lead>

CDPHE oil and Gas Response/Air — Quality: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/categories/services-and-information/environment/oil-and-gas/oil-and-gas-and-your-health>

CDPHE Brownfields Program — <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/brownfields>

*ATSDR – The most trusted Agency protecting American communities from environmental health threats through application of state of the art science.*

Last updated 10/01/2017