

# ATSDR Public Health Investment

## Idaho

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

ATSDR funds 25 cooperative agreements to help states build their capacity to assess and respond to site-specific issues involving human exposure to hazardous substances in the environment.

### Public Health in Action

**Preventing Lead Exposure at an Elementary School** — In February 2016, IDHW learned that a drinking water fountain in an elementary school in Eastern Idaho had tested above the permitted level for lead; IDHW quickly worked in coordination with other state and local agencies to address this. IDEQ immediately provided bottled water to the school. IDHW provided lead testing equipment. Southeastern District Health Department provided free blood lead testing for children and staff and completed over 260 lead screenings. None of the people tested had an elevated blood lead level. The school took the tested water fountain out of service and replaced it with a new fountain.

### Key projects

- **Pinehurst** — This small Idaho town is located within the Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical Superfund Site, the second largest NPL site in the United States. IDHW assessed air monitoring data, especially for evidence of metals pollution. This report assured the community that regulatory institutional controls are protecting their air from site-related pollution. ATSDR provided technical assistance and guidance during the health assessment process.
- **Gilmore** — Public interest in land use in areas with contamination from past mining led to an environmental assessment of the area and follow-up with appropriate health education. IDHW is providing toxicological expertise and outreach to help people protect their health while enjoying this beautiful area. ATSDR works with states to assess health risks from mining operations and educate communities.
- **Lewiston** — A complex interaction between industrial air pollution and geography presents a unique environmental issue for this city. The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, the Nez Perce Tribe's Air Quality Program, and Washington State University are working together to study the issue. IDHW will provide expert environmental health assessment of elevated formaldehyde levels in local air. ATSDR provides technical resources to assess the effects of exposures to air contaminants.

### State Priorities

- **Safe Drinking Water** — Ensuring Idaho's residents that have private drinking water wells, approximately one third of the population, know how to test their well water, and providing the best available health information on the region's most common water contaminants.
- **Radon** — Promoting testing for radon in homes and reduction of levels that are too high and providing technical assistance to homeowners so they can reduce exposures (two out of every five homes, according to test results).
- **Air Quality/Wildfire Smoke** — Working closely with state and federal agencies to inform Idahoans how to reduce health effects from exposure to wildfire smoke, such as respiratory and heart problems.

## Idaho

**Award amount:**

\$212,073 per year

**Term:** 3 years

**Grantee since:** 1992

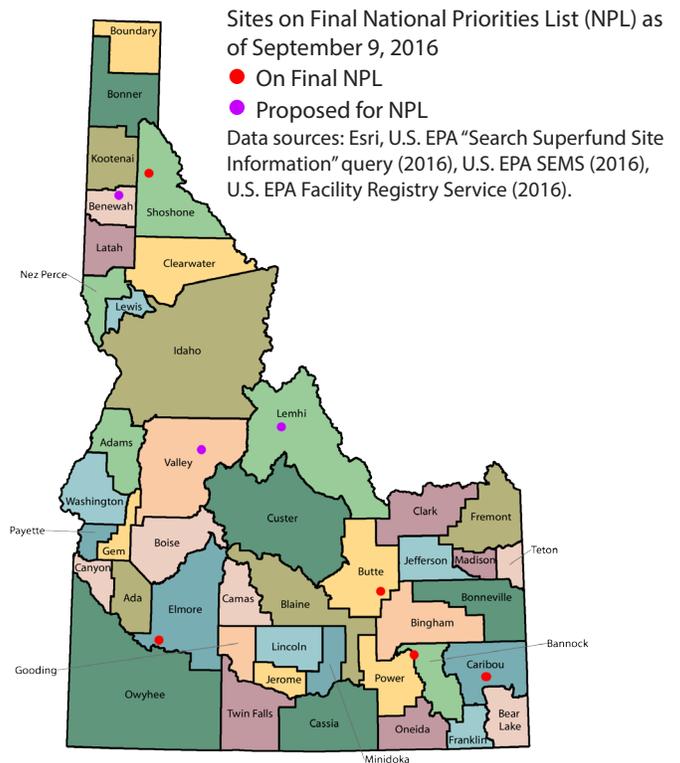
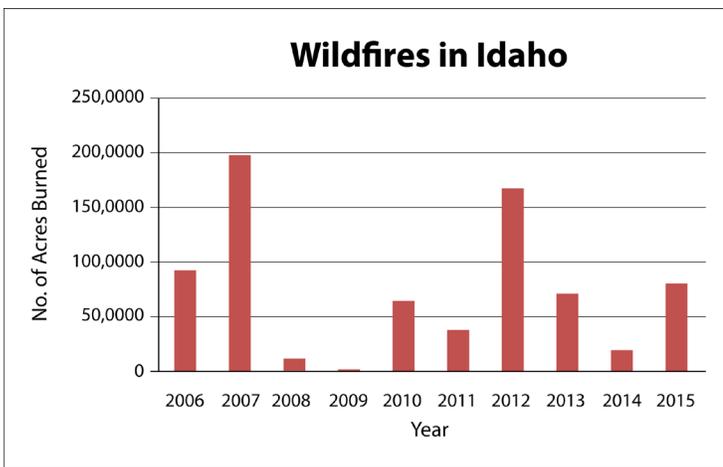
## About ATSDR

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.

"The IDHW ATSDR CO-OP provides Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) with toxicological expertise and health and safety educational outreach support based on the outcomes of property assessments. This partnership is a great resource to help DEQ achieve our mission of protecting human health and the environment." Source: Dana Swift, Mine Waste Project Coordinator, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

## Did You Know?

- Of the 8,000 mining sites in Idaho, more than 550 are known abandoned mines on Idaho public lands. Both chemical contamination and physical hazards are present at the sites.
- At least 80 of these abandoned mines may impact Idaho's water resources.
- To help federal and state regulators protect the public, IDHW provides toxicological assessment, technical support, and educational outreach at mining sites for the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, the Idaho Department of Lands, the Bureau of Land Management, and the US Environmental Protection Agency.



## Learn more

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

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 Idaho — <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/HAC/PHA/HCPHA.asp?State=ID>

Wildfire smoke information — <http://idsmoke.blogspot.com/>

Fish advisory information — <http://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Health/EnvironmentalHealth/FishAdvisories/tabid/180/Default.aspx>

Private well information — <http://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Health/EnvironmentalHealth/WellWater/tabid/1128/Default.aspx>

Abandoned mine Information — <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/assistance-resources/environmental-guide-for-local-govts/waste-mgmt/mines-inactive/>

*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