

# ATSDR Public Health Investment

## Virginia

### CDC/ATSDR support helps Virginia reduce exposures 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

**VDH Conducts Mercury Campaign in Schools** — ATSDR launched its [Don't Mess With Mercury](#) campaign in 2013. To raise awareness about the risks of mercury exposure and proper management of mercury spills, VDH encouraged health departments to promote the campaign in school districts. VDH also developed a mercury survey, which it distributed to schools. Survey results revealed that approximately 8,000 school attendees and staff were educated on the health effects of mercury exposure and proper mercury spill management.

### Key projects

- **Dan River** — Heavy metals entered the river following a coal ash release upstream in North Carolina. Therefore, fish consumption may be harmful to health. VDH issued a fish consumption advisory to protect residents' health.
- **Coal ash** — Closing coal ash ponds in Virginia has raised awareness of contamination. Adjacent communities are concerned that individual private wells may be affected. VDH is evaluating groundwater monitoring wells and private wells near ash ponds for health implications.
- **Big Stone Gap** — Improper disposal of batteries, metal, and transformers at a scrap metal processing facility in Big Stone Gap resulted in soil contaminated with lead and polychlorinated biphenyls. VDH evaluated health effects of soil samples collected from the site, adjacent playgrounds, and along train tracks.

### State Priorities

- **Exposures to Environmental Contaminants** — Identification of potential health hazards resulting from exposure to certain chemical or biological agents; and the assessment and subsequent recommendations to abate or reduce any resulting health effects. This aligns with ATSDR's priority to identify, educate, and reduce exposure to toxic substances.
- **Safe Drinking Water** — Assuring clean, safe drinking water; protecting the public from waterborne disease and water pollution.
- **Vapor intrusion** — Collaborating with state and federal environmental agencies to evaluate the health impact of VOCs migrating from groundwater into homes and buildings.

### Virginia

#### Award amount:

\$276,218 per year

#### Term: 3 years

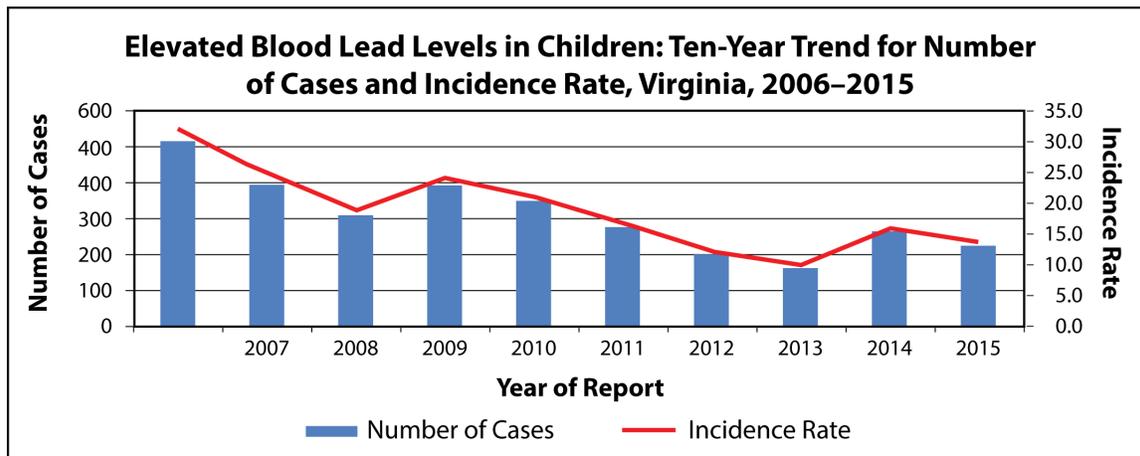
Grantee since: 2011

### 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. This blood lead level is where public health action is initiated.

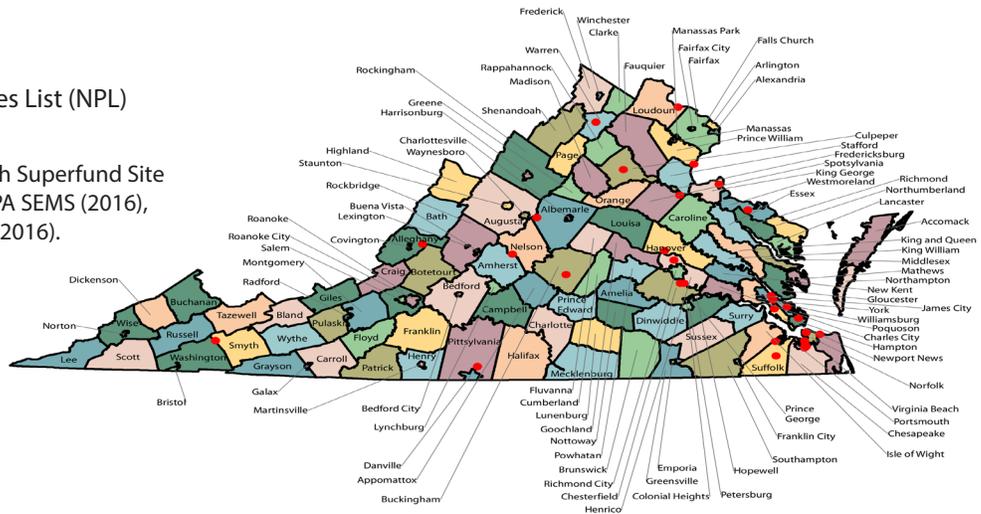
## Did you know?

- Over 1,500 sites in Virginia are included in either the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality or U.S. Environmental Protection Agency remediation program.
- The number of cases of childhood blood lead levels > 10 µg/dL in Virginia have decreased by half over the past 10 years. This blood lead level is where public health action is initiated.



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

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 Virginia:

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 Virginia — <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hac/pha/HCPHA.asp?State=VA>

Virginia Department of Health's cooperative agreement with ATSDR —

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/public-health-toxicology/health-assessments/>

Virginia Department of Health Office of Drinking Water —

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/drinking-water/>

Virginia Department of Health Child Lead Safe Program —

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/leadsafe/>

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

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