



# Environmental Health Services & Outreach

Phone: 515-281-0921  
<http://idph.iowa.gov/ehs>

Protecting & Improving  
the Health of Iowans



We live in a time when it's easy to take many things for granted. Clean water, safe food and proper waste disposal are things we expect. However, it takes properly trained people at the local level to carry out the work needed to consistently ensure the basics we've come to expect are there. IDPH works to ensure the same services and knowledge are delivered statewide, regardless the size of the community.

IDPH supports local boards of health and their employees in providing environmental health programs. These trained individuals are key in performing routine inspections on regulated facilities, as well as providing technical assistance and guidance to local public health officials and Iowans who have concerns regarding environmental exposures and their health.

## Did you know?

We work closely with all 99 counties to ensure they have the resources to perform all aspects of environmental health.

### Why are Environmental Health Services and Outreach important to protecting and improving the health of Iowans?

- Concerns about environmental conditions continue to increase, but the level of environmental health services is not consistent across the state.
- Environmental health affects every Iowan every day. The environmental health workforce is vital to making sure Iowans are safe where they live, work and play.
- Environmental hazards may affect Iowans in a public health emergency or natural disaster. These include food safety, availability of clean drinking water, management of waste and air quality.
- Iowa's environmental health workforce is aging and it is important to recruit new graduates to the field of environmental health.
- During public health emergencies and natural disasters, federal resources are typically not available for the first 72 hours. Local health agencies must be prepared to respond until additional assistance arrives.

### Which Iowa Public Health Goals are we working to achieve?

- Strengthen the health infrastructure
- Protect against environmental hazards
- Prepare for, respond to & recover from emergencies

### What do we do?

- Offer consultation to local boards of health and boards of supervisors on their role in providing environmental health services. This includes finding and hiring qualified environmental health specialists.
- Provide training and consultation services to local environmental health staff and public on issues that include indoor air quality, water quality, tattoo inspections and more.
- Provide technical assistance and consultation during a food or water-related illness outbreak investigation.
- Facilitate coordination between state agencies and local public health agencies.
- Provide equipment, assistance and back-up staff for local emergency response plans.
- The Grants to Counties Water Well program provides funding to local health departments for private well testing, plugging abandoned wells and renovating existing wells.

## How do we measure our progress?

### 1 Number of well tests provided by the Grants to Counties program:

Data Source: Program tracking logs. Data are available quarterly.

**How are we doing?** In state fiscal year 2017, over 7,700 private wells in Iowa had their water tested for coliform bacteria and nitrate through the Grants to Counties program.

### 2 Number of wells rehabilitated by the Grants to Counties program:

Data Source: Program tracking logs. Data are available quarterly.

**How are we doing?** In state fiscal year 2017, 133 private drinking wells were rehabilitated to protect public health and prevent groundwater contamination.

### 3 Number of wells plugged by the Grants to Counties program:

Data Source: Program tracking logs. Data are available quarterly.

**How are we doing?** In state fiscal year 2017, over 2000 wells and cisterns were plugged to protect public health and prevent groundwater contamination.

## What can Iowans do to help?

1. All Iowans should develop a personal or family disaster plan. For more information, go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).
2. Iowans can contact their county environmental health office if they would like a free water test for their private well, or if they need help paying for the cost of plugging a well.
3. Local public health officials, elected officials and board of health members should call 515-281-0921 with questions about the delivery of environmental health services in Iowa.

## Expenditures

General fund, federal funds, & intra state receipts\* (Dept of Natural Resources): K19-1901/1919/1921/1923; 0153-1904

	State Fiscal Year 2016 Actual	State Fiscal Year 2017 Actual	State Fiscal Year 2018 Estimate
State funds	\$301,264	\$282,618	\$284,591
Federal funds	\$17,171	\$11,317	\$21,000
Other funds*	\$1,797,933	\$1,931,593	\$3,100,600
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>\$2,116,368</b>	<b>\$2,225,529</b>	<b>\$3,406,191</b>
FTEs	2.80	2.94	3.56

**Note:** Funding information is intended to provide an overview of funding related to the program area. It does not include all federal and state requirements and/or restrictions for the use of funds. Contact the program area for more detailed budget information.