

Project Guidance and Considerations

Independent projects are open to a wide variety of environmental public health issues and identified program needs identified by local environmental public health host sites. Together with CDC, we are encouraging interested students and health departments to explore how environmental health, climate change, and environmental justice issues are either directly or indirectly associated with the purpose and environmental health hazard/issue being addressed by proposed projects. Considerations regarding how these priority areas converge with environmental health hazards and their impact on community health outcomes and environmental public health program sustainability are included in the revised program impact and evaluation metrics. Further, projects will be asked to help identify environmental justice and health equity concerns that are associated with identified internship projects and help to better understand the disproportionate health effects these issues may have among various population groups. The health department mentor and agency will identify a project focus for the internship. The focus should be from an initiative, project or program that is a current concern identified within the scope of issues normally addressed by the hosting agency jurisdiction. Students and health departments will be matched by NEHA staff based on student's interest and host site's project portfolio. Examples of potential projects include:

- **Climate and Health – The impact of indoor and outdoor air quality on health and policy:** conducting an in-depth analysis on environmental policies currently in place within the health department's jurisdiction and their ability to impact human health.
- **Climate and Health – Identifying contributing factors to wildfire conditions:** conducting an assessment on mitigation and adaptation strategies, health effects of smoke, and evaluating effective communication strategies to reduce risk.
- **Vector Control – Identifying impacts of climate change on vector populations and control strategies:** analyze data to determine any geographic trends in vector-borne disease to inform enhanced surveillance in disaster prone regions.
- **Water Quality – Using EPA's Cyanobacteria Assessment Network (CyAN) tool for identifying harmful algal blooms (HABs):** assist in assessing the environmental health information and untreated recreational water data systems used by the health department and associated partners to determine



whether current systems adequately identify and characterize untreated recreational water hazards and harmful exposures.

- **Data Informatics/Tracking: Identify and extract data from relevant data sources:** conduct research to understand the impacts of environmental health hazards on vulnerable and under-served populations and inform public health policies.

Deliverable examples could include a literature review, a community health assessment, a white paper/report, an infographic, or a presentation/report of findings and recommendations.

NEPHIP interns and host public health agencies have access to guidance and support from NEHA staff along with faculty from the intern's specific environmental health program. Our partners, EHAC and AEHAP, are ready to assist when appropriate and requested.

