

The Monitor

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)
Occupational Health Surveillance Program

NEWS

IF YOU ARE AN EMPLOYER, substance abuse is your concern - 67.3 percent of individuals who use substances at a risky level are employed full-time. Employers pay the price of employee substance abuse in tardiness, absenteeism, workers' compensation and disability claims, turnover, decreased productivity and healthcare premiums for related injuries and illnesses. Read more in the Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) winter 2011 [newsletter](#).

WorkSafe Colorado Network Development

The network will continue to meet in 2011 to implement the goals and objective described in the [strategic plan](#). CDPHE occupational health staff met with the Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) Coordinator at CDPHE, Lynette Myers. She and members of the ELP leadership committee will attend the next WorkSafe meeting on February 7th.

CDPHE Surveillance Projects

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) Occupational Health Surveillance Program is hosting three MPH Capstone Projects this spring semester through the Colorado School of Public Health. Students are investigating the following topics: 1) Work-related hospitalizations, 2) Disparities in occupational injury & illness and employment profiles, and 3) Work-associated suicide and violence. The CDPHE is also hosting an EOH resident, Dr. Bryan Alvarez, who is assisting on a variety of related projects. Additionally, the MAP ERC interdisciplinary course is planning a project titled, *Marketing WorkSafe Colorado: Research on Best Practices from Other Occupational Health Organizations in Colorado*.

Colorado's OHI reports are updated through at least 2007-08, and reports are available on the CDPHE website. NIOSH/CSTE expect to publish the next national occupational health indicators (OHI) reports in March (2006 data) and May (2007 data).

Our fall MPH intern, Deb Goeken, recently completed an in-depth review of Colorado Employment Demographics as a supplement to the NIOSH OHI report. This report is currently being validated for publication on the CDPHE website.

CDPHE Program Funding

CDPHE was not a successful applicant for the EPA's Pesticide Incident Surveillance Program Grant. From 10 applications, only 3 awards were given to states with experience conducting active surveillance activities and with reportable conditions already on record. We have applied for a no-cost extension for the NIOSH Strategic Planning Grant to support meetings of the WorkSafe Colorado network through 2012.

CDPHE Program Staffing

The CDPHE was accepted as a host site for the 2011 CSTE fellowship program, and has also applied to host a PHPS fellow. These fellows will support combined efforts of the Environmental Epidemiology and Occupational Health programs, including pesticide surveillance, further analysis of OHI data, and program development and outreach.

Presentations

Meredith Towle and Corey Campbell, MS presented *The Colorado Story* at the CSTE/COSS meeting in Austin, TX on November 16th. Meredith Towle presented *Occupational Health Surveillance in Colorado* at the American Society for safety Engineers (ASSE) Northern Colorado Chapter Meeting on December 8th and at the National Jewish Health, Division of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Research Meeting on January 6th.

CDPHE staff will brief the Colorado Board of Health on the new surveillance program at the [March 16th meeting](#). These meeting are open to public attendance.

Planning and Partnerships

Due to our active role on the Public Health Indicators Task Force of the [CDPHE Office of Planning and Partnerships](#), three (3) occupational health measures were successfully adopted for Colorado's Public Health Improvement Plan framework: 1) Work-related fatalities, 2) Non-fatal Lost-time Workers' Compensation Claims by County, 3) Work-related hospitalizations. Details for dissemination and use of these data at the local level are still to be decided.

Mountain and Plains Education and Research Center

Information on activities, events, training and funding opportunities is available on-line at <http://maperc.ucdenver.edu>

Contact:

meredith.towle@state.co.us

(303) 691-4938