



April 9, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nancy Sarieh, (415) 554-2716, nancy.sarieh@sfdph.org

Local Health Department Kicks Off National Public Health Week by Highlighting the Impacts of Climate Change on San Francisco Communities

San Francisco, CA - A new report released this week by the San Francisco Department of Public Health's Climate and Health Program, in conjunction with the White House's Symposium on Data & Innovation at the Climate-Health Nexus, illustrates the link between climate change and most salient health impacts on the City's residents.

This week, The Obama Administration announced efforts to highlight links between climate change and its impact on health and in a [press release](#), the San Francisco Department of Public Health was noted as a leader in this effort by empowering healthy people and communities through climate data and innovation.

As part of National Public Health Week beginning on April 6, 2015, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) has been hosting a series of workshops to address key questions on the link between Federal data and innovation and the climate and health nexus. San Francisco's Department of Public Health is leading the way locally by releasing its first [Climate and Health Profile](#).

Spearheaded by the Department of Public Health, their Climate and Health team worked with multiple city agencies and stakeholders including the San Francisco Department of Environment, the San Francisco Department of Emergency Management, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission and San Francisco's local Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities program and many others to review and assess the findings. The breadth and the depth of the report reflect this extensive collaboration.

Using data sets from 32 local, state and federal sources, the Climate and Health Profile analyzed publicly available data to show the direct effect of rising temperatures, increased precipitation and reduced air quality on public health in San Francisco communities.

The report summarizes climate conditions, future projections and the impact that climate change will have on health. By using climate projections from NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), Cal-Adapt and local sources to prioritize the health impacts and risk factors, the report paves the way for San Francisco's climate preparedness efforts. Through the analysis, the Department of Public Health determined which neighborhoods would be disproportionately impacted and areas the City should focus future adaptation resources.

"Many of our neighborhoods and vulnerable populations that already experience poor health outcomes will be most impacted by climate change. This new report highlights opportunities for more focused action not only to improve community resilience, but to design solutions that eliminate health disparities." said Cyndy Comerford, the Director of San Francisco's Climate and Health Program.

Through the analysis of socioeconomic factors, environmental exposure, infrastructure conditions, health and hazard risks, the profile concludes that certain San Francisco neighborhoods and populations will feel the effect of climate change more intensely. These risks are often exacerbated by pre-existing conditions, as well as racial or social divisions and will impact San Francisco's most vulnerable neighborhoods the greatest.



"From heat stroke to higher incidents of asthma to water borne illness, the Department of Public Health's new report makes it clear that San Francisco's vulnerable residents will bear the burden of climate change impacts without concerted action. Their leadership in this area sets the stage for other local health departments around the state and the US to follow suit," said Linda Rudolph, MD, MPH, Director, Center for Climate Change and Health at the Public Health Institute.

In 2009, San Francisco was one of the first cities to create an open data initiative to increase the transparency of government and to spur economic development. The use of open data has enabled better data-driven decision-making and has increased the use of predictive analytics for city processes.

"The datasets published through the Climate and Health Profile Report demonstrates the use of innovative data to improve health and provide the public with information to take action on improving resiliency. The publication of this report on DataSF.org promotes the city's open data goals by allowing neighborhood organizations, city departments, and private sector partners to use the indicators in new ways." said Joy Bonaguro, Chief Data Officer, Office of San Francisco Mayor Edwin M. Lee.

A vast majority of the world's climate scientists assert that the earth is warming and that the burning of fossil fuels by humans is the primary cause. Organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) are calling for climate action knowing that the impacts from climate change have a direct connection to negative impacts on human health. The WHO has called climate change a public health crisis and estimates climate change will cause an additional 250,000 additional deaths per year between 2030 and 2050.

"The Climate and Health Profile takes a global issue like climate change and brings it home. The report makes clear that reducing our carbon emissions is not only about the health of our planet, it's about the health of our communities." said Debbie Raphael, Director of the San Francisco Department of the Environment.

Using the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) national framework, Building Resilience Against Climate Effects (BRACE), the Climate and Health program is assessing climate trends, defining disease burden, developing specific intervention methods, and evaluating the effects of change for at-risk populations within San Francisco.

"CDC's Climate and Health Program is supporting our states and cities as they develop innovative tools to prepare for the health effects of climate change. Our hope is that other communities will use the Climate and Health Profile as a model for evaluating the local impacts of climate change on public health," said George Luber, PhD, Chief - Climate and Health Program, Centers for Disease Control. [Adaptation in Action](#), a report from the CDC that outlines specific successes in a number of cities, which includes San Francisco and regions that have taken action to reduce negative health outcomes from climate change.

The Full Report and additional Information can be found at <http://www.sfclimatehealth.org>.

To keep up to date on the climate and health topic, please follow @sfclimatehealth on Twitter.

#####