

## Waterborne Disease Prevention

The Waterborne Disease Prevention Branch is the lead coordination and response unit for domestic and global water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)-related disease in CDC's National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases. The mission of the branch is to maximize the health, productivity, and well-being of people in the United States and around the globe through improved and sustained access to safe water for drinking, recreation, and other uses, adequate sanitation, and basic hygiene practices.

WASH addresses our mission in the U.S. and abroad by developing partnerships, providing technical and emergency assistance, monitoring and evaluating new interventions and ongoing programs, building laboratory expertise and capacity, and conducting applied research to support activities and programs.

To provide clear, useful information on the many uses of water, WASH-related illnesses, and specific ways to stay healthy to the public and professionals in water-related roles, CDC's Health Promotion and Communication Team develops and disseminates information and materials for a variety of audiences. They work with all Waterborne Disease Prevention Branch teams and WASH-related groups across CDC to create and share health promotion materials, training and education tools, marketing and advocacy documents, and scientific information and data in a variety of formats. In addition to educating and informing the public, we also provide information and materials to state and local health departments, Ministries of Health, clinicians, researchers, industry groups, and other domestic and global partners.

The Health Promotion and Communication Team does this by:

Conducting health education [campaigns and observances](#)

Creating posters, fact sheets, and other [health promotion materials](#)

Developing and managing websites such as:

[Healthy Water](#) (CDC-wide website for accessing WASH-related information)

[Drinking Water](#)

[Healthy Swimming/Recreational Water](#)

[Global Water, Sanitation, & Hygiene \(WASH\)](#)

[Other Uses of Water](#)

[Water-related Emergencies & Outbreaks](#)

[Water-related Hygiene](#)

[Handwashing](#) (CDC-wide portal for accessing hygiene information)

[The Safe Water System](#)

[Healthy Contact Lens Wear and Care](#) (CDC-wide portal for accessing contact lens hygiene information)

[National Outbreak Reporting System \(NORS\)](#)

WASH is also the lead CDC group for specific diseases that include amebiasis, cryptosporidiosis, giardiasis, cholera (non-laboratory), shigellosis (non-laboratory), and infections caused Cronobacter (non-laboratory), enterotoxigenic E. coli (ETEC; non-laboratory), and the free-living amoebae Acanthamoeba, Balamuthia, Naegleria, and Sappinia.

To accomplish this mission teams:

- Track waterborne disease nationally.
- Investigate the causes and sources of waterborne disease and outbreaks.
- Identify the risk factors for infection.
- Develop improved laboratory detection and sampling methods.
- Develop new ways to remove or inactivate pathogens.
- Assess new prevention ideas.
- Promote improved public health through communication and education.
- Develop WASH-related guidance and policy.

Across multiple centers and groups at CDC there are resources to respond to domestic water, sanitation and hygiene. For example NCEH supports STLT drinking water programs and NCIRD handles legionella outbreak response/guidance. If there is a global need, CGH/DGHP may need to be consulted.

For more information on the [Waterborne Disease Prevention Branch and resources](#) it can provide visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/global/>

The Division of Emergency and Environmental Health Services (DEEHS) within the CDC National Center for Environmental Health provides support for drinking water programs, recreational water support for environmental health practitioners, and assistance addressing environmental components of waterborne disease outbreaks. Specific products and resources include:

Build [capacity to implement evidence-based interventions](#) among state, tribal, local and territorial drinking water programs.

[Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response](#) – Free course for public health responders addressing the environmental health impacts of emergencies and disasters. The course has modules on several topics, including potable water and wastewater.

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