



Environmental Public Health  
Performance Standards  
Vector Assessment  
2014



Monitor  
Investigate  
Educate  
Mobilize  
Develop  
Enforce  
Link  
Assure  
Evaluate  
Research



# Environmental Public Health Performance Standards Vector Assessment Report

Florida Department of Health in Broward County  
October 31, 2014

## Introduction

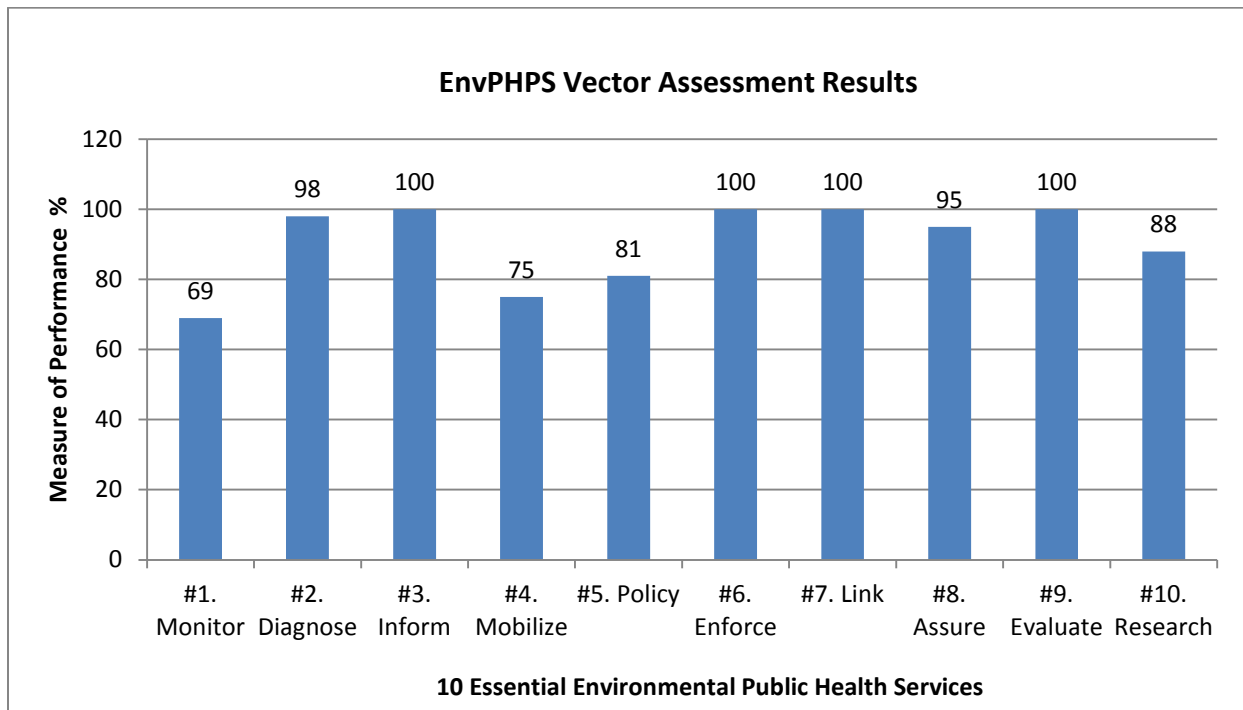
The Florida Department of Health in Broward County used the Environmental Public Health Performance Standards (EnvPHPS) to conduct a vector assessment. The EnvPHPS are a set of standards describing the level of performance and capacity to which all environmental public health (EPH) systems and programs should aspire. The organizational framework for the standards is the ten Essential Environmental Public Health Services that outline the services in an EPH system or program necessary to effectively protect and improve environmental and public health. The EnvPHPS describe activities, actions, and processes that an EPH system or program performs to provide the essential services optimally. The assessment results were used to determine action needed to improve the Florida Department of Health in Broward County's capacity to perform the essential services. Results of the self-assessment are provided and described below.

The 10 Essential Environmental Public Health Services:

1. **Monitor** environmental and health status to identify and solve community environmental public health problems.
2. **Diagnose and investigate** environmental public health problems and health hazards in the community.
3. **Inform, educate, and empower** people about environmental public health issues.
4. **Mobilize** community partnerships and actions to identify and solve environmental public health problems.
5. **Develop** policies and plans that support individual and community environmental public health efforts.
6. **Enforce** laws and regulations that protect environmental public health and ensure safety.
7. **Link** people to needed environmental public health services and assure the provision of environmental public health services when unavailable.
8. **Assure** a competent environmental public health workforce.
9. **Evaluate** effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based environmental public health services.
10. **Research** new insights and innovative solutions to environmental public health problems and issues.

## Assessment Results

EnvPHPS vector assessment results indicated that the Florida Department of Health in Broward County is most effectively providing Essential Service #3: Inform, educate, and empower people about vector issues; Essential Service #6: Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety; Essential Service #7: Link people to needed vector services and assure the provision of vector services when otherwise unavailable; and, Essential Service #9: Evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population based on vector services. Essential Environmental Public Health Vector Services the department determined most in need of strengthening include Essential Service #1: Monitor environmental and health status to identify and solve community health problems, and, Essential Service #4: Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve vector problems. For each essential service, the assessment requires evaluation of the level of service for a number of activities that together account for the full provision of the essential service. EnvPHPS vector assessment scores for each EEPHS are displayed in the chart below.



## Moving Forward

The Florida Department of Health in Broward County reviewed the service gaps identified by the EnvPHPS vector assessment. Each gap was discussed, and after full understanding of why the gaps exist was achieved, a list of intervention options was developed. An action plan will be developed to implement the interventions. The group plans to establish a schedule for periodically reviewing action plan progress.

Below is a brief summary of findings and recommendations.

***Essential Service #1: Monitor vector status to identify and solve community vector problems***

Activity: DOH-Broward conducts numerous assessments and utilizes a multitude of internal and external databases and information sources to inform and guide programmatic activities. Some examples of reports and assessments include: quota reports; re-inspection report summaries; reportable diseases, bacteriological results; and mosquito surveillance. Databases and information sources include: Indirect community perceptions during inspections and investigation; education including body vector control; Merlin surveillance system; Environmental Health database; Crystal reports; Florida CHARTS; and, Disease registries. Active Strategy software is the DOH-Broward internal performance management system that provides ongoing programmatic reporting of measures related to patient care, customer satisfaction, productivity, and manages the resources of the organization in an ongoing & systematic way for the best possible resource management. Program data is collected through the statewide Florida Department of Health (DOH) Health Management Systems (HMS). The Environmental Health Director reviews the data entered into HMS to ensure it meets the established programmatic guidelines.

Gaps: While the Environmental Health Program has robust data, information is not always available on the organizational website and/or in formats easily digested by the public.

Recommendation: Develop an annual Environmental Health profile (including vectors) that utilizes reports of findings, investigative results and other data. Continue to conduct community environmental health assessments at least once every three years.

Benefit: Transparency and increased accountability both internally and with the public.

***Essential Service #2: Diagnose and investigate vector problems and health hazards in the community***

Activity: The Florida Department of Health in Broward County has a mature and robust public health preparedness system and has received recognition from the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) for Project Public Health Ready (PPHR), which provide nationally recognized standards for local public health preparedness. DOH-Broward's PPHR preparedness plans include operational plans for All-Hazards Response, Epidemiology Response, Environmental Health Response, Laboratory Response and Public Information and Communications, with protocols included for associated response activities. The PPHR plans include response partners and delineate roles and responsibilities as well as guidance, forms and materials for creating messages in a variety of formats. Protocols to establish and maintain chain of custody for evidence is also included in the response plans as appropriate. Information on how 24/7/365 coverage is provided is included in each of the plans as well as on the DOH-Broward website. These operational response plans and protocols are reviewed annually and updated if needed. DOH-Broward and Broward County Emergency Management Division (BEMD) collaboratively review response plans to ensure county-wide coordination. DOH-Broward and BEMD collaboratively conduct planning, training, and exercises, including WebEOC training and development. DOH-Broward Environmental Health program staff utilizes the following software systems to assist in investigations: Merlin (mosquito-borne virus, rabies) and Environmental Health Database (Crystal reports tracking violations and inspections).

Gaps: None identified.

Recommendation: None.

Benefit: N/A

***Essential Service #3: Inform, educate, and empower people about vector issues***

Activity: Information and education is provided to the public in a wide-variety of methods including: developing and providing educational materials such as mosquito prevention palm cards that are provided to all public schools and parks in Broward County, educational door hangers and flyers, documentation included in a complaint inventory; posting of inspection reports and resources on DOH-Broward’s website, press releases and announcements through DOH-Broward’s Public Information Officer. DOH-Broward Environmental Health staff participates on community, regional and state panels including the Smart Growth Partnership, Safety Team, Broward County Environmental Group, Emergency Services Function (ESF)-8 Health and Medical at the Broward County Emergency Operations Center, ESF-8 Workgroup meetings with reporting to the Emergency Coordinating Council, ESF-8 Special Needs Shelter/Client meetings, and Region 7 Environmental Health Strike Team lead.

Gaps: None identified.

Recommendation: None.

Benefit: N/A

***Essential Service #4: Mobilize community partnerships and actions to identify and solve vector problems***

Activity: The DOH-Broward Environmental Health Program maintains an up-to-date directory of key stakeholders. Stakeholder lists include: City Managers list; Group Care Program – Key staff for Department of Business and Professional Regulation as well as the Agency for Health Care Administration; and, Pool Program – Operators and Managers. Additional lists include: licensed laboratories; Broward County School Board; and, Broward County Mosquito Control. The Florida Department of Health develops Environmental Health policies. DOH-Broward staff serves on local and state advisory panels to provide input into policy development and revisions. Partnerships among government agencies and the private sector are in place to enhance environmental health program effectiveness. Partnerships include: Department of Business and Professional Regulation and Broward County Environmental Protection Division to improve facility safety; and, Broward County Emergency Management Division to ensure plans are in place to coordinate environmental health responses to emergencies.

Gaps: No identified gaps.

Recommendation: Continue to enhance and maintain relationships with key stakeholders in Broward County.

Benefit: Enhanced coordination and understanding of roles and responsibilities.

***Essential Service #5: Develop policies and plans that support individual and community vector control efforts***

Activity: The DOH-Broward Environmental Health Program employs Environmental Specialists that assure the delivery of the Essential Public Health Services in Broward County. This is evidenced in a variety of written documentation, including assessments and reports of findings. The Pool Program, as part of the DOH-Broward core contract with Broward County, submits required quota reports to ensure pools are regulated; sanitary nuisance complaints are reported to the Sanitary Control Board appointment County Commission representative; and, prevention activities at group homes. DOH-Broward has received recognition from the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) for Project Public Health Ready

(PPHR), which provide nationally recognized standards for local public health preparedness. DOH-Broward's PPHR preparedness plans include operational plans for All-Hazards Response, Epidemiology Response, Environmental Health Response, Laboratory Response and Public Information and Communications, with protocols included for associated response activities. Plans and policies are reviewed on an annual basis. DOH-Broward and Broward County Emergency Management Division collaborative review and update response plans to ensure countywide coordination.

Gaps: DOH-Broward Environmental Health does not have a defined community process to identify vector control policy issues, vector control priorities nor resources.

Recommendation: DOH-Broward Environmental Health Program should develop a formalized community process for vector control issues.

Benefit: Integrated process for reporting quarterly information and annual progress in an established community process.

***Essential Service #6: Enforce laws and regulations that protect environmental public health and ensure safety***

Activity: DOH-Broward is successful in enforcing laws and regulations that protect environmental public health and ensure safety. State of Florida environmental health laws are reviewed annually with gaps identified. Environmental Health Program staff serves on or provide subject matter expertise to county and state policy groups. DOH-Broward conducts outreach and education in the community. Some examples include: presentation to the Broward County Sanitary Control Board; presentations to community groups; and, Education at time of inspections. Program services are evaluated through weekly reviews of inspection reports and monthly enforcement activity reviews.

Gaps: No identified gaps.

Recommendation: Continue to enhance and maintain relationships with key stakeholders in Broward County.

Benefit: Increased knowledge about program and resources and enhanced collaboration and coordination.

***Essential Service #7: Link people to needed vector control services and assure the provision of vector control services when unavailable***

Activity: The DOH-Broward Environmental Health Program provides outreach and referrals that link constituents to environmental public health and protection services through a phone contacts and the website. Active outreach and education occurs through a complaint hotline and referrals to non-DOH-Broward Environmental Health Programs such as Code Enforcement, Mosquito Control, Department of Business and Professional Regulation, South Florida Water Management District, Department of Agriculture and the Agency for Healthcare Administration. Classes and presentations provide additional outreach and awareness throughout Broward County to various groups including the Sanitary Control Board, the School Board, Department of Environmental Protection monthly meetings, and Broward County Building Department. DOH-Broward's PPHR preparedness plans include operational plans for All-Hazards Response, Epidemiology Response, Environmental Health Response, Laboratory Response and Public Information and Communications, with protocols and roles and responsibilities delineated for response activities. Palm cards are created in three languages and are delivered to the community to remove barriers to services. The DOH-Broward Call Center, website and all

services are available in multiple languages, TDY and are ADA compliant. DOH-Broward in collaboration with Broward County government, maintains a vulnerable population and special needs registry. The DOH-Broward Outreach Planning Team meets monthly and provides outreach services throughout Broward County. DOH-Broward is the lead agency for Emergency Support Function 8, Health and Medical (ESF-8) for the Broward County Emergency Management Division (BEMD). DOH-Broward operates the special needs shelters in emergencies and collaboratively with BEMD pre-screens and registers residents with special needs.

Gaps: None identified.

Recommendation: Monitor activities to ensure ADA compliance and accessibility to all residents of Broward County.

Benefit: Increase access and awareness of Environmental Public Health Services and Programs.

### ***Essential Service #8: Assure a competent environmental public health workforce***

Activity: DOH-Broward has identified workforce development in its strategic planning activities. Smart Expectations are included in position descriptions for Environmental Health Program staff. Performance evaluations are conducted at least annually. Position descriptions include any required state certifications and licenses. Certifications and renewals of CEU's are tracked to insure requirements are met. CEU's are renewed every two years; Staff competencies and individual skills are enhanced through in-service trainings, cross-training of staff, leadership training and coaching sessions. There are incentives provided for continuing education including tuition assistance and fee waivers.

Gaps: Gaps in the workforce are communicated through People First (the State hiring mechanism) but a process to advertise workforce gaps is not in place with key stakeholders.

Recommendation: Develop and institute an advisory process to identify and address gaps in the workforce with stakeholders.

Benefit: Well-trained workforce with opportunities provided for leadership development and career enhancement.

### ***Essential Service #9: Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based environmental public health services***

Activity: The DOH-Broward Environmental Health program and services are routinely evaluated through implementation of performance standards, quota reports, internal program audits, customer satisfaction surveys, indicator monitoring, inspection report reviews, ride-along field observation, and sanitary control board reporting. DOH-Broward has activated its incident command system for real world events and exercises. Environmental Health participated in the response to outbreaks of Dengue and Chikungunya in Broward County. Full-Scale and Functional Exercises include State Watch Office, Hurricane Exercises, and deployment of a Regional Environmental Health Strike Team to a radiological event. Public Information activities include press releases and website postings for Mosquito control. DOH-Broward hosted grand rounds on Dengue and West Nile viruses which were open to the public.

Gaps: No identified gaps.

Recommendation: N/A

Benefit: Dynamic Vector Control system that is responsive to internal and external change.

***Essential Service #10: Research new insights and innovative solutions to vector control problems and issues***

Activity: DOH-Broward Environmental Health Program staff provides suggestions for improvement to the program through a suggestion box that is located in the work area as well as staff providing input at monthly staff meetings. Formal recognition of staff is forthcoming with an “Employee of the Month” designation in the Florida Department of Health’s email “Spotlight” publication. Employees are encouraged to recommend programmatic improvements. Some suggestions that have been implemented include time utilization training, proper zone use, time entering practices, and in-service trainings. DOH-Broward Environmental Health staff served as the pilot county to conduct a paperless initiative using pen-tablets in the field to improve the inspection process. The program was successful and is being implemented by DOH throughout the state. The DOH-Broward Environmental Health Program does not conduct research; however, program staff participates in the Smart Growth Partnership which is involved in policy development and the conduct of Health Impact Assessments to assist in decision-making activities and program implementation. DOH-Broward has long-term relationships with institutes of higher learning to collaboratively conduct research. These include: Nova Southeastern University, Barry University, Florida International University, Florida Atlantic University and Broward College. DOH-Broward sponsors Public Health interns and is currently a host site for 4 Public Health Associates through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Public Health Associate program.

Gaps: None identified.

Recommendation: Continue to explore partnership and grant opportunities to conduct research related to environmental health.

Benefit: Baseline data; partnerships; expanded knowledge.

### **Priorities**

The following recommendations will be implemented through the Community Health Improvement Process.

1. Develop an annual Environmental Health profile that utilizes reports of findings, investigative results and other data. Continue to conduct community environmental health assessments at least once every three years.
2. Continue to enhance and maintain relationships with key stakeholders in Broward County.
3. Monitor activities to ensure ADA compliance and accessibility to all residents of Broward County.
4. Continue to explore partnership and grant opportunities to conduct research related to environmental health.

### **Conclusion**

The Florida Department of Health in Broward County strives to provide quality vector control services in order to assure a safe and healthy environment. Conducting the EnvPHPS assisted DOH-Broward in understanding how well the agency performs the 10 Essential Environmental Public Health Services. In response to EnvPHPS assessment findings, action items have been incorporated into the Community Health Improvement Plan as part of DOH-Broward’s culture of continuous improvement. Progress in addressing those gaps will be assessed on a quarterly basis through analysis of progress reports and by re-engaging in the EnvPHPS process every three years.



