

San Francisco is linking health and climate change impacts under a program that aims to educate and empower citizens and public agencies to improve resilience.



Climate Change and Human Health

Climate change is expected to more seriously affect the health and well-being of communities that are least able to prepare for, cope with, and recover from the impacts. In this regard, extreme heat days in San Francisco are projected to increase by up to 90 days per year and sea levels will rise up to 46 inches.

To address this challenge, the San Francisco Department of Public Health's (SFDPH) Climate and Health Program is successfully addressing the public health impacts of climate change by leveraging data-driven planning and health indicators to work on climate adaptation.

While climate change has been called "the greatest challenge facing the world," it also represents one of the biggest opportunities to improve global health. The program's use of climate data helps the City design solutions that reduce health disparities.

The Climate and Health Program

The Climate and Health Program has developed assessments, plans, indices and indicators for adaptation and resilience efforts. Some of these initiatives include:

- The **San Francisco Climate and Health Profile** that summarized how climate change is expected to impact San Francisco, which populations are most and least resilient to these impacts, and where those populations live.
- The **Extreme Heat Vulnerability Assessment** and **Flood Health Vulnerability Assessment** used to

investigate and trace the pathways that will link climate impacts to health outcomes to vulnerable populations.

- **Community Resiliency Indicator System, Flood Health Index, and Heat Vulnerability Index** systematically compare the resiliency and vulnerability of San Francisco neighborhoods in order to allocate resources, plan interventions, and advocate for policies and programs.
- Emergency plans and educational and outreach material for adaptation. This has included an **Extreme Heat and a Flood Emergency Operations Plan** and associated outreach materials on heat, flooding, extreme storms and sheltering in place.
- Continuously **strengthening collaboration across government agencies** and **supporting vulnerable communities** in building capacity and leadership.

Call to Action

SFDPH is working to develop and pilot methods to adapt to the current and future health impacts of climate change. The Climate and Health Program is currently drafting a Climate and Health Adaptation Plan and a five year strategy on activities to implement this Plan, including monitoring and evaluation of adaptations to reduce the negative health impacts of climate change within the jurisdiction of the health department. SFDPH will also be part of a City-wide collaborative community process to conduct community meetings at San Francisco's 29 public library branches beginning in late 2016 to promote climate health education and engage stakeholders in climate adaptation. These strategies and activities are expected to reduce the health burden from climate change.

To keep up to date on the climate and health topic, see

www.sfclimatehealth.org, follow **@sfclimatehealth** 

and work products are on located on **www.sfhealthequity.org/elements/climate**



San Francisco Department of Public Health • Climate and Health Program

Impact of Climate Change on Human Health

