



Environmental Public Health Tracking

USING EPHT DATA AND RESOURCES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Establishment of the Missouri Blue-Green Algae Task Force

What was the problem/situation?

Prior to the establishment of the Missouri Blue-Green Algae Task Force, Missouri had no set plan for addressing Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) in Missouri. Because no one agency in Missouri is in a position to address all of the issues associated with a HAB, a multiagency approach was needed.

How was Tracking involved?

The MO EPHT team played a key role in bringing together multiple agencies to establish the Missouri Blue-Green Algae Task Force. This task force was formed with representatives from Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA), and the University of Missouri (MU). The task force was established to determine how the state should handle HABs when they occur in Missouri. Missouri EPHT has also developed and actively distributes two new educational brochures focusing on blue-green algae and recreational water. The establishment of the work group forged a new partnership for the MO EPHT team with the Missouri Stream Team, a volunteer group with thousands of members across the state dedicated to monitoring and cleaning Missouri's rivers and streams.

What action was taken to resolve the problem?

This year Missouri had its first bloom that resulted in the closure of a beach. Because of the prior formation of the task force, Missouri had an organized, multi-agency proactive approach to address this event which resulted in the decision to temporarily close swim beaches and post notices regarding the bloom around the lake to protect the citizens of Missouri from the health risk posed by exposure to a HAB. Information was also released through the news media and social media to quickly share the possible health risk with the largest audience possible.



The National Environmental Public Health Tracking Program
Missouri Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT) is a program within the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. EPHT is part of a larger initiative to establish Environmental Public Health Tracking systems at the national and state levels.

