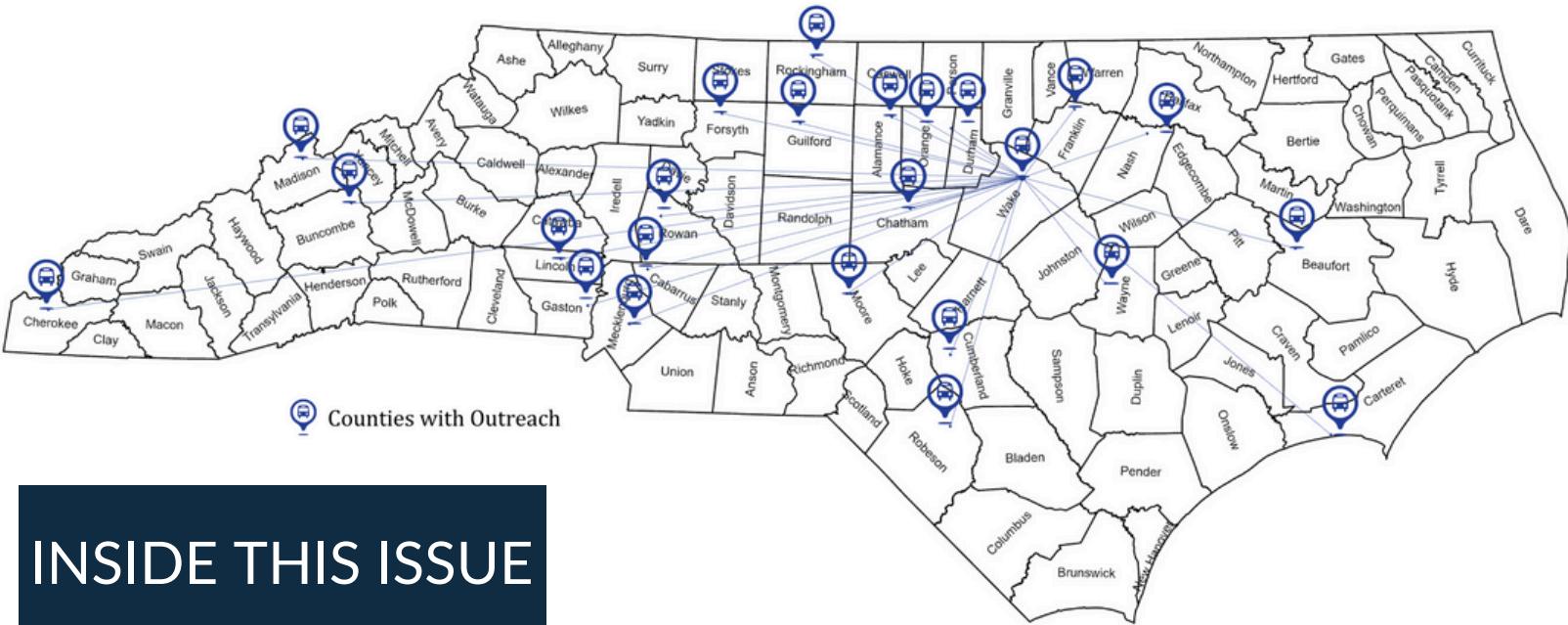


# CONNECTING ACROSS NORTH CAROLINA TO BUILD HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

From training sessions to community gatherings, the NCEPH team has been active across North Carolina to strengthen our partnerships and promote data-driven public health practices.



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### Technical Assistance Now Available!



The NC Environmental Public Health Tracking Program now accepts requests for data visualizations from local health jurisdictions and their partners. We're here to help with custom maps, charts, and resources to enhance health planning and address community health needs. See [Page 4](#) for details on how to request data visualizations from our program.



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# Hurricane Helene: Recovery and Support Resources

The NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) has mobilized resources to assist communities that were impacted by Hurricane Helene. From ensuring access to medical supplies and shelter to providing critical health and safety information, NCDHHS is committed to supporting North Carolinians throughout this challenging time.

## Recovery Resources

### Disaster Recovery Health and Safety

Dangers to avoid, drinking water safety, well safety, food safety, and more.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### List of Operating Pharmacies

With some exceptions, pharmacists can dispense a one-time emergency supply when they are unable to reach the medical provider and a one-time emergency refill of prescribed medication.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### List of Open Medical Practices

A directory of medical practices in western NC that are open or partially-open, as reported to the NC Medical Board.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### NC Medicaid Temporary Flexibilities and Resources

Information for NC Medicaid beneficiaries and families impacted by Hurricane Helene, including help accessing care and the latest program flexibilities.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### State Operated Healthcare Facilities

NCDHHS is taking steps to respond to the effects of Hurricane Helene at its western facilities, reporting all patients and residents are safe.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### Protected Areas

Shelter, aid, and other emergency assistance is provided regardless of immigration status.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### Hurricane Helene Recovery Communications Toolkit

Information for communities & businesses affected by the storm.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### Provider and Responder Resources

Hurricane Helene resources for providers and responders.

[LEARN MORE](#)

For more information, visit the [NCDHHS Hurricane Helene Recovery Resources](#) page to stay updated on recovery efforts.



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# Strengthening Connections Across North Carolina

From February to October, the NCEPHT team engaged with communities across North Carolina through training sessions, health conferences, and environmental justice gatherings. Our team showcased the Environmental Health Data Dashboard (EHDD) at regional Epi Team trainings, connected with residents at community events, and participated in key health and environmental symposiums. Through these outreach efforts we highlighted how data supports community health assessments, empowers local health planning, advocacy, and resilience, and promotes data literacy and public health initiatives in over 21 communities.



Our GIS Analyst, Dr. Faye Koenigsmark, and Public Health Educator, Aminah Keys, present on the Environmental Health Data Dashboard during the Epi Teams Training in Asheville, NC.



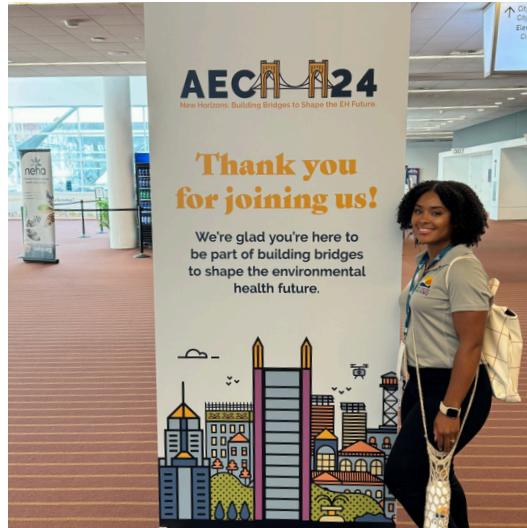
Dr. Faye Koenigsmark and Aminah Keys discuss integrating environmental justice data in public health preparedness at the Annual Public Health Preparedness & Response Symposium.



Dr. Faye Koenigsmark, engages with attendees during a poster session, describing the Environmental Health Dashboard's role in supporting community health and data-driven decision-making while showcasing its features and gathering stakeholder feedback on its impact.



Aminah Keys, and Climate and Health Epidemiologist, Autumn Locklear, join NC Environmental Justice Network for a paddle down the Lumber River, learning about local environmental challenges and community resilience.



Aminah Keys attends the National Environmental Health Association Annual Education Conference in Pittsburgh, PA.



Dr. Faye Koenigsmark, and Alverina Hall-Clay, Operations Manager, present at the North Carolina Public Health Association Conference on identifying environmental justice concerns to improve community health.

# Technical Assistance Now Available!

## Technical Assistance Requests for CHAs and PHP&R Plans

NC Environmental Health Public Tracking | Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch | Division of Public Health | North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Start now

The Environmental Public Health Tracking team is offering technical assistance for map visualizations to support the work of local health departments and their partners on Community Health Assessments (CHAs) and Public Health Preparedness and Response Plans (PHPRs).

Quantitative data is a great way to provide additional context to feedback collected from community listening sessions, surveys, and other qualitative data sources.

[REQUEST ASSISTANCE](#)

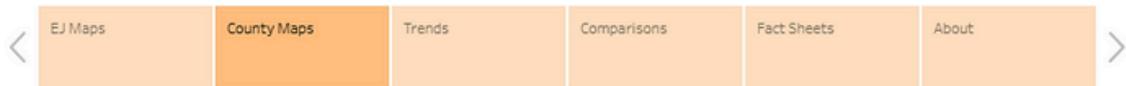
As part of our goal to promote environmental and climate justice across North Carolina, the NC Environmental Public Health Tracking Program has been working with local health departments to incorporate data on environmental health disparities in their Community Health Assessments and Public Health Preparedness and Response plans. Including environmental justice in these plans and reports is an important step toward identifying and addressing the inequitable distribution of environmental and health burdens on NC communities.

The [Environmental Health & Quality Toolkit](#) is a new resource developed via collaboration among state, local, and academic agencies. This toolkit provides a framework and supplemental materials to help local health departments incorporate environmental justice into their community health needs assessment.



Taylor Ginn, 2023 (last ed 2024 Aug 20). Available from: <https://www.taylorandfrancisgroup.com/taylorcommunity.org/tip-5-things-to-do-in-concordia>

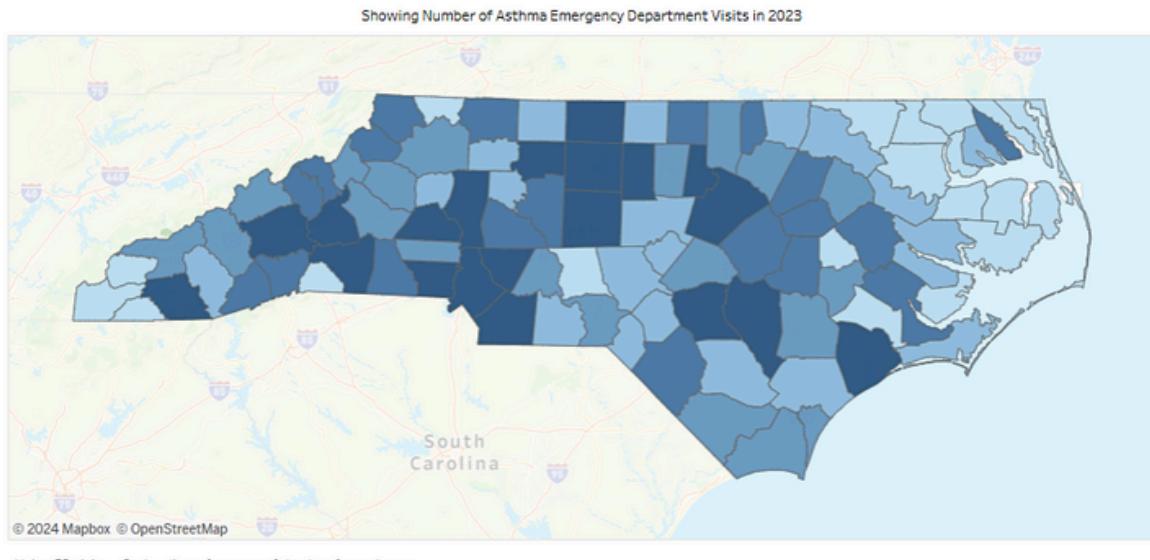
# Environmental Health Data Dashboard Updates



Click on a place on the map for the option to view it more closely on the Trends Over Time dashboard.

Select Content Area   Select Group   Select Indicator   Select Measure   Select Year

Long-term Health Effects   Asthma   Emergency Department Visit...   Annual number of emergency departm...   2023



19.00 - 186.00

187.00 - 438.00

455.00 - 709.00

727.00 - 1,388.00

1,528.00 - 11,805.00

## What's New

### Data Additions:

- Asthma:** Annual number of emergency department (ED) visits for patients with asthma, updated through 2023.
- Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning:** Annual number and rate of ED visits for CO poisoning, updated through 2023.
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder (COPD):** Annual number and rate of ED visits for COPD, updated through 2023.
- Heat-Related Illness (HRI):** Annual number and rate of ED visits for HRI, updated through 2023.

### Map Enhancements:

- Revised legend on the Environmental Justice (EJ) map to display better low and high Environmental Justice Index (EJI) census tracts.
- Updated the Fact Sheets tab for easier use and interpretation.

## What's on the Horizon

### Hospitalization Data:

- Adding counts and rates from 2016–2023 for five indicators: Acute Myocardial Infarction (AMI), Asthma, CO Poisoning, COPD, and HRI.

### Birth Defects Data:

- Updating with information from 2018–2021.



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# Introducing: Principal Investigator Dr. Sarah Hatcher



Sarah Hatcher, PhD  
Epidemiology Supervisor

Dr. Sarah Hatcher earned her PhD in Environmental Sciences and Engineering from the UNC-Chapel Hill Gillings School of Public Health, specializing in environmental justice and community-based participatory research. She served as a CDC Epidemic Intelligence Service officer with the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, gaining experience in applied epidemiology and Tribal public health.

Dr. Hatcher has held various positions in public health, including as an epidemiologist at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and lead of the Climate and Health Program at NCDHHS. In these roles, she has built strong relationships with community organizations, Tribes, local health departments, and state and federal partners.

As Epidemiology Supervisor, Dr. Hatcher is the Principal Investigator for the NC Environmental Public Health Tracking Program and supports other occupational and environmental epidemiology activities. These include surveillance for carbon monoxide poisoning, pesticide poisoning, toxic substance releases, elevated blood lead levels in adults, occupational health, and heat-related illness.

Sarah lives in rural Hillsborough, NC with her husband, Alex, and two dogs, Echo and Luna.

## Welcome Sarah



Sarah Christian, MPH, CHES®  
Environmental Program Consultant

Sarah Christian, an Environmental Program Consultant with a Master of Public Health from the University of Illinois Springfield, recently joined the NCEPHT team. Her experience with project management has prepared her to lead the coordination of Component B while providing overall support our team.

## Our Summer Intern



Ariel Mial  
Public Health Educator Intern

This past summer, we had the privilege of hosting Ariel Mial as our intern. Ariel, hailing from Greensboro, holds a bachelor's degree in Environmental and Geographic Science from North Carolina Central University and is pursuing a master's in Environmental, Earth, and Geospatial Science. Throughout her internship, she worked closely with our Public Health Educator, contributing to the NCEPHT program's communication, community engagement, and outreach efforts.

## Farewell Femi



Olufemi Ajumobi, MD, PhD  
Environmental Epidemiologist

Dr. Olufemi Ajumobi has accepted a position at the FDA. We appreciate Dr. Ajumobi's contributions to our team and wish him the best in his new endeavor.



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# Your Feedback Matters!



**NORTH CAROLINA**  
ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH  
**TRACKING**

Use the QR code below to provide your feedback on the [EHDD](#). We need your input to learn how we can improve our dashboard!

Scan here to offer feedback:



Stay Connected, Stay Informed

As we continue our journey together, we invite you to stay connected and engaged. Explore our improved website, and reach out to us with any suggestions, questions, or opportunities to collaborate.

Together we can provide data and context to inform data-driven policies, funding, and solutions to build a healthier and more equitable environment for all North Carolinians.

Best regards,  
The NCEPHT Team

\*Empowering Communities, Informing Decisions\*

Website: <https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/oee/programs/EnvPubHealthTracking.html> |

Email: [ncepht\\_support@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:ncepht_support@dhhs.nc.gov) | Social Media: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)