



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
BUREAU OF PUBLIC HEALTH PROTECTION

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March 1, 2020

Senator Thomas Sherman, Chair
 Commission to Study Environmentally-triggered Chronic Illness
 New Hampshire State House
 Room 107
 107 North Main Street
 Concord, NH 03301

Re: *Progress Report on Data Sharing between the New Hampshire Departments of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Environmental Services (DES) (RSA 126-A:76, III) Chapter 229:5*

Dear Senator Sherman:

As required by SB 85 (2019), an act reestablishing the commission to study Environmentally-triggered chronic illness, please find attached a second progress report for 2019-2020 that represents the joint work of DHHS and DES on data sharing practices and a summary of recent collaborative projects between the departments as required under paragraph 1.

The following documents are enclosed:

- SB 85 DHHS/DES Progress Report (data sharing and collaborative projects)
 March 1, 2020

Department staff are available to present the report to the Commission to Study Environmentally-triggered Chronic Illness during its next meeting scheduled for March 27, 2020. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Morris, Director
 Department of Health and Human Services
 Division of Public Health Services

Mike Wimsatt, Director
 NH Dept. of Environmental Services
 Waste Management Division

cc: Members of the Commission on Environmentally-triggered chronic illness
 Representative Stephen Shurtleff, Speaker of the House of Representatives
 Senator Donna Soucy, Senate President
 Mr. Michael York, State Librarian

2nd Progress Report for SB85

Submitted by:

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health Services

&

New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

March 2020

Introduction

This is the second report related to Senate Bill (SB) 85 (2019), which directs the New Hampshire (NH) Department of Environmental Services (DES) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to improve coordination and collaboration as it relates to environmental health, with a specific focus on data sharing.

This Report includes a summary of background information, an update on data sharing practices between the two agencies, a review of current collaborations, and recommendations for future work.

Background

Senate Bill (SB) 85 (2019), re-established a legislative commission to study environmentally-triggered chronic illness. The objectives of SB85 build on previous work related to House Bill (HB) 511 (2017) and HB 1356 (2018). The work of this Commission is focused on conducting environmental health surveillance and improving coordination and collaboration between DES and DHHS in order to allocate resources efficiently to reduce exposure to environmental contaminants and prevent disease.

The SB 85 Statement of Intent reads as follows: “The general court recognizes that nearly half of adults in the United States have at least one chronic health condition and chronic diseases are responsible for increased health care costs. Seventy percent of health care costs in the United States are for chronic diseases. Some chronic diseases are known or thought to be associated with environmental causes. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the state of New Hampshire has the highest rates of people with bladder, breast, esophageal, and pediatric cancer in the country. In addition, a double pediatric cancer cluster was identified in the seacoast of New Hampshire in 2014. Therefore, the general court hereby establishes the commission to study environmentally-triggered chronic illness.”

HB 511 (2017) established a legislative commission to study environmentally-triggered chronic illness.

HB 1356 (2018), charged DES and DHHS to develop and implement a method by which the departments share certain health outcome and environmental data. The HB 1356 Preliminary Report submitted in August 2018 includes more information on the status of the activities listed below and is attached in the Appendix.

Specifically, the departments were tasked to:

- Update a memorandum of agreement related to data sharing;
- Sign a joint standard operating procedure on how data layers can be shared between the two departments to identify linkages between environmental contaminants and health outcomes;
- Hold a presentation on the departments' ongoing, joint efforts under the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention environmental public health tracking cooperative agreement; and
- Compile a report describing and estimating the cost to perform a 2-way pilot project between the departments on arsenic in drinking water, where both health effects and environmental data exist.

Conceptual Diagram: Current Data Sharing Practices Across DHHS DPHS and DES

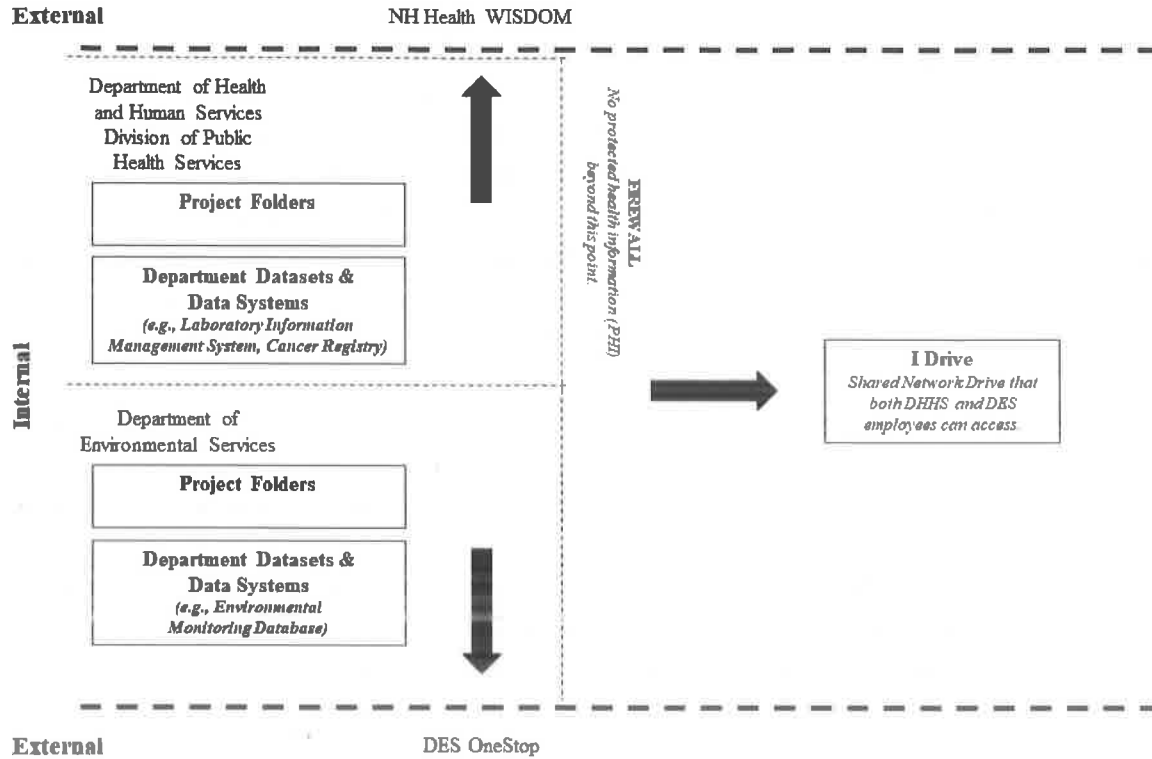


Figure 1.

2019 NH TrACE Study Analyte List

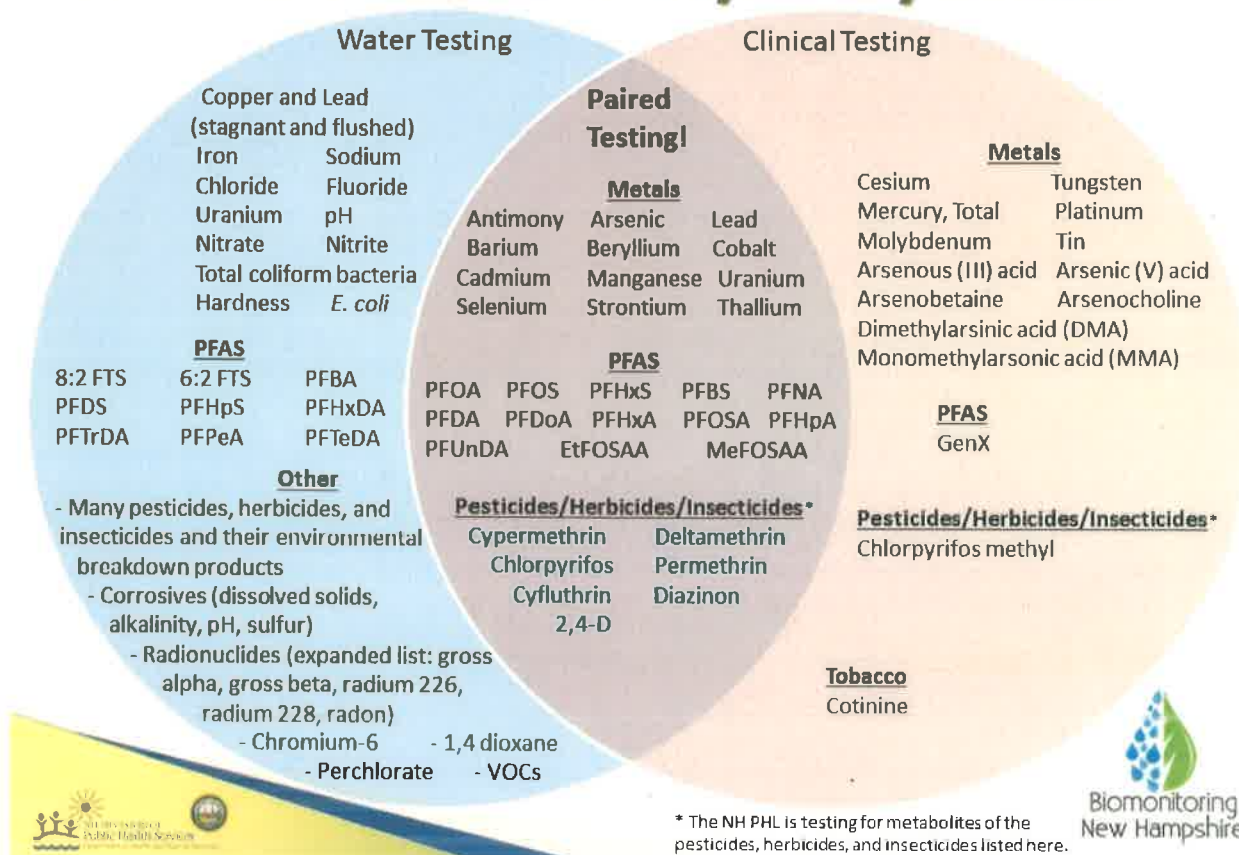


Figure 2.

Recommendations

We look forward to continuing to engage in this work as we further refine our data sharing practices and find innovative ways to use data in order to drive decision making, while also recognizing the limitations of the data and resources available to support this work. In collaboration with the Commission, we will explore further opportunities to improve data sharing and analysis of environmental exposure and health outcome data.

References Used in this Report

- NH DES OneStop Data Portal: <https://www.des.nh.gov/onestop/>
 NH Environmental Public Health Tracking Program: <https://www.nh.gov/epht/>
 NH Health WISDOM Data Portal: <https://wisdom.dhhs.nh.gov/wisdom/#main>
 BiomonitoringNH Program: <https://tinyurl.com/BiomonitoringNH>
 2019 NH TrACE Study: <https://tinyurl.com/2019TrACEStudy>