

# Environmental Health Division

## MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH FACT SHEET

**Health begins long before illness; it begins where we live, learn, work, and play. We all live in conditions that we cannot individually control but that can affect our health—the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat. MDH works behind the scenes with families, neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces to create conditions that support the health of all Minnesotans, no matter where they live.**



We strive for cleaner air inside our homes, restaurants, schools, and workplaces. We are responsible for the smoking regulations in public places and workplaces. We educate people about the potential health effects of asbestos, mold, carbon monoxide, radon, and other indoor air contaminants.



We work with communities to protect the source(s) of their drinking water. We inspect and monitor public drinking water for more than 100 contaminants. We establish and enforce standards for constructing and sealing private and public wells. We investigate and communicate the health risk and exposure potential of contaminants of emerging concern in drinking water. We educate and assist professionals, communities, private well users, and households across the state about water quality and stewardship.



We establish and enforce health standards to ensure clean and healthy conditions at restaurants and school kitchens. We educate the public about food safety. We also provide statewide and site-specific guidelines for eating fish from lakes and rivers.



We establish and enforce health standards to ensure clean and healthy conditions at home, hotels, motels, resorts, manufactured home parks, and recreational camping areas. Our inspectors visit homes with asbestos, lead-based paint, or radon and help reduce the health risk.



We establish and enforce health standards to ensure clean and healthy conditions at pools, resorts, children's camps, recreation camping areas, and sports arenas.



We establish and enforce health standards to ensure clean and healthy conditions at schools and businesses. Our inspectors visit schools and other buildings with asbestos or lead-based paint around the state.



We work with public health and allied professionals to proactively protect the health of Minnesotans from climate change impacts. We provide education, research, and technical assistance to create health and climate solutions across our State.



## Chemicals & Hazards

We measure and evaluate potential health risks of chemical exposures in the environment and in Minnesotans, especially pregnant women, and children. We work with federal and state agencies to assess and prevent possible human health risks from accidental spills, waste disposal, and agricultural and industrial activities. This information is used to promote public health actions to reduce chemical exposures.



## Radiation

We establish and enforce health standards to prevent unnecessary exposure to radiation or radioactive materials. We monitor for radiation around the two nuclear power plants and will provide technical advice in the event of a nuclear power plant emergency.



## Licenses & Certifications

We ensure contractors, consultants, inspectors, operators, and laboratories have the right training, skills, and standards to protect the health of all Minnesotans.

### MDH Mission

Protecting, maintaining, and improving the health of all Minnesotans.

*To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5000. Printed on recycled paper.*

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### Division Offices

#### Main Office

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#### Central District Office

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Fax: 320-223-7350

#### Northeastern District Office

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#### Southeastern District Office

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Fax: 507-537-7194

#### West Central District Office

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Fergus Falls, MN 56537  
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