

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PRIORITIES IN THE CALIFORNIA-BAJA CALIFORNIA BORDER REGION: THE CALIFORNIA PERSPECTIVE

**California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA)
Office of Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
California Department of Health Services (CDHS)
California Office of Binational Border Health (COBBH)
Environmental Health Investigations Branch (EHIB)**

**Border 2012 U.S.-Mexico Environmental Program
National Coordinators' Meeting
Tucson, Arizona - March 9, 2005**

Environmental Health Priorities in the California/Baja California Border Region

- Pesticides Exposure
- Air Quality and Asthma
- Lead Exposure

PESTICIDE EXPOSURE

- **California is leading agricultural state in the U.S.**
- **Estimated 1.6 million agricultural workers and families.**
- **Agricultural workers at high risk of pesticide exposure**

PESTICIDE EXPOSURE

- **Underreporting of pesticide-related illnesses**
- **Inaccuracy of existing information**
- **Lack of awareness about health risks**
- **Limited training of health care providers on pesticide-related illnesses**

PESTICIDE EXPOSURE ACTIVITIES

- Department of Pesticide Regulations (DPR) working with Mexican agencies to:
 - determine how pesticide exposures are being reported and tracked
 - develop binational reporting system
 - provide Train-the-Trainer materials for pesticide safety courses for farm workers.

Cal/EPA Office of Health Hazard Assessment Pesticide Illness Reporting Improvement Project

- **Design and integrate web-based pesticide illness reporting into CDHS Confidential Morbidity Reporting system.**
- **Improve recognition, management, and reporting of pesticides illnesses.**

AIR QUALITY AND ASTHMA

- Imperial County has highest asthma hospitalizations for all ages and among children aged 1 – 14 in California.
- EPA non-attainment area for PM10 and ozone.
- City of Calexico has CO concentrations above national U.S. standards

AIR QUALITY & ASTHMA ACTIVITIES

- CDHS will conduct inventory and assessment of health, hazard, and exposure databases specific to border region.
- CDHS is conducting school-based asthma survey in 13 and 14 year old children in Imperial County

Lead Exposure

- In 1992 – 2002, 88% of childhood lead poisonings reported in San Diego County involved Latino children. Education is needed on both sides of the border regarding the use of homemade remedies and ceramic cookware, and consumption of Mexican candies that contain lead.

Lead Exposure Activities

Cal EPA OEHHA will be conducting:

- Outreach
- Education
- Promotora trainings on
 - Lead exposure
 - Water quality
 - Air quality

On the California border

CALIFORNIA/BAJA CALIFORNIA REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE

Binational Scoping Meeting on April 13th
(San Diego/Tijuana area)

- Discuss and prioritize environmental health issues in the California/Baja California border region.
- Identify activities.
- Develop workplan, timeline, and evaluation measures.