

A Framework for Action: San Francisco Department of Public Health

The San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) launched its [Climate & Health Program](#) in 2010 with funding from the [CDC's Climate Ready States and Cities Initiative](#). The first step in the [BRACE framework](#) is to anticipate climate impacts and assess vulnerability. SFDPH completed assessments for extreme heat events (2013) and [flooding and extreme storms](#) (2016), a [climate and health profile](#) exploring the major health impacts of climate change, preparedness plans for extreme heat and storm/flooding emergencies, and a health co-benefits analysis of the county's climate action plan.

To assess public health preparedness, Climate and Health program (CHP) staff surveyed SFDPH leadership to better understand perceptions of climate impacts and capacity to implement adaptations, reviewed SFDPH strategic planning documents to identify opportunities for departmental action, and assessed climate vulnerability of SFDPH facilities.

From Assessment to Action

In 2017, CHP shifted from assessment to action with the release of its [Climate and Health Adaptation Framework](#). The Framework provides “a starting point to engage San Francisco’s diverse City and community stakeholders in designing solutions that reduce health disparities and climate health impacts... a tool to begin conversations about how best to adapt to the health impacts of climate change.” It includes the prior vulnerability assessments, indicators of climate risk, an overview of SFDPHs capacity to address climate and health, and proposed strategies and activities to reduce risk and promote health equity in the era of climate change.

The Framework outlines over 70 interventions, including working with other city departments to develop an in-building leak audit program for low-income homes, and evaluating the effectiveness of public information services in extreme weather events. Equity is a guiding principle in the work of SFDPH, and the Framework explicitly addresses the disproportionate burden of climate and health impacts on low-income communities and communities of color.



San Francisco's Climate and Health Adaptation Framework 2017



San Francisco Department of Public Health



Future Work and Lessons Learned

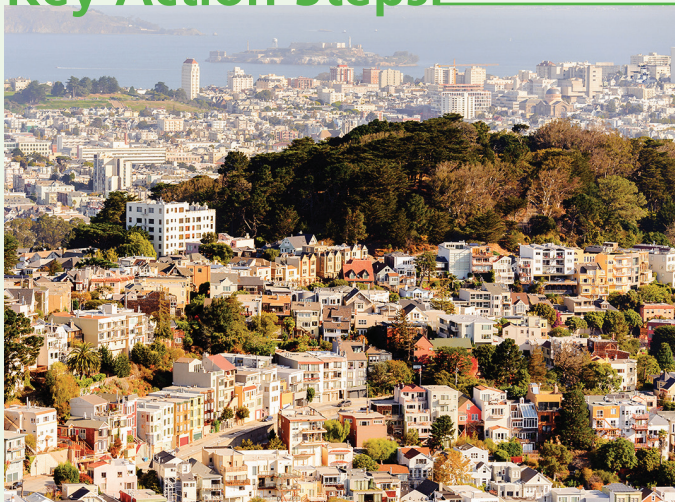
SFDPH is developing a Climate and Health Outreach Plan to increase engagement with residents and community based organizations to prioritize adaptation strategies that respond to the concerns of vulnerable communities. Climate and health champions have been identified across SFDPH programs, and SFDPH is bringing their expertise into efforts to improve collaboration with twelve City departments. One proposal is the development of a unified climate and health message for use across multiple City climate initiatives.

Former climate and health program director, Cyndy Comerford shared, “the most successful partnerships have been with organizations and city departments that share our view that climate change is a systems issue, connected to transportation, food, energy, health care systems, and beyond.”

Learn More

- [San Francisco’s Climate and Health Adaptation Framework: 2017](#)
- [San Francisco Climate Change & Health Program](#)
- [San Francisco Department of Public Health](#)
- [San Francisco County CalBRACE Climate and Health Profile](#)

Key Action Steps:



- Conduct a climate and health vulnerability assessment that can form the foundation for a climate and health profile, preparedness plans, community engagement strategies, and recommendations for action.
- Work with LHD program and agency partners to establish a strategic plan to address climate change, health, and equity.
- Use the plan to advance community engagement in prioritizing action on climate, health, and equity.