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THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH LAUNCHES ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING NETWORK

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Health (DOH) announced today the launch of the Florida Environmental Public Health Tracking Network, a collaborative effort led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help eliminate the effects of environmental hazards on human health.

The Tracking Network is a web-based query system that provides a “one-stop data shop” for health, environmental hazard and exposure information. Although some of the information can be found elsewhere on the internet, the Tracking Network’s key feature is consistent and systematic data that researchers, policy-makers and the public can compare across states.

In 2006, Florida was selected as one of 16 states (and one city) to help develop the National Tracking Network by providing state health, environmental and exposure data to the CDC’s national web portal and by developing a state web portal for content and health messages specific to Florida. In Florida, the Tracking Network was a collaborative effort between the Department of Health, other government agencies, universities, health registries and non-profit organizations.

“The Tracking Network is a major step towards identifying threats to the nation’s health posed by environmental hazards, such as elevated childhood lead levels and lead-based paint in older housing,” said State Surgeon General Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H. “State residents can access critical environmental health information that will help them make informed decisions to protect themselves and their families.”

Available information on the Health Tracking website includes:

- Risks from environmental hazards such as poor outdoor air quality, chemicals in drinking water and hazardous waste sites
- Adverse health effects from environmental hazards, such as asthma hospitalizations, heart attacks, selected birth defects, carbon monoxide poisoning and childhood lead poisoning

DOH promotes, protects and improves the health of all people in Florida. For more information, visit www.FLTracking.com or www.cdc.gov/ephtracking. To learn more about the DOH Division of Environmental Health, visit www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/index.html.

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