

Exposure Investigations



An Exposure Investigation:

- ▶ Develops a picture of current and possible future human exposures to hazardous substances in the environment.
- ▶ Evaluate existing and possible health effects related to those exposures.
- ▶ Identifies possible routes of exposure.

Gathering the Information:

- ▶ **Bio-medical Testing** - Collects urine and blood samples. This method can show current and sometimes past exposure to a contaminant.
- ▶ **Environmental Testing** - Examines soil, water, or air for contamination. ATSDR investigators use this method of testing where people live, work, play, or otherwise may come into contact with the contaminants being investigated.
- ▶ **Exposure-dose Reconstruction** - Analyzes environmental sampling information and computer models to estimate the contaminant levels people may have been exposed to in the past or may be exposed to in the future. This information is used to evaluate how a person's health might be affected.



An Exposure Investigation is conducted to determine:

- ▶ If it's likely people are currently being exposed to a contaminant.
- ▶ If ATSDR needs more information on the exposure.
- ▶ Whether other public health decisions are necessary.

ATSDR exposure investigations are done on a site-by-site basis. If you live in an area where there are multiple exposures from more than one source, it will be extremely difficult for an exposure investigation to state "without a doubt" which one is the principal source.