



## Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT) Project Update 1-15-04

- Northrop Grumman consultants will complete an Interagency IT Assessment (DEQ, NRIS and DPHHS) this month and will provide us with recommendations on possible ways to link data between agencies and develop database standards.
- We are conducting a Statewide Environmental Health Needs Assessment and we will be surveying County and Tribal Public Health staff, County Commissioners, and Extension Agents later this month. The goal is to gather input on health concerns related to the environment and to assess training needs. We also plan to survey non-profit advocacy groups later, which will include Health, Environmental Justice, and Environmental advocacy groups.
- We are also funding nine Counties and two Reservations to conduct community environmental health needs assessments. Community input is required and involvement of community members encouraged. A second training session for participating sites is scheduled for March 2-3, 2004 in Helena. Some sites have begun contacting the media about their projects, which has raised awareness. (Sites include: Butte-Silverbow, Hill, Glacier, Ravalli, Yellowstone, Lewis & Clark, Dawson, Flathead and Cascade Counties, Crow and Ft Peck Reservations)
- The EPHT website is up! The initial web information was sent to DEQ for approval. We plan to expand the site so that it will be a source of information for the public on a variety of environmental health topics such as asbestos, mercury, lead, asthma etc. The web site provides much of its information through links to other sites. Feedback is welcome: <http://www.dphhs.state.mt.us/epht/>
- Tom Ellerhoff attended the National Environmental Health Conference in Atlanta in December 2003 as the DEQ Liaison to the EPHT project along with DPHHS staff. DEQ staff have been involved in meetings with the IT contractors who are developing the database inventory template for EPHT. We began preliminary discussions of considering support of staff at DEQ to increase involvement in EPHT.