

Attachment C

Needs Assessment for Developing a National Network of Local Environmental Health Professionals

Madison County Health Department Example of Need for Developing a Network of Local Environmental Health Professionals

The Madison County Health Department illustrates one example of how a national network of local environmental health directors/officials would be beneficial.

Madison County Example: While New York State has banned Shale Gas development, there remained high concern regarding the sudden emphasis by gas companies to push more gas through pipelines to high demand areas. This prompted construction of new gas compressor facilities that have raised health concerns among neighboring residents. In response to such a compressor station, the Madison County Health Department has initiated a health study to determine and track possible health effects from such construction. This included conducting extensive environmental sampling to establish baseline data related to air quality, water supply, surface water and even individuals health conditions. The county plans to continue such testing and the health study through construction and at least three years following start of the operation. Since engaging in the health study, other local health departments have requested assistance from Madison County to expand the study to include populations in their respective area faced with similar concerns.

If a National Network of LHDs had existed other LHDs would have learned about the Madison County initiative much sooner and those LHDs facing similar issues could have benefited from Madison County's efforts to address this environmental health issue in their community.