

▶ DIRECT FROM CDC ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

ments. During these fairs, CTDPH overcame cost- and knowledge-related barriers to arsenic and uranium testing by distributing 719 free water testing kits. The public returned 86% (618) of the water testing kits for analysis. The public health lab identified 34 households where arsenic or uranium exceeded maximum contaminant levels. CTDPH provided follow-up letters to residents explaining the results and offering information on treatment options.

Editor's Note: NEHA strives to provide up-to-date and relevant information on environmental health and to build partnerships in the profession. In pursuit of these goals, we feature this column on environmental

The contamination of drinking water in private wells, especially near former military (National Research Council, 2009) and industrial sites (Worley et al., 2017), has become an issue of increasing concern to the public. Even as the media highlights these examples of contamination, some 34 million Americans rely on well water possibly affected by common hazards (National Groundwater Association, 2016). Bacterial and chemical contamination and naturally occurring contaminants such as arsenic and uranium affect water quality in one of every five wells throughout the U.S. (DeSimone, Hamilton, & Gilliom, 2009). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Act does not cover private wells. In response, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Safe Water for Community Health (Safe WATCH) program addresses private wells and other federally un-

regulated drinking water sources and systems by strengthening state and local safe drinking water programs.

Delta County, Colorado Health Department responded to 530 requests from residents to provide free well water sampling. The Safe WATCH grant supported the first coordinated effort in the six-county region of the West Central Public Health Partnership (WCPHP), led by the Delta County Health Department, to assess drinking water quality and identify risks associated with private wells. Members of WCPHP have promoted free water sampling through brochures, Twitter, Facebook, seminars, social media, newspaper articles, and a video advertisement created with the University of Colorado Boulder (see sidebar). The well water quality data are now being used to develop GIS contaminant risk maps for the region.

New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) staff identified communities at risk for arsenic and radionuclide contamination of well water. They implemented targeted outreach events that included well water testing in those communities. Test results were shared with policy makers and helped support a proposal to expand the State Private Well Testing Act (PWTA) rules to include arsenic and radiological (gross alpha) testing statewide, with a possible adoption of the

revised PWTA rules by 2018. Currently, the PWTA requires tests for radionuclides only in

Strategy. VDH implemented a marketing campaign addressing well testing barriers that featured 12 articles in the Burlington Free Press and resulted in 1.8 million digital ad displays across websites and social media. Additional outreach was provided through an online statewide neighborhood network called the Front Porch Forum. The digital ads directed patrons to the VDH drinking water informational page to learn about well testing. The campaign received attention from local news that led to a live interview with the drinking water engineer, prompting additional requests from residents to have their wells tested.

Safe WATCH partners closed gaps in their safe drinking water programs by addressing priorities related to the Essential Srs