# Environmental Health Information Outreach to Native Americans

Office of Outreach and Special Populations - Specialized Information Services - National Library of Medicine - National Institutes of Health



Many tribes are responsible for environmental health services for their members and for the protection of tribal lands.

Tribes may need to regulate and provide for safe and healthy:

- Air quality
- Trash and hazardous waste disposal
- Drinking water quality
- Sewer, stormwater, and watershed management

Tribes aim to provide high-quality environmental health services, but may have challenges with:

- Lack of trained environmental health specialists from within their communities
- Inadequate funding
- Limited access to electronic information, including phones and Internet
- Geographic isolation
- Coordinating with environmental officials in federal, state, and local governments
- Little control over environmental problems that impact tribal lands but originate outside their boundaries
- Inadequate health care, especially emergency response
- Substandard housing and roads
- Pressure to use tribal lands to produce income from hazardous waste handling or from logging, mining, and other extraction industries

In some areas, tribes, like other local governments, may have to cope with:

- Pesticide use and pesticide drift
- Dust from unpaved roads, fields, and industrial operations
- Mold in homes, schools, and other buildings
- Air pollution
- Carbon monoxide poisoning caused by faulty home heating systems
- Abandoned mine tailings
- Unregulated dumps
- Dangerous and "dirty" businesses

## National Library of Medicine (NLM) Outreach Activities

Training, exhibits, and career development for Native Americans

### **Training**

Tribal colleges benefit from a 1-day training course for faculty, students, and community members. The course, *Empowering* Tribal Communities with **Environmental Health and** Medical Information Resources has been offered at:

- Diné College Shiprock, New Mexico
- Haskell Indian **Nations University** Lawrence, Kansas

**Knowledge River** 

This work-study program provides support for

students attending the University of Arizona

School of Information Resources and Library

of Arizona Health Sciences Library.

Three Affiliated Tribes

Nez Perce Tribe

Lapwai, Idaho

Honolulu, Hawaii

Science in Tucson. Students learn about health

sciences librarianship by working at the University

Sacred Root, an Information Internship Program

This program is for midcareer Native Americans

involved in health or information technology.

It offers professional development along with

funding for projects designed by the interns

to enhance health information access in their

communities. Interns have participated from:

Ft. Berthold, North Dakota

Native Hawaiian community

American Indian and Hispanic American graduate

 Oglala Lakota College campuses at Pine Ridge and Kyle, South Dakota





## **Exhibits at Professional Meetings**

NLM showcases its resources at several conferences

- National Tribal Environmental Council
- National Indian Health Board
- National Congress of American Indians
- Association of American Indian Physicians
- Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science



**Indian Pow-Wow Exhibit Program** 

NLM exhibited at nine Indian pow-wows in eight states during the summer of 2005. NLM staff used online demonstrations and printed materials to introduce pow-wow visitors to health information resources for the public

North American Indian Days, Browning, Montana, July 7–10, 2005, with



each year including:



## Web Resources

Access to quality health information may help prevent illnesses and injuries



## **Health Information For and About American Indians**

Arctic Health

Health portal for Arctic region inhabitants, with a focus on Alaska http://arctichealth.org

American Indian Health Gateway to health information for and about American Indians http://americanindianhealth. nlm.nih.gov

**Tribal Connections** (National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Pacific Northwest Region) **Network Libraries are the** 

best source for regional assistance with health information and medical libraries

http://tribalconnections.org



Reference Tools

A to Z List of Resource

Database Manual

Calendar of Events

NLM-TOX-ENVIRO-HEALTH-L

WISER-Wireless Information

MedlinePlus<sup>®</sup> Environmental

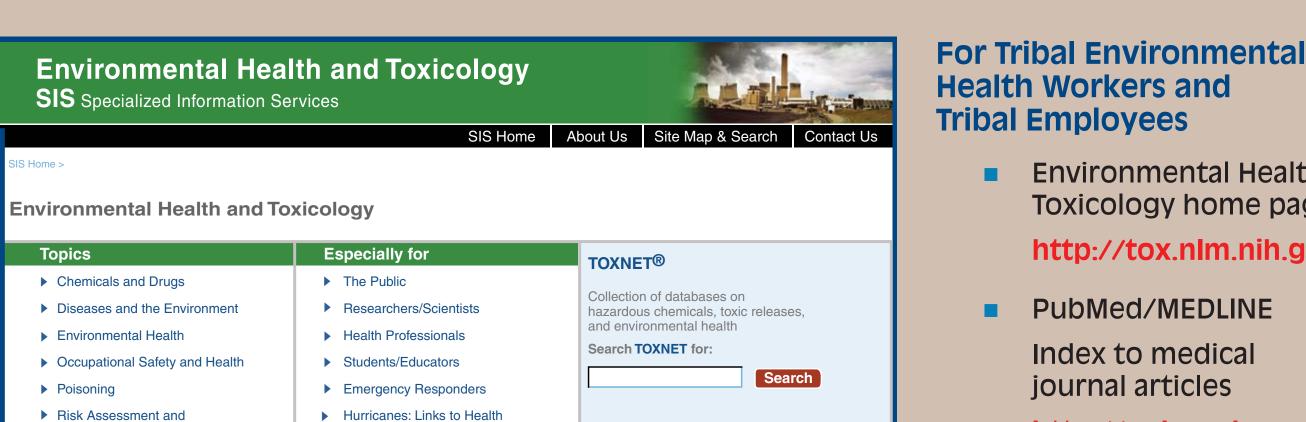
More Chemical Information

List of NLM Databases and

Publications and Reference

Health e-mail Announcement Lis

System for Emergency Responders



More to Explore

Enviro-Health Links

**Toxicology Tutorials** 

Fact Sheets

**DIRLINE®** 

Toxicology Web Links

**Database Descriptions** 

MedlinePlus: Consumer

Public Health Information

**Environmental Health Inform** 

Health Services Research & Public

Health Information Programs

Education and Career Link

Tox Town

ALTBIB

journal articles http://pubmed.gov

Haz-Map

Hazards and diseases linked to mining, steelwork, farming oil industries, and many others.

Index to medical

http://hazmap.nlm.nih.gov

**Environmental Health and** 

Toxicology home page

http://tox.nlm.nih.gov

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**Helping Concerned Citizens Learn About** Their Health and the Environment

Tox Town

New Enviro-Health Links resource or

National Institute of

**Environmental Health** 

Sciences: The primary

NIH organization for

environmental health

**Exploring connections between** health and the environment http://toxtown.nlm.nih.gov

MedlinePlus Trusted Health Information for You Over 700 health topics including **Native American Health** 

Hands Around the World image designed by Dennis Fox, Artist ■ Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara Nation