

LOUISIANA

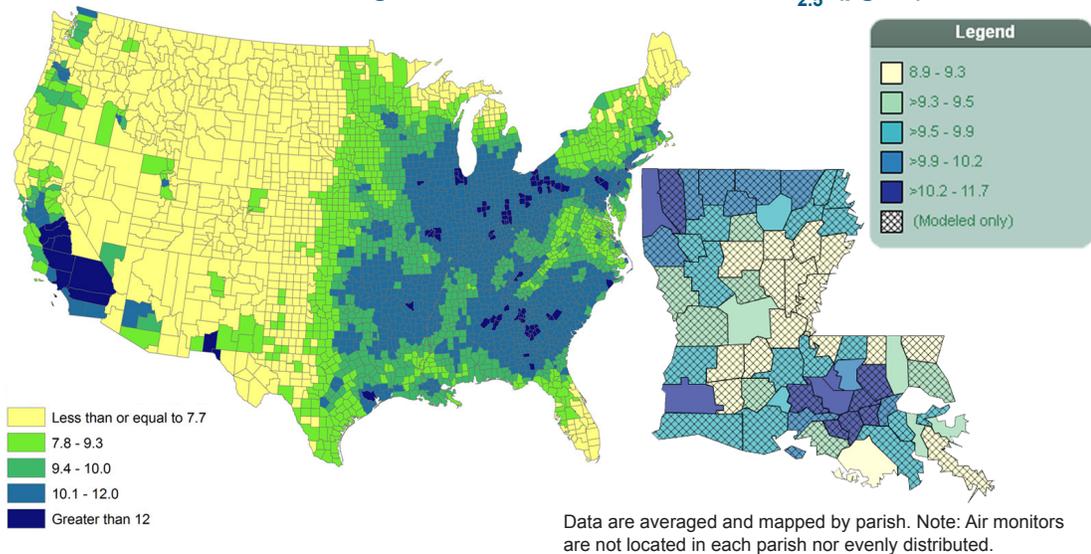
CDC's National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network

The Environmental Public Health Tracking Network is a dynamic system that provides information and data about environmental hazards and potentially related health problems. It presents what is known about environmental hazards, such as air pollution, and where they might exist, where people are exposed to hazards, and how targeted action can protect health, reduce illness, and save lives.

AIR POLLUTION (PM_{2.5}) AND HEALTH

Air pollution is a leading environmental threat to human health. Particles in the air such as dust, dirt, soot, and smoke are kinds of air pollution that have been linked with health problems. Some particles in the air are large or dark enough to be seen, like some kinds of smoke and soot. Other particles are so small that you cannot see them. Very small particles that are less than 2.5 micrometers wide (smaller than a grain of sand) are known as fine particulate matter or PM_{2.5}.

2011 Annual Average Ambient Concentrations of PM_{2.5} (µg/m³)



PM_{2.5} particles are small enough to be inhaled deeply into the lungs. Once fine particles are in the lungs, they can affect the heart, blood vessels, and lungs. People exposed to fine particles over a long period of time can have more heart and lung problems than people who are not breathing this kind of air pollution. Being exposed to any kind of particulate matter may lead to increased emergency department visits and hospital stays for breathing and heart problems and other health problems. In Louisiana:

46 Age-adjusted Rate of Emergency Department Visits for Asthma - 2011
/10,000



32 Age-adjusted Rate of Hospitalizations for Heart Attacks (Over 35) - 2010
/10,000



cdc.gov/ephtracking



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Raising Awareness of Potential Mercury Exposure

Fishing and consuming seafood are important economic and recreational activities in Louisiana. Certain fish are known to carry higher levels of mercury than others. The Louisiana Environmental Public Health Tracking Program (Louisiana Tracking Program) uses biomonitoring data to track mercury exposure resulting from fish consumption. In 2006, Louisiana began requiring the reporting of all blood mercury laboratory results. These data were combined with levels of mercury in fish tissue to identify geographic areas and populations of potential concern. This identification has led to health education and outreach efforts to increase awareness and ultimately reduce mercury exposure in Louisiana.

Environmental Hazards



From 1992-2009, LA had **48** fish advisories due to mercury contamination



44 percent of samples from 1994-2010 from Louisiana waterways exceed the EPA* methylmercury fish tissue limit of 0.3 ppm.

Health Effects



Louisiana has an average fish consumption rate more than **1.5** times the national rate.



Out of 2,062 LA residents screened between 2007 & 2009, **4%** had a blood mercury level above national levels.

Protecting Louisiana's Workforce from Extreme Heat

Louisiana's subtropical climate and higher rates of chronic health conditions like heart disease, diabetes and obesity contribute to heat-related illness. Many Louisianans work outdoors and are employed in physically demanding occupations such as construction, agriculture, landscaping, utilities, and oil/gas exploration and production. This puts them at risk for over-exposure to heat. The Louisiana Tracking Program worked with the state's Occupational Health Program and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to educate employers on how to better protect their workers from the heat and humidity.

Health Effects



75 percent of approximately 3,000 emergency department visits for heat-related illness in 2011 were men age 16 and older.



Louisiana had the highest rate of heat-related illness among outdoor workers compared with other states in the Southeast region between 2010 and 2011.