

Virginia Department of Health

Public Health Impacts of Climate Change

Summit

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Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Role in Climate Change

- The public health impacts of climate change are an emerging priority for the Commonwealth.
 - Identified as a source of concern by citizens during the 2018 Health Commissioner Listening Tour.
- To identify public health threats and mitigation tactics, the VDH Climate Change Committee (C-3) was created in January of 2019.
- The C-3 has been tasked with:
 - Identifying health related impacts of climate change in Virginia
 - Identifying vulnerable populations
 - Outlining relevant data, programs, and research in collaboration with internal and external partners
 - Developing recommendations for identification and mitigation of climate change impact

Focus Areas Identified by VDH C-3

- **Air Temperature/Quality**
 - Heat Stress/Heat Exhaustion
 - Exacerbation of Chronic Diseases (Cardiovascular, Pulmonary Diseases)
- **Water Temperature/Quality**
 - Impact on shellfish, food consumption
 - Increased risk of infections (i.e. vibrio)
 - Harmful Algal Blooms
- **Sea Level Rise**
 - Exposure to contaminated water from sewer and/or well displacement.
 - Displacement of populations, including vulnerable populations
- **Extreme Weather Events**
 - Increased risk of injury and death from flooding, hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, etc.

Establishing Partnerships

- To effectively identify and address the public health impacts of climate change, VDH realized the need to identify additional subject matter experts at the local, state, and national level.
- Engaged representatives nominated by the Commissioner's Public Health Advisory Council
 - Introductory Conference Call Held on March 5, 2019
- C-3 members identified and/or met with partners from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Public Health Impacts of Climate Change and Beyond

- To best understand and determine the health impacts of climate change, the VDH C-3 helped organize today's summit with great help from many of you in the audience to create an opportunity for dialogue, mutual learning, and collaboration.
- However, VDH recognizes that studying the public health impacts of climate change is only one step of the Commonwealth's larger initiatives to study and curb the impact of climate change.

Executive Orders by Governor Northam

- **Executive Order 22 - Establishment of the Governor's Conservation Cabinet: A United Effort to Protect and Conserve Virginia's Natural Resources (October 4, 2018)**
 - “The Conservation Cabinet shall be established within the Office of the Governor, to better protect Virginia’s natural resources and to improve environmental quality across the Commonwealth. Through increased coordination of Virginia agencies, departments and programs the Conservation Cabinet will work to ensure a healthy environment and continued economic opportunity for all Virginians.”
 - Consults with the Secretary for Health and Human Resources
- **Executive Order 24 - Increasing Virginia's Resilience to Sea Level Rise and Natural Hazards (November 2, 2018)**

Virginia Secretary for Natural Resources



Matthew J. Strickler is the Secretary of Natural Resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Prior to joining the Administration, he served as Senior Policy Advisor to Democratic members of the House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources.

Originally from Lexington, Virginia, Secretary Strickler graduated from Washington and Lee University and holds master's degrees in public policy and marine science from the College of William and Mary and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science.

Secretary Strickler was also a Knauss Marine Policy Fellow in NOAA's Office of International Affairs in 2007.

Virginia Secretary of Health and Human Resources



Daniel Carey, M.D. is the Secretary of Health and Human Resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Prior to his appointment, Dr. Carey worked as a cardiologist and served as Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer at Centra.

Dr. Carey has special interest in medical leadership, and in addition to his roles at Centra, has also served as President of the Lynchburg Academy of Medicine, the Medical Society of Virginia and the MSV Foundation.

A long-time Virginia resident, Dr. Carey graduated from the University of Virginia and Harvard Medical School.