

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MAJOR

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND RADIOLOGICAL HEALTH SCIENCES
COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

What is Environmental Health?

- How environmental factors affect the health of humans and animals
- What types of environmental factors? Some examples include: air quality, water quality, pollution, pesticides, chemical storage and handling, asbestos, mold, lead, radiation, noise, communicable disease, vector-borne disease, zoonotic disease, food-borne illness, environmental contaminants, hazardous waste transport and disposal, solid waste, and workplace hazards
- **The focus is on health**, primarily human health. How do these environmental factors impact our health? How can we mitigate these factors and change our behaviors/interaction with environment to improve individual and community health?

Advantages of majoring in Environmental Health:

- The only accredited Environmental Health undergraduate program in Colorado
- Small program of around 100 undergraduates means close connection to the faculty and staff
- Excellent scholarship opportunities
- Required internship gives students practical experience needed to enter the workplace successfully
- Tremendous career opportunities! More employers than graduates, locally and nationally with annual starting salaries ranging from \$37,000 - \$56,000.
- 5 year BS/MS program in Health Physics with starting salaries in the \$80's
- Excellent preparation for medical school, veterinary school, and other human health programs such as pharmacy, chiropractic, physical & occupational therapy, nursing and other health science programs
- Excellent preparation for Masters in Public Health programs, as well as MS/PhD in epidemiology, toxicology, industrial hygiene, occupational health, ergonomics, health physics and more
- Great program for people with international health interests

Career Fields:

Epidemiology: studies the incidence, distribution, and control of disease in a population

Toxicology: the study of the harmful effects of physical agents or chemicals on living organisms

Occupational Health/Industrial Hygiene: devoted to the prevention, recognition, evaluation, and control of workplace contaminants and stressors that may cause sickness, injury, impaired health or impaired well being among workers or among citizens of the community. Includes the study of ergonomics

Health Physics: evaluates the balance of risks and benefits of the use of radiation, particularly in new technologies. This spans many diverse fields including basic research, medicine, environmental restoration, industrial applications and space exploration

Public Health: educating and protecting the health of communities, emergency preparedness, disaster response

Internship Sites/Employers of Recent Graduates:

Public Health: CDC, USDA, US Public Health Service, Colorado Dept. of Public Health and Environment, Indian Health Service, City of Fort Collins, Larimer County, Jefferson County, Tri-County, Boulder County, El Paso County, Teton County (MT), Hennepin County (MN), Bernalillo County (NM), Oakland County (MI)

Industry: Amgen, Anheuser Busch, Avago Technologies, Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Boeing, Ball, URS, Hach, Kennecott Mine, Platte River Power Authority, Coors, CoorsTek, Owens Corning, Intel, Connell Resources.

Consulting: Hellman and Associates, Stewart Environmental, ChemRisk, Air Resource Specialists

Academia: CSU, CU Health Sciences Center, UC Berkeley, University of Utah, UCLA

International: Epidemiological study for Cape Leopard Trust in South Africa, Water quality study in Honduras, Air quality study in Nicaragua, NGO in Albania, Peace Corps

Graduate and Professional School Preparation:

About 20% of our graduates immediately go onto graduate or professional school, including programs in human medicine, veterinary medicine, pharmacy, physician assistant, nursing, chiropractic, epidemiology, toxicology, occupational health and safety, microbiology and law school.

Recent topics in the news about Environmental Health:

H1N1 flu, salmonella in a county water system, uranium mining, food recalls, lead paint on toys, avian flu, debate over fluoridating a community's water system, mercury and eating fish, West Nile Virus, plague, hepatitis outbreak at local restaurant, mining accidents, workplace injuries, Ipod noise and hearing loss, pesticide use and asthma, second-hand smoke, radiation levels of cell phones, hantavirus, asbestos in apartment buildings, radon, alternative energy sources, meth lab clean-ups, bioterrorism, toxic mold, public health concerns in the aftermath of events such as Hurricane Katrina and World Trade Center, public beach closings due to health concerns. Environmental Health is in the news every day!

The concern is always: how do we protect the health of individuals/communities?

Graduate Programs in our department:

Programs Available in the area of Environmental Health

- Epidemiology
- Ergonomics
- Industrial Hygiene
- Toxicology (includes 1-year Plan B option in Forensic Toxicology)

Programs Available in the area of Radiological Health

- Cancer Biology/Oncology
- Health Physics (includes 5 year BS/MS option)
- Radiobiology
- Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging

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