

# Collaboration with Government Partners Increases UNC SRP Relevance

## Research Translation Core, UNC Superfund Research Program

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The UNC SRP RTC continues to foster collaboration with local, state and federal government partners who can use our science.

### Bolstering NCDHHS Efforts to Map Contaminants and Communicate Risks

#### Building capacity to identify populations at greatest potential risk from well water contamination

- The RTC and DHHS are developing a database to identify and map data patterns of concern for 25 organic and inorganic contaminants.
- The RTC will provide training for state agencies and local health departments on using these data to inform public health actions to reduce exposure.

#### Improving Risk Communication around NPL Sites

- The RTC is assisting NCDHHS in evaluating the effectiveness of fish consumption advisory signs posted at a PCB-contaminated lake. To date, fifty anglers have been interviewed to establish knowledge baseline.
- The RTC also evaluated a PSA that we designed with NCDHHS about a catch-and-release policy at recreational facility contaminated with PCBs from an upstream NPL site. With n=175, we found:
  - Statistically significant ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) improvements in knowledge.
  - Strong intentions to perform desired behaviors.
  - Participants able to accurately recall information after 24 hours.



### Building Public Participation Skills in Local and State Agencies

After developing a 20-minute peer-to-peer training video with substantial input from NCDENR and NCDHHS, the RTC conducted pre-/post-tests and 30-day follow-up surveys with over 150 government employees. Results showed statistically significant changes ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) in:

- Perceived effectiveness and quality of public interactions (with > 75% of participants indicating improvement in both categories).
- Clarification of individual values around public participation and more inclusive definitions of roles of government employees.
- Improved knowledge.
- Increased confidence and positive emotions about community involvement.



### Strengthening Interactions with USEPA and ATSDR

In summer 2009, the RTC hosted a meeting aimed at improving understanding of work practices within the USEPA and ATSDR and their science and science communication needs as they relate to the Superfund cleanup program.

