

**Linking Environmental Data and Health Data from Different Spatial Scales:
A Case Study from Florida's Environmental Public Health Tracking Initiative**

Carol A. Gotway,¹ Linda J. Young,² Jie Yang,² Greg Kearney,³ Chris DuClos³

¹Office of Workforce and Career Development, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Georgia

²Department of Statistics; University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida

³Florida Department of Health, Division of Environmental Health, Tallahassee, Florida

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) created the Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT) Program to integrate hazard monitoring, exposure, and health effects surveillance into a cohesive tracking network. Very little new data are being collected in the EPHT effort. The emphasis has been, and likely will continue to be, on the synthesis of existing environmental and health data systems. Part of Florida's effort to move toward implementation of EPHT is to develop models of the spatial and temporal association between myocardial infarctions (MIs) and ambient ozone levels in Florida. Existing data were obtained from Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration, Florida's Department of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Census Bureau, and CDC's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. In this presentation, we highlight the opportunities and challenges associated with combining disparate spatial data for EPHT analyses. We compare the results from two different approaches to data linkage, focusing on the need to account for spatial scale and the support of spatial data in the analysis.