



Health Department

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**UTAH COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT PROTECTS UTAH
COUNTY FROM EMERGENCIES AND DISASTERS THROUGH
NATIONAL “PROJECT PUBLIC HEALTH READY” RECOGNITION PROGRAM**

Provo, UT– Utah County Health Department (UCHD) has been recognized by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) for its ability to plan for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies. UCHD demonstrated these capabilities by meeting the comprehensive preparedness benchmarks required by Project Public Health Ready (PPHR), a unique partnership between NACCHO and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. UCHD joins a cohort of more than 520 local health departments across the country that have been distinguished for excellence in preparedness through PPHR, either individually or as part of a region.

“We are proud to have been recognized by Project Public Health Ready for our high level of preparedness,” said Ralph Clegg, Executive Director of UCHD. “We continue to improve our ability to quickly and effectively respond to any public health crisis in Utah County.” Clegg continues, “I believe that this honor is exceedingly well-deserved because it reflects tremendous effort, dedication, creativity, and cooperation on the part of our entire team of subject matter experts. This rigorous project shows UCHD’s commitment to public health preparedness and that this community is a leader in emergency preparedness—in public health, in public safety, and in other disciplines. Still, the most important factor in determining whether we succeed in responding to an emergency will be the actions of our citizens in advance planning, cooperating with authorities, and helping each other in a time of disaster.”

PPHR recognition confirms that UCHD has a thorough and coordinated emergency response plan in place and that staff have the training to protect the health of the community during an emergency. Local health departments recognized by PPHR undergo a rigorous evaluation by peer review to assess their ability to meet a set of national standards for public health preparedness. These standards align with federal government requirements and other national best practices.

PPHR recognition also requires health departments to collaborate with their state, local, and community partners to develop plans that account for all the constituents in their jurisdictions.

UCHD routinely collaborates with community partners, as evident in the Utah-Wasatch HealthCare Coalition, consisting of partners from hospitals, long term care, home health, dialysis centers, mental health, school districts, universities, emergency management, Fire, and EMS.

“Public health preparedness planning, response, and recovery begins at the local level. Local health departments play an essential role in creating healthy, resilient communities that can respond to and recover from disasters.” said Lori Tremmel Freeman, NACCHO Chief Executive Officer. “NACCHO commends Utah County Health Department for being a model of public health emergency preparedness.”

NACCHO, the voice of the nearly 3,000 local health departments across the country, provides resources to help local health department leaders develop public health policies and programs to ensure that communities have access to vital programs and services that people need to keep them protected from disease and disaster. Its mission is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice for local health departments in order to ensure the conditions that promote health and equity, combat disease, and improve the quality and length of all lives.

Health.Utahcounty.gov

For more information on Project Public Health Ready, including recognized sites, project tools, and resources, visit <http://www.naccho.org/PPHR>.

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