

Navigating a *Giardia* sp. outbreak linked to drinking water in Montana: A collaborative response

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 | 1:00 — 2:00 pm ET

COURSE # 000-624-25

DESCRIPTION

Drinking water-based microbial outbreaks may pose serious public health threats due to community reliance on clean drinking water systems, regulatory complexities and sometimes unclear jurisdictional responsibilities. Public health laboratories play a critical role in outbreak detection and response but may be unaware of the full range of partners and federal resources available to them. This lack of awareness can delay response efforts and worsen health outcomes in affected communities. For instance, giardiasis—the most common intestinal parasitic infection in the US¹—has been a leading cause of drinking water-related outbreaks for decades.² By collaborating and coordinating with partners, public health laboratories can enhance preparedness, accelerate response, and protect communities more effectively during microbial drinking water emergencies.

AUDIENCE

State and local laboratory scientists; public health, environmental and federal partners; other APHL members and staff

OBJECTIVES

After completing this webinar the participant will be able to:

- Outline strategies to improve communication and collaboration between public health, partner organizations and utilities for improved health outcomes and emergency response
- Identify existing challenges to effective outbreak response
- Identify opportunities for effective outbreak response, including access to federal resources

SPEAKERS

- **Rachel Brookins, PE**, environmental engineer, US Environmental Protection Agency Region 8
- **Rachel Hinnenkamp, MPH**, food and waterborne disease epidemiologist, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services
- **David Parker, MA**, physical scientist, US Environmental Protection Agency National Enforcement Investigations Center, Denver, Colorado

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Level of Instruction:

- **BASIC:** Entry level; no prior knowledge of the subject is necessary.

Moderator

- **Elizabeth Watts, PhD**, chief of environmental sciences, Public Health Laboratory, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

ACCESSIBILITY

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals seeking special accommodations must email a request to emily.potter@aphl.org prior to the live webinar. Closed captions will be available with the webinar recording.

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¹Connors, E. E., Miller, A. D., Balachandran, N., Robinson, B. M., & Benedict, K. M. (2021). Giardiasis outbreaks — United States, 2012–2017. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 70 (9), 304–307. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7009a2>

²Collier, S. A., Deng, L., Adam, E. A., Benedict, K. M., Beshears, E. M., Blackstock, A. J., ... Beach, M. J. (2021). Estimate of Burden and Direct Healthcare Cost of Infectious Waterborne Disease in the United States. *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, 27(1), 140–149. <https://doi.org/10.3201/eid2701.190676>

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This webinar is supported by Cooperative Agreement number NU600E000104 (CDC-RFA-OE20-2001) funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Department of Health and Human Services, or APHL and member laboratories. This project was 100% funded with federal funds from a federal program of \$1,106,858.