



State of Utah

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NEWS RELEASE

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DEQ Releases Annual Environmental Report for 2016

State of the Environment Report Spotlights Agency Successes

SALT LAKE CITY – The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) released its annual State of the Environment Report today. This end-of-year report provides a comprehensive look at agency activities and initiatives in 2016 that improved Utah’s environment, quality of life and created new economic opportunities.

“Our employees work tirelessly to improve the lives of all Utahns and safeguard Utah’s air, land, and water to support human health, a vibrant economy, and our unsurpassed quality of life,” said Alan Matheson, executive director at DEQ. “This year’s report provides a synopsis of what we do every day to ensure the health and well-being of the people of Utah residents.”

The report highlights DEQ successes the past year, including:

- [Air quality research projects](#) funded by the Legislature that help DEQ scientists understand the complex chemical reactions behind the formation of fine particulates (PM_{2.5}) during winter inversions and identify effective control technologies that reduce pollution and support economic development.
- A collaborative effort between DEQ, the [Bingham Research Center](#), and the [Tri-County Health Department](#) that uses innovative technology to track down [leaks in storage tanks](#) at oil and gas wells in the Uinta Basin. This effort was partially funded by a \$150,000 legislative appropriation.
- Multi-agency coordination, sampling, and daily updates on [harmful algal blooms](#) on some state water to protect the public from the adverse health effects of exposure to cyanobacteria and cyanotoxins.
- Provided funding of \$797,500 for drinking-water system master plans and engineering studies, and another \$44.6 million to 18 drinking-water systems for construction projects to ensure safe, clean drinking water for Utah residents.
- Education and outreach on the dangers of [radon gas](#), found at unhealthy levels in one in three Utah homes, that led approximately 8,000 Utah residents to get their homes tested.
- Assistance to Centro Civico Mexicano with a [cleanup grant](#) that will help develop affordable senior housing and a civic center on formerly contaminated land.

“One of the defining characteristics of Utah is our stewardship ethic—a drive to leave the world better for those who follow,” says Matheson. “We at DEQ share that drive and pledge to continue our work to create a cleaner, healthier, more prosperous Utah.”

View the 2016 State of the Environment report at: report.deq.utah.gov.

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About DEQ

Established in 1991, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) mission is to safeguard and improve Utah's air, land and water through balanced regulation. DEQ implements state and federal environmental laws and works with individuals, community groups and businesses to protect the quality of Utah's air, land and water. For more information, visit www.deq.utah.gov, follow DEQ on Facebook ([utahdeq](https://www.facebook.com/utahdeq)) and Twitter ([UtahDEQ](https://twitter.com/UtahDEQ)), or call 1-800-458-0145.