

Detection of COVID-19 in Wastewater Issue Brief 2020 Update

Background: Widespread studies conducted national and globally indicate that genes specific to the SARS-CoV-2 virus can be detected in wastewater. The ability to collectively sample both symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals has lead dozens of states, cities, and universities to actively monitor wastewater to inform public health decisions. In spring of 2020, the Environmental Research Institute of the States (ERIS), the research arm of the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS), and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), under a Memorandum of Agreement with U.S. EPA, began working on an issue brief on the detection of COVID-19 in wastewater.

Over 40 states have initiated programs with partners to collect wastewater samples for COVID-19 research to determine the presence of infected individuals and to estimate the extent of community spread. The issue brief summarizes activities and results in three states to introduce the use of SARS-CoV-2 monitoring in wastewater as an early warning system for increased infections in communities. The brief also covers research gaps, risk communication, sampling methodology standard practices, and recommendations and looking ahead.

The issue brief, published in November 2020, is available on both the ERIS and ASTHO websites:

- <https://www.eristates.org/projects/detection-of-covid-19-in-wastewater/>
- <https://www.astho.org/COVID-19/Detection-of-COVID-19-in-Wastewater/>