



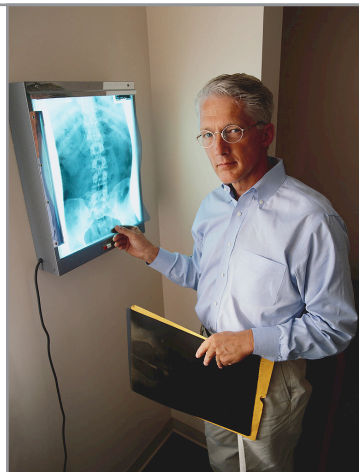
Budget cuts have left areas in **Southeast Washington** struggling to keep up with outbreaks – requiring staff to shift time away from important prevention activities.

VALLEY FEVER IN BENTON & FRANKLIN COUNTIES



In addition to the many known reportable communicable diseases, Benton-Franklin Health District has also needed to manage the discovery of *Coccidioides immitis* in the soil. This fungus is responsible for Valley Fever and had previously been thought to exist only in southwestern United States. Lack of funding has limited their ability to conduct prevalence testing and environmental sampling to understand the full extent of this infection in the area. Additional state funding will expand their capacity to conduct surveillance for Coccidioidomycosis and to inform and educate the medical community about this emerging infection.

LIMITED DISEASE RESPONSE IN ASOTIN COUNTY



As a small, rural health jurisdiction, Asotin County Health District is currently not able to investigate and respond to communicable diseases in a timeframe expected. This is largely because of limited staffing capacity; one outbreak has agency-wide impacts. For example, Asotin County recently had a potential case of tuberculosis in a resident. In order to respond, staff were pulled from regular WIC, Maternal and Child Health, and support activities. This means appointments with moms and babies are delayed, creating inconveniences for the families served. It's also an example of how one seemingly small event sets the agency back in three different programs.

UNABLE TO ASSESS THE HEALTH OF COLUMBIA COUNTY



Not only have funding cuts forced the Columbia County Public Health Department to close their doors one day per week, they also lack the funding to complete necessary health assessments. These community health assessments should be done every 3-5 years, but Columbia County hasn't been able to do one since 2009. Public health data helps prioritize needs, identify health threats, plan programs and activities, and develop policies to improve health. Being able to identify progress made and current gaps in Columbia's health would also allow the County to partner with the community, coalitions, and the hospital district to create a community health improvement plan—a public health best practice.