APPENDIX D

SWOT Analysis Results from Technical Teams

The Technical Teams were asked to brainstorm on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to achieving the vision and goals of the strategic plan from their specific area of expertise. They responded to the following questions: What are the internal (within MDH) strengths and weaknesses that will aid or impede progress on preparing for and adapting to the public health impacts of climate change? What are the external opportunities and threats that will affect MDH's ability to prepare for and adapt to climate change as it relates to public health?

SWOT Definitions:
- **Strengths** are internal characteristics, qualities, and capacities that are doing well and contribute to the organization's accomplishments.
- **Weaknesses** are internal qualities that need to be improved.
- **Opportunities** refer to external activities or trends that the organization may benefit from, connect with or take advantage of to grow or enhance its performance.
- **Threats** are external activities or trends that threaten the current and future success of the organization.

1. Strengths
- Champions – John Stine, Linda Bruemmer
- Dedicated and qualified MDH staff willing to participate
- Support from parts of management
- Diversity of programs that can contribute
- Current capacity and strong existing programs related to public health and climate change, including vector-borne diseases, asthma, emergency preparedness, wells, laboratory, and foodborne diseases
- Credibility
- Established good relationships with water suppliers
- Past experience with flooding/drought
- Good database and tracking system for water
- Potential biomonitoring
- Positive external relationships and partners (e.g., CDC, local public health,
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agencies (MPCA), Association of State and

- Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), Tribes)
- Willingness to take the lead
- Diversity of divisions included in planning (planning includes representatives
- from almost every division)
- Attempting a coordinated effort to gain momentum
- Strong notification system
- All hazards plan framework
- State Community Health Services Advisory Committee (SCHSAC)
- Public health delivered formally to at risk communities
- Good relationships with responders

2. Weaknesses
- Lack of resources/staff/funding (e.g., funding for vector-borne disease surveillance is unstable and insufficient for further enhancing surveillance; staff working on air pollution has been cut, current funding for the climate change coordinator position ends at the end of August)
- Climate change forces people to think outside their area of expertise
- Playing catch up with other agencies, MDH came late to climate change discussions that other state agencies have had
- Barriers to cross-program collaboration
- May not have all the expertise in house
- Inability to create significant interest with legislators
- No one providing a strong voice or consistent messages for climate change
- Interagency coordination (we are doing this, but we could do more)
- Dedicated funding
- Agency buy-in
- No regulation authority (makes it harder to make changes)
- Data management (making sure there is no overlap in data collection between divisions and agencies) (also difficult to combine/coordinate data across divisions or agencies)
- Difficult to measure progress
- Not everyone thinks it's a problem
- Method of communication is weak, tough to get message out, targeting and delivering the right messages at the right time
- Communication with at risk populations

- Those at highest risk are not connected
- No defined definition of mortality from heat
- Climate change is a broad category with confusing public health ownership, who owns it?

3. Opportunities
- Collaboration with other state, local, and federal agencies (including organizations such as the University of Minnesota, WICCI Wisconsin's initiative on climate change lead by DNR and UW)
- Allows participants to think beyond their normal work duties
- Clean Water Fund
- Multi-pollution strategies for health & environment, lots of co-benefits
- Local support (mayors)
- Increased awareness at national level leading to more funding, human health data
- Build off of other agencies regulatory/monitoring authorities
- Social media- use to get messaging out
  Ways to communicate about water systems: mutual aide opportunity in times of crisis
- Foster interactions with localities
- Ongoing research we can use and integrate into our plan (conferences to share information)
- Strong support from local public health and some local elected officials
- System for reporting air quality index & monitoring is in place
- Interagency Pollution Prevention Advisory Team (IPPAT) (working on mitigation)
- Mortality data based on climate patterns, forecasts, Dr. Kalstein's research on excessive deaths due to climate patterns
- Minneapolis City's work on extreme heat
- Opportunity to define "at risk" populations in MN
- Template news releases, framework response for local health department
- Opportunity to determine whose role is this? Local or state?
- Opportunity for cross-cutting area organizations, look at it holistically
- Create a consistent message
- Opportunity to get the message out to private firms (e.g., landscaping and construction businesses)
- Expand on limited English messaging
- 211 United Way

4. Threats

- Playing catch up with other agencies, came to the table late
- Local beliefs
- Conflicting information available to public that can result in a general lack of
- concern · Seen as a political issue · No clear cause and effect · Threatening issue (easy to ignore, doesn't fit into the "worry box") · Lack of interest – some people believe it is just inevitable · Buy-in · Uncertainty · Economy not good for this right now · Lack of & missing data (short term, acute, long term, etc.) · Existing stressors cause additional threats to landscape (population growth,
- invasive species, development pressures)
- Accounting for different variables
- Messaging– can hurt credibility or may give people the wrong information due
- to uncertainty
- Hard to agree on the consistent message
- Hard to define the scope (it's so big)
- Competing priorities
- No specific directive
- People believe its just natural, can't do anything about it
- Lack of funding (state, local level)
- Insufficient interest in unattended consequences
- Public unwilling to change behavoir
- Infrastructure does not promote non-vehicular behavior
- Unwillingness to identify and address vulnerable populations
- Problem of downscaling the models: What are the direct effects on Minnesota? Where to prioritize?
- Lack of pollen monitoring data in Minnesota to cover the entire state
- Minnesota is already at or approaching air quality levels of concern
- Many vulnerable at-risk populations (asthmatics, respiratory disease, non-English speaking, poor, etc.)