

California Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice, in partnership with **San Joaquin County Public Health Services** and **BrowneMusser**, has secured over **\$748,000** in funding to combat **extreme heat** in the **Central Valley**.

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[San Joaquin County, CA] **California Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice** in partnership with San Joaquin County Public Health Services, and BrowneMusser is thrilled to announce \$748,500 in grant funding to put in action the Central Valley Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Planning project. This initiative was selected through a competitive process led by the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program (EHCRP), part of the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI). This critical investment will support efforts to protect vulnerable communities, promote health equity, and build local resilience against the growing threat of extreme heat driven by climate change.

With this grant funding, the Central Valley Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Planning project will address urgent challenges posed by extreme heat and identified by the community of San Joaquin County. The grant has five main objectives.

- Objective 1: Develop a community-led health promotion plan to prepare the most vulnerable Central Valley communities, and those who care for them, for extreme heat events and other climate-related health challenges.
- Objective 2: Improve community-wide health literacy and self-efficacy associated with heat risks.
- Objective 3: Build on trusted relationships that San Joaquin County Public Health Services has with local community partners working with vulnerable populations, including members of their Resilient Community Advisory Committee.
- Objective 4: Prepare and disseminate information and messages to prevent heat exposures, recognize early warnings of heat-related illness, and prepare people to act and prevent dire health outcomes.
- Objective 5: Assess and address opportunities to integrate extreme heat advice during patient encounters in emergency and primary care settings, as well as assess and address extreme heat content in Central Valley-based schools of nursing curriculum.

Leveraging all partners' relationships will be critical to the success of the planning grant. The California Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice has environmental health expertise and strong relationships with health providers and educators in the Central Valley. As one of the leaders of the California Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice, and a researcher, professor, and practicing clinician, Dr. Mechelle Perea-Ryan, stated: "As a nurse educator and Family Nurse Practitioner, I recognize our responsibility to prepare students and colleagues for today's health challenges, including rising extreme heat risks. Partnering with nursing schools and clinical sites in the Central Valley to assess knowledge and readiness to prevent and manage heat-related illness—strengthens both education and our commitment to climate-resilient community health."



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San Joaquin County Public Health Services will leverage its trusted relationships with community-based organizations and leaders throughout the county, as well as other government agencies working in this space.

“We look forward to partnering in this initiative as we are always exploring ways to mitigate health impacts upon our vulnerable populations, since they are more susceptible to heat-related illnesses. This includes agricultural workers, people over 65, young children, pregnant women, and individuals with chronic diseases.” Renee Sunseri, Director, San Joaquin County Public Health Services.

The expertise of BrowneMusser, a strategic communications firm, will assist in co-creating culturally and linguistically appropriate messages and tools. They will also develop a plan for their delivery and dissemination to collectively inform and engage the community to keep each other safe during extreme heat events, as well as contribute to a peer-to-peer regional strategic educational campaign on preparing for extreme heat events.

This initiative is part of a statewide effort to empower a diverse range of communities — from the San Bernardino Community College District to nonprofit organizations in the Imperial Valley, to the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians in Southern California, and the Black Cultural Zone Community Development Corporation in Oakland. The grants support the development of long-lasting infrastructure solutions, while also strengthening community resilience to extreme heat.

“The projections for hotter and longer heat events threaten the well-being of everyone in the community,” notes Dr. Barbara Sattler, Project Director and Leadership Council member of California Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice. “Our mission is to make sure that our most sensitive and vulnerable populations are identified and protected.”

The investment in the Central Valley Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Planning project is one of 47 grants receiving \$32 million collectively to take action to protect against the public health impacts of extreme heat. Learn more about the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program on the [LCI website](#).

