

# Health Protection

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*Healthy Alaskans 2010 Volume I: Targets for Improved Health*

- Chapter 8:**        ***Injury Prevention***
- Chapter 9:**        ***Violence and Abuse Prevention***
- Chapter 10:**      ***Occupational Safety and Health***
- Chapter 11:**      ***Environmental Health***
- Chapter 12:**      ***Food Safety***
- Chapter 13:**      ***Oral Health***
- Chapter 14:**      ***Vision and Hearing***

**H**ealth protection refers to the activities that assure the safety of food, water, air, drugs and appliances. Making sure that clinics, hospital laboratories, and blood banks are reliable, and that health care professionals are qualified to serve, are shared responsibilities between state and local governments and professional organizations.

Setting standards, adopting regulations and implementing and enforcing them may happen at the local, state or federal level depending on the scope of authority to deal with the specific issue, the nature of the problem, and the level of consensus. For example, in some states, helmet laws for children riding bicycles have been adopted at the state level, while in other states, individual communities have adopted local regulations. Some immunization regulations and disease reporting requirements are national, while others are state-specific.

Environmental and public health agencies share responsibility for safety of schools and restaurants, water supplies, and waste disposal. In Alaska they share the implementation of tobacco control enforcement. Injury prevention and child abuse prevention efforts are shared among a variety of governmental, non-profit and other organizations. For some problems, like designating land or funds for neighborhood exercise trails, or starting a recycling program to reduce waste, community action can muster resources or provide the forum for change. Communities can set standards or organize needed services (including public clinics or coordinated emergency services), in instances where individuals on their own cannot solve the problem.

