

### Educating Elected Officials

Educating new and seasoned Elected Officials is an important role for public health advocates. This toolkit provides a range of tips and resources that can be used to assist you in your efforts to keep Elected and Appointed Officials in the know about the Smart Surfaces solutions to mitigating urban heat and improving health for residents.

#### ✓ Identify Changes in your Elected Officials:

- After November 5th (Election Day) communities across the nation will have new and returning Elected Officials up and down the ballot. Once they assume office, it's the perfect time to reach out to new and returning Elected Officials at the local, state, and federal level. [CLICK HERE](#) to find your local election offices and results of the recent election.

#### ✓ Use trusted messengers to reach Elected Officials

- Before reaching out to your new Elected Officials, research their running platform and identify if areas of public health, air quality, climate change, or environmental justice were a part of their platform.
- Determine who in your community might be the best messenger to educate about this topic based on the Elected Official's party, platform, and past performance. [CLICK HERE](#) for additional resources to help identify messengers.

#### ✓ Consider Timing

- City Councils, General Assemblies, and other public bodies have a wide range of important topics they are acting on at any given time. Take the time to review meeting agendas and minutes to better understand what might be front of mind for the Elected Official. Your passion for this important, urgent topic does not make other issues any less important and time sensitive.

#### ✓ Share reliable and brief resources

- Share reliable information from a credible source. This is not the time to share every piece of literature on the topic, but instead share a one-pager or short overview.

#### ✓ Built trust and rapport

- Follow-up after the meeting to build the relationship. Send an email with a brief overview of the issue you outlined. This would be a great time to share specific asks and next steps. Don't make this a one and done, see this as a starting point.

### • The Problem:

- Communities across the nation are more regularly experiencing extreme heat, floods and other disasters due to changing climate.
- Two-thirds of the average U.S. city is made up of roads, parking spaces, sidewalks and roofs. Since these surfaces are typically dark and non-porous, they are contributing to increased urban heat, flooding, increased air pollution and poor health.
- Extreme temperature, both heat and cold, is a trigger for individuals with lung disease such as asthma and COPD. Excessive heat increases the risk of an exacerbations, hospitalization, and death.
- Nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from industry and other sources react with heat and sunlight to create ozone. Ozone causes swelling and irritation of the lungs — much like getting a sunburn on your lungs. Repeated exposure may lead to permanent lung damage.
- Thankfully, there are some proven steps that individuals and community leaders can take to help reduce extreme heat now and into the future.

### • The Smart Surfaces Solution:

- Smart Surfaces encompass a suite of cutting-edge technologies, including reflective (cool) roofs and pavements, green roofs, trees, solar photovoltaics (PV) and rain gardens. These features are designed to mitigate urban heat, enhance air quality and improve health.
- Cities have an exciting opportunity to integrate these proven solutions into building practices and improve health through their built infrastructure.
- Would you be interested in learning more about these Smart Surfaces and how your city might be benefit from adopting them?

## Smart Surfaces Resources

- [Lung Association Website Landing page](#)
- [Smart Surfaces video \(2 minutes\)](#)
- [City Specific Factsheets](#)
- [Smart Surfaces Coalition website](#)
- [Blog - Navigating Urban Heat](#)
- [Blog - Critical Steps Communities Can Take Now](#)

