



Build a Digital Map for Your COIN: Using Free Online Software

We recommend enlisting the help of a GIS professional (through your agency or by partnering with other agencies with this expertise) for generating digital maps to locate the at-risk populations you have identified from secondary data. However, as you collect address/location information for your network, there are two online tools that can help you generate maps showing exactly where your COIN members are located. You can even “zoom in” to satellite photography and see what the location looks like. The directions on the Web sites listed below are very good, and we include the following information to help you understand the tools and anticipate using them.

The Map Multiple Locations online tool at (www.batchgeo.com) will let you generate simple maps based on address information you provide in a spreadsheet format. You can also generate a file that will open in the free Google Earth software (earth.google.com) allowing you to actually view the location using satellite photography.

Here are some tips:

- If you will want to look at satellite photos of your network member locations, you will need to download and install the free Google Earth software: www.earth.google.com. If you do not have administrator rights on your computer at work, you will need to have someone from your IT department download the software for you.
- Go to the geocoding website (www.batchgeo.com) and follow their directions to use an Excel spreadsheet to “geocode” your addresses so they can be used to generate maps. This should be easy to do if you have been using Excel to develop your database.
- To view your map in Google Earth, go to the bottom of the geocoding page and select the button “Download to Google Earth (KML) File.” Save the .kml file generated from your data. You must have already installed the Google Earth free software AND have Internet access for this next step to work: Double click on .kml file you saved from the geocoding Web site, and it will launch Google Earth and let you zoom in and look at the location.
- Think about generating different maps to show network members for the different at-risk populations you have located (such as blind, deaf, rural, etc.) by creating separate geocoded files for Google Earth.