

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Climate and Health Resources: WASHINGTON, DC



Climate change poses risks to human health. [Already in the United States](#), we are seeing rising temperatures, increased frequency and intensity of some types of extreme weather, sea level rise, and other changes in weather and climate patterns. We are all vulnerable to the health impacts associated with climate change. However, these climate and health risks vary across the country.

Heat waves, heavy downpours, and sea level rise pose growing challenges to many aspects of life in the District of Columbia. Examples of risks and actions for District of Columbia residents include:

- **Higher temperatures will increase heat-related illnesses, hospital visits, and deaths.** In D.C., the urban heat island effect will make heat events worse. [Learn how you can take action to protect against heat waves](#), such as:
 - **Respond:** Drink plenty of water.
 - **Respond:** Watch for signs of dehydration and overheating, especially in children.
- **More intense rain can overwhelm combined sewer systems** (where storm water and sewage share the same pipes). This can contaminate recreational water and drinking water sources, and lead to disease outbreaks. [Learn how you can take action to ensure drinking water safety](#), such as:
 - **Prepare:** Have an emergency water supply ready for your family (1 gallon per person/pet per day).
 - **Respond:** Check the news for tap water safety notices, such as boiling water before use.
- **Increasing levels of harmful algae and bacteria in the Chesapeake Bay may make eating oysters less safe.** These contaminants cause infections or stomach illnesses. [Learn how you can take action to ensure food safety](#), such as:
 - **Prepare:** Check for health department notices before fishing or harvesting shellfish.
 - **Respond:** Keep seafood chilled to less than 38°F. Discard any perishable food if your refrigerator has lost power for longer than four hours.

Learn more in the [USGCRP Climate and Health Assessment](#).

The examples of risks and actions provided in this document are not a comprehensive list. They provide users with illustrative impacts and resources for further information. Examples were selected based on relevance to the state or region and representation of a diversity of health threats. Selection does not imply ranking of severity of impacts nor prioritization of actions. The examples of impacts are based on "The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment," available at <https://health2016.globalchange.gov>, as well as the National Climate Assessment at <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/>

RESOURCES FOR WASHINGTON, DC RESIDENTS

Resource Topic	Information	Source
Climate Change Impacts	Learn more: What Climate Change Means for DC	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
	Learn more: National Climate Assessment: Northeast	U.S. Global Change Research Program. 2014.
	Explore Actions: Climate of Opportunity: A Climate Action Plan for the District of Columbia, 2010 Draft <i>Includes Health Concerns for: Transportation, Water, Wastewater</i>	Washington, DC
	Explore Actions: Building a Climate Resilient National Capital Region: Federal and community agencies working together on climate preparedness and resilience.	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, U.S. Global Change Research Program , U.S. General Services Administration, National Capital Planning Commission. September 2014.
	Find Resources: EPA Region 3 (Mid-Atlantic)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Public Health Information	Find Resources: Washington, DC Emergency Preparedness and Response (Dept. of Health)	City of Washington, DC
	Find Resources: Washington, DC Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management	City of Washington, DC
	Find Resources: Washington, DC Department of Health	City of Washington, DC