



Change of language and content for EPA's Climate Ready Water Utilities program and web page

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Change of language and content for EPA's Climate Ready Water Utilities program and web page

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) page on its initiative to support water utilities in adapting to climate impacts was edited in late November or early December 2016 to emphasize resilience and extreme weather over climate change.

Note: These changes were first reported on by Inside Climate News (February 28, 2017): [EPA Removes Mentions of 'Climate Change' in Water Utilities Program](#).

Description

The EPA modified its discussion of programs on water utilities' management of climate change impacts to focus more on resilience and extreme weather. The agency ultimately removed all 19 uses of the word "climate" and changed the name of the program from "Climate Ready Water Utilities" to "Creating Resilient Water Utilities". It removed links to EPA clearinghouses on climate change science, though these pages still exist.

The most notable changes to this site are summarized here:

- **Changed program, page title, and mission to focus on resilience and extreme weather**
 - Formerly, the introduction stated that the goal of the Climate Ready Water Utilities (CRWU) initiative was to help utilities "adapt to climate change by promoting a clear understanding of climate science and adaptation options." Now it states the goal is to "increase resilience to extreme weather events....by promoting a clear understanding of long-term adaptation options."
- **Removal of all mention of the word "climate."** All 19 mentions of the word "climate" were removed. Some were replaced with "extreme weather" or "resilience."
- **Reorganization of links and removal of links to climate change science clearinghouses**
- **Titles and URLs of pages in the CRWU domain were changed to remove "climate."**

Page 1: Climate Ready Water Utilities / Creating Resilient Water Utilities

- URL: <https://www.epa.gov/crwu>
- Side-by-side View: 11/1/16 - 12/29/16

Screenshot 1.1

(1.1a) Changed program, page title, and mission to focus on resilience and extreme weather:

1. The program/page was changed from “Climate Ready Water Utilities” to “Creating Resilient Water Utilities.”
2. The introduction was changed from “The CRWU Initiative provides the water sector (drinking water, wastewater and stormwater utilities) with the practical tools, training, and technical assistance needed to adapt to climate change by promoting a clear understanding of climate science and adaptation options. Read about the Climate Ready Water Utilities Initiative.” to “The CRWU initiative provides drinking water, wastewater and stormwater utilities with the practical tools, training, and technical assistance needed to increase resilience to extreme weather events. Through a comprehensive planning process, CRWU assists water sector utilities by promoting a clear understanding of potential long-term adaptation options”

(1.1b) Removes all mention of the word “climate.” All 19 mentions of the word “climate” were removed. Some were replaced with “extreme weather” or “resilience.”

Removals:

1. “Conduct a climate risk assessment” became “Conduct a risk assessment”
2. “Climate adaptation in action” became “Adaptation in action”
3. “Understanding climate science” in the purpose statement was removed
4. “View climate resources” and “View climate studies and reports” became “View resources”
5. The headings “Get Climate Training for Your Utility” and “Access Climate Change Resources” were removed.

Replacements

6. “Plan for Climate Change at Your Utility” became “Plan for Extreme Weather”
7. “Assess Your Risk to Climate Change” became “Assess Your Risk and Find Resources”
8. “Adapt and plan for climate change impacts at your utility using EPA's GREAT!” became “Adapt and plan for extreme weather impacts at your utility using EPA's GREAT!”

(1.1c) Reorganization of links and removal of links to climate change science clearinghouses:

1. Links to “[View your local climate change projection](#)” and “[EPA Climate Change Newsroom](#)” were removed but these pages themselves were not taken down (the URL of the Climate Change Newsroom did change, however).
2. A link called “Becoming climate ready” to a YouTube video was the last mention of “climate” on the page [but was removed](#) between February 7th, 2017 and February 19th, 2017. The video itself is no longer available.

(1.1d) Titles and URLs of pages in the CRWU domain were changed to remove “climate.”

