



Environmental Data & Governance Initiative Website Monitoring Report

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Removals of Climate Change Mentions and Links from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences Website

August 20, 2017

Writing and review of this report was conducted and overseen by the members of EDGI's Website Monitoring Committee: Maya Anjur-Dietrich, Andrew Bergman, Gretchen Gehrke, and Toly Rinberg. Report writing was led by Jake Wylie

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Removals of Climate Change Mentions and Links from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences Website

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) has altered climate change language, updated climate change references, and reduced access to a Web resource with information on climate change and human health across several webpages. On the Global Environmental Health pages, the term “climate change” has been changed to “climate” on side menus and page titles. Links to an educational fact sheet about climate change were removed, reducing access to the resource.

Description

NIEHS has altered wording on its Global Environmental Health (GEH) pages, removing the phrase “climate change” and replacing it with “climate” from side menus and page titles. NIEHS is one of 27 divisions of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and is dedicated to the study of the environment and its effects on human health.¹ NIEHS also removed links to an educational 4-page fact sheet titled, “Climate Change and Human Health”, from two separate pages: a library of brochures and fact sheets, and a page dedicated to explaining the environmental impacts of climate change. While the “Climate Change and Human Health” fact sheet is still hosted on the NIEHS website, access to it has been significantly reduced. On pages where the term “climate change” was removed from the title, no other language changes were made and the term “climate change” continues to be used in the body text of the page.

The most notable changes to the climate-related NIEHS webpages are summarized here:

1. Removed mentions of “climate change”

- a. The term “climate change” was changed to “climate” on the following page and side menu titles: “Climate Change and Human Health,” “Climate Change and Children’s Health,” and “Health Impacts of Climate Change (Change 1.1a-d)
- b. Removed subtitle “Health Impacts of Climate Change” from the page about climate change and cancer (Change 2.1a)

2. Removed links to fact sheet on “Climate Change and Human Health,” significantly reducing access, and updated climate change reference section

- a. Removed description of and links to a “Climate Change and Human Health” fact sheet in July 2017 (Change 3.1a, 4.3a)
- b. In an earlier round of changes in May 2017, the NIEHS reformatted, reorganized, and added descriptive text to section with climate change Web references. Most link URLs in the section remained the same, but four were removed, two were added, and one was changed (Change 4.1a, 4.2a)

¹ [About NIEHS](#) - August 14, 2017

Detailed Description of Changes

Page 1: Climate and Human Health

- URL: <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/programs/geh/climatechange/>
- Previous title: Climate Change and Human Health
- Side-by-side View: 7/6/2017 - 7/22/2017
- Changes occurred between **July 19, 1:53 pm ET** and **July 20, 2017 1:18 PM ET**

Screenshot 1.1

(1.1a) Changed page header from "Climate Change and Human Health" to "Climate and Human Health"

(1.1b) Changed side menu title from "Climate Change and Human Health" to "Climate and Human Health"

(1.1c) Changed side menu title from "Climate Change and Children's Health" to "Climate and Children's Health"

- This side menu change is the same as the page title change on the corresponding page (previous version from [June 2, 2017](#) and current version from [August 10, 2017](#))

(1.1d) Changed side menu title from "Health Impacts of Climate Change" to "Health Impacts of Climate"

- This side menu change is the same as the page title change on the corresponding page (previous version from [May 19, 2017](#) and current version from [August 10, 2017](#))

Comparison of <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/programs/geh/climatechange/> — [history](#) — [enable javascript](#) — [view as gist](#)

Jul 6 2017 8:52 PM rendered: single page Jul 20 2017 1:18 PM

National Institutes of Health - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
Your Environment. Your Health.

Health & Education Research Funding Opportunities Careers & Training News About NIEHS

Research

- Initiatives in Environmental Health Science
- Global Environmental Health
- Climate Change and Human Health**
- Climate Change and Children's Health
- Engagement and Education
- Health Impacts of Climate Change
- Ongoing Activities
- Research Program and Funding Opportunities
- Resources and Publications
- Cookstoves and Indoor Air
- GEH Podcasts
- WHO Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health Sciences
- Sustainable Development
- All Scientists
- All Research Groups

Climate Change and Human Health

A changing climate impacts our health and wellbeing. The major public health organizations of the world have said that climate change is a critical public health problem. Climate change makes many existing diseases and conditions worse, but it may also help introduce new pests and pathogens into new regions or communities. As the planet warms, oceans expand and the sea level rises, floods and droughts become more frequent and intense, and heat waves and hurricanes become more severe. The most vulnerable people—children, the elderly, the poor, and those with underlying health conditions—are at increased risk for health effects from climate change. Climate change also stresses our health care infrastructure and delivery systems.


Steps can be taken to lessen climate change ("mitigation") and reduce its impacts on our health and the health of future generations ("adaptation"). Some of these steps can yield benefits for our health, environment, economy, and society at the same time. The federal government has called for efforts to support adaptation and mitigation of climate change to create healthier, more sustainable communities. The goals of the NIEHS Climate Change and Human Health Program align with these efforts.

Goals:

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

NIEHS' knowledge management tool for locating the most relevant scientific literature on the health implications of climate change.

[Explore the Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal](#)



The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health
This 2016 assessment

Internet Archive: previous version from [June 2, 2016](#) and current version from [August 8, 2017](#)

Page 2: Cancer

- URL:
https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/programs/geh/climatechange/health_impacts/cancer/index.cfm
- Side-by-side View: 6/16/2017 - 7/20/2017
- Changes occurred between **July 19, 4:28 PM ET** and **July 20, 2017 3:52 PM ET**

Screenshot 2.1

(2.1a) Removed subtitle “Health Impacts of Climate Change”

(2.1b) Side menu changes are the same as in Screenshot 1.1

Comparison of https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/...ealth_impacts/cancer/index.cfm — history — enable javascript — view as gist

Jun 16 2017 9:52 AM rendered: single page Jul 20 2017 3:52 PM

National Institutes of Health - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
Your Environment. Your Health.

Health & Education Research Funding Opportunities Careers & Training News About NIEHS

Research

- Initiatives in Environmental Health Science
- Global Environmental Health
- Climate Change and Human Health
- Health Impacts of Climate Change
- Asthma, Respiratory Allergies, and Airway Diseases
- Cancer**
- Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke
- Foodborne Diseases and Nutrition
- Heat-Related Morbidity and Mortality
- Human Developmental Effects
- Mental Health and Stress-Related Disorders
- Neurological Diseases and Disorders
- Vectorborne and Zoonotic Diseases
- Waterborne Diseases
- Weather-Related Morbidity and Mortality
- All Scientists
- All Research Groups


Cancer

Health Impacts of Climate Change

Cancer refers to a group of diseases in which abnormal cells divide without control and can invade other tissues. There are more than 100 different types of cancer, usually named after the organ in which it affects, such as liver or breast cancer. Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States. Lung cancer accounts for approximately 30% of overall deaths from cancer in the US; and though smoking is the main cause, air pollution also contributes to the occurrence of lung cancer. Although the development and causes of all cancers are not completely understood, pathogens, environmental contaminants, age, and genetics are all factors in its development.

Health Impacts

- Increased exposure to toxic chemicals, known or suspected to cause cancer, that are released into the environment following heavy rainfall or flooding and by increased volatilization of chemicals under conditions of increased temperature
- Depletion of stratospheric ozone leads to an increase in UV exposure and temperature, increasing the risk of skin cancer and cataracts. Alternatively, an increase in exposure to UV radiation can lead to elevated levels of Vitamin D, which has been associated with a decreased risk of some types of cancer
- A decline in air quality and rise in concentrations of certain air pollutants increases the risk of lung cancer



Internet Archive: previous version from [July 5, 2017](#) and current version from [August 9, 2017](#)

Page 3: Brochures & Fact Sheets

- URL: <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/materials/index.cfm>
- Side-by-side View: 6/30/2017 - 7/6/2017
- Changes occurred between **July 5, 1:48 AM ET** and **July 6, 2017 1:16 AM ET**

Screenshot 3.1

(3.1a) Removed section "Climate Change and Human Health"







- Section included link to PDF titled "Climate Change and Human Health" at URL https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/materials/climate_change_and_human_health_508.pdf
 - Page live on [August 11, 2017](#)
- Section included screenshot of the fact sheet cover page
- Section included text: "Climate change is a significant threat to the health of the American people. It is the result of the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, primarily from the burning of fossil fuels, such as oil and gasoline, for energy and other human activities. These gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, warm and alter the global climate."
- Since April 2017, several other changes have been made to this library including removal of links and descriptions of other fact sheets. This report focuses specifically on the PDF titled "Climate Change and Human Health."

Last Updated: 04/2016

Related Health Topic(s): [Climate Change](#)

Comparison of <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/materials/index.cfm> - history - enable javascript - view as guest

Jun 30 2017 4:06 AM rendered: side-by-side Jul 6 2017 1:16 AM

Children's Health – Why the Environment Matters	Children's Health – Why the Environment Matters
 <p>NIEHS is committed to understanding how the environment affects a child's health and development. Researchers across the country are discovering that certain chemicals, pollutants, foods, and activities can be more harmful to a fetus and children than to adults.</p> <p>Last Updated: 10/2015</p> <p>Related Health Topic(s): Children's Health</p>	 <p>NIEHS is committed to understanding how the environment affects a child's health and development. Researchers across the country are discovering that certain chemicals, pollutants, foods, and activities can be more harmful to a fetus and children than to adults.</p> <p>Last Updated: 10/2015</p> <p>Related Health Topic(s): Children's Health</p>
 <p>Climate change is a significant threat to the health of the American people. It is the result of the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, primarily from the burning of fossil fuels, such as oil and gasoline, for energy and other human activities. These gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, warm and alter the global climate.</p> <p>Last Updated: 04/2016</p> <p>Related Health Topic(s): Climate Change</p>	 <p>The NIEHS Clinical Research Unit is a 14,000 square foot facility specifically designed to host collaborative research that moves laboratory science into applications for improving human health and preventing disease.</p> <p>Last Updated: 09/2010</p>
 <p>The NIEHS Clinical Research Unit is a 14,000 square foot facility specifically designed to host collaborative research that moves laboratory science into applications for improving human health and preventing disease.</p> <p>Last Updated: 09/2010</p>	 <p>Cobalt is a naturally occurring metallic element that can be present in different forms. It is mixed with other metals to make cemented carbides, bonded diamonds, and alloys that can be used to make durable industrial products, such as military and industrial equipment.</p> <p>Last Updated: 11/2016</p>

Internet Archive: previous version from [July 4, 2017](#) and current version from [August 13, 2017](#)

Page 4: Climate Change

- URL: <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/climate-change/index.cfm>

Screenshot 4.1

- Side-by-side View: 3/8/2017 - 5/8/2017
- Changes occurred between **May 8, 2017 4:20 AM ET** and **May 9, 2017 3:48 AM ET**

(4.1a) Added reference link to "Climate change is affecting the health of Americans"

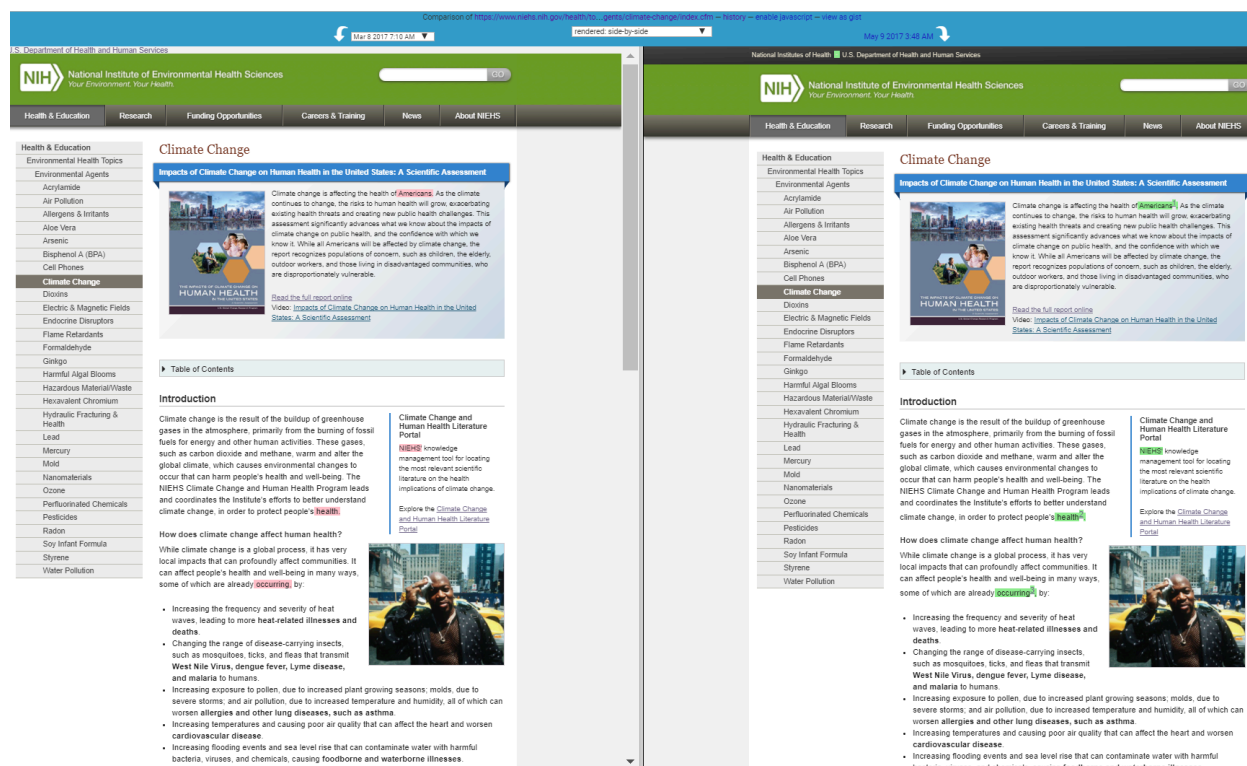
- Reference link on "Americans¹" opens small window: "USGCRP (2016). The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment. Crimmins, A., J. Balbus, J.L. Gamble, C.B. Beard, J.E. Bell, D. Dodgen, R.J. Eisen, N. Fann, M. Hawkins, S.C. Herring, L. Jantarasami, D.M. Mills, S. Saha, M.C. Sarofim, J. Trtanj, and L. Ziska, Eds. U.S. Global Change Research Program, Washington, DC. [Available]"
- Link URL is <https://health2016.globalchange.gov/>.

(4.1b) Added reference link to "order to protect people's health."

- Reference link on "health²" opens small window: "Melillo, Jerry M., Terese (T.C.) Richmond, and Gary W. Yohe, Eds., 2014: Climate Change Impacts in the United States: The Third National Climate Assessment. U.S. Global Change Research Program, 841 pp. doi:10.7930/J0Z31WJ2. [Available]"
- Link URL is <https://data.globalchange.gov/report/nca3>

(4.1c) Added reference link to "some of which are already occurring."

- Reference link on "occurring³" opens small window: "Portier CJ, Thigpen Tart K, Carter SR, Dilworth CH, Grambsch AE, Gohlke J, Hess J, Howard SN, Lubner G, Lutz JT, Maslak T, Prudent N, Radtke M, Rosenthal JP, Rowles T, Sandifer PA, Scheraga J, Schramm PJ, Strickman D, Trtanj JM, Whung P-Y. 2010. A Human Health Perspective On Climate Change: A Report Outlining the Research Needs on the Human Health Effects of Climate Change. Research Triangle Park, NC:Environmental Health Perspectives/National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. doi:10.1289/ehp.1002272. [Available]"
- Link URL is https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/materials/a_human_health_perspective_on_climate_change_full_report_508.pdf



Screenshot 4.2 (Continuation of Screenshot 4.1)

(4.2a) Reformatted, reorganized, and added descriptive text to reference section. Most link URLs remained the same, but four were removed, and one was changed. This report does not detail the links with unchanged link URLs and does not detail the addition of the descriptive text. See Internet Archive versions, linked below, to see how the reference section on this page was changed.

1. The reference section was previously under the following subsections:

- What NIEHS is Doing on Climate Change
- General Information
- Research Links
- Related Links

2. The reference section is now under the following subsections:

- Further Reading
 - Stories from the Environmental Factor (NIEHS Newsletter)
 - Printable Fact Sheets
 - Additional Resources
- For Educators

3. Removed the following links:

- Removed link with link text "Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change" linked to URL <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/12783/adapting-to-the-impacts-of-climate-change>

- Removed link text “Ready Program” linked to URL <http://www.ready.gov/>
 - Removed link with link text “Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States” linked to URL <http://downloads.globalchange.gov/usimpacts/pdfs/climate-impacts-report.pdf>
 - Removed link with link text “Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability” linked to URL https://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/publications_ipcc_fourth_assessment_report_wg2_report_impacts_adaptation_and_vulnerability.htm
- 4. Changed the following link:**
- Changed link URL from <https://www.epa.gov/climatechange/what-you-can-do-about-climate-change> to <https://www.epa.gov/climate-research> linked to text “Climate Change: What You Can Do.”
 - As a result of the [overhaul of some of EPA's climate change websites](#), the previous URL leads to a [notice page](#) stating “This page is being updated.”

Comparison of <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/docs/2017-03-01-us-surgeon-general-addresses-un-conference-on-climate-change-cop-21.pdf> - History - [view page](#) - [view all](#)

Mar 8 2017 7:10 AM rendered: side-by-side May 9 2017 3:48 AM

deaths.

- Changing the range of disease-carrying insects, such as mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas that transmit West Nile Virus, Dengue fever, Lyme disease, and malaria to humans.
- Increasing exposure to pollen, due to increased plant growing seasons; molds, due to severe storms; and air pollution, due to increased temperature and humidity, all of which can worsen allergies and other lung diseases, such as asthma.
- Increasing temperatures and causing poor air quality that can affect the heart and worsen cardiovascular disease.
- Increasing flooding events and sea level rise that can contaminate water with harmful bacteria, viruses, and chemicals, causing foodborne and waterborne illnesses.
- Increasing the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, in addition to causing injuries, deaths, illnesses, and effects on mental health from damage to property, loss of loved ones, displacement, and chronic stress.
- Placing added stress on hospital and public health systems, and limiting people's ability to obtain adequate health care during extreme climate events.

U.S. Surgeon General Addresses UN Conference on Climate Change (COP-21)

What NIEHS is Doing on Climate Change

- [Anniversary Year features first NIEHS Global Environmental Health Day](#)
- [Participation in the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves](#)
- [Development of a Global Environmental Health Program](#)
- [Development of a Climate Change and Human Health Program](#)
- [Participation in the United States Global Change Research Program's Interagency Crosscutting Group on Climate Change and Human Health](#)
- [Sponsorship of studies on health, climate change, and sustainable development](#)
- [The Lancet Health and Climate Change](#)

General Information

- [Climate Change and Human Health](#) (514KB) - **Updates April 2016**
- [Climate Change and Human Health - HHS.gov](#)
- [Climate and Health Program Prevention and Preparedness](#)
- [Climate Change: What You Can Do](#)
- [Ready Program](#)

Research Links

- Contaloni U, Menne B, Akter R, Ebi KL, Hauengue M, Kovats RS, Revich B, Woodward A. 2007. Climate Change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Parry ML, Canziani, OF, Palutikof JP, van der Linden PJ, Hanson CE, eds. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- NRC (National Research Council). 2010. [Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change](#). Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
- USGCRP (United States Global Change Research Program). 2009. [Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States](#). Karl TR, Melillo JM, Peterson TC, eds. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Placing added stress on hospital and public health systems, and limiting people's ability to obtain adequate health care during extreme climate events.

U.S. Surgeon General Addresses UN Conference on Climate Change (COP-21)

Further Reading

[Stories from the Environmental Factor \(NIEHS Newsletter\)](#)

- [Anniversary Year Features First NIEHS Global Environmental Health Day \(July 2016\)](#)

Printable Fact Sheets

- [Climate Change and Human Health](#) (514KB)

Additional Resources

- [Centers, Interagency Collaborations, and Consortia: Climate Change and Human Health Research](#) - The NIEHS Climate Change and Human Health program funds research aimed at understanding the health impacts of climate change and how strategies used to adapt to or lessen climate change might affect health adversely.
- [Climate Change and Human Health - HHS.gov](#) - The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) considers climate change to be one of the top public health challenges of our time. Our mission to protect the health and well-being of people in the United States depends on healthy and sustainable environments.
- [Climate Change: What You Can Do](#) - This site provides more than 25 easy steps you can take at home, school, the office, and on the road to protect the climate: reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution, and save money. Take action today! Small steps add up. If we all do our part.
- [Climate and Health Program Prevention and Preparedness](#) - This site provides more than 25 easy steps you can take at home, school, the office, and on the road to protect the climate: reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution, and save money. Take action today! Small steps add up. If we all do our part.
- [Cookstoves and Indoor Air](#) - NIEHS has invested over estimated \$5 million in research related to cookstoves and their health effects, primarily in community-based intervention studies in Guatemala, Ecuador, Nepal, Pakistan, Ghana, and the U.S. with study endpoints including lower respiratory infection (LRI) and tuberculosis in children; low birth weight, COPD, and other respiratory conditions in adult women. NIEHS seeks to expand the geographic reach of its studies and research training programs, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of new cookstove technologies.
- [Global Environmental Health Program \(Global\)](#) - Environmental Health may be defined as research, education, training, and research translation directed at health problems that are related to environmental exposures and transcend national boundaries, with a goal of improving health for all people by reducing the environmental exposures that lead to avoidable disease, disabilities and deaths.
- [Health and Climate Change](#) - Managing the effects of climate change. The UCL Lancet Commission.
- [Preparedness and Resilience: Climate Change and Human Health](#) - The federal government has called for efforts to support adaptation and mitigation of climate change to create healthier, more sustainable communities. The goals of the NIEHS Climate Change and Human Health Program align with these efforts.
- [United States Global Change Research Program's Interagency Crosscutting Group on Climate Change and Human Health](#) - The National Climate Assessment summarizes the impacts of climate change on the United States, now and in the future. A team of more than 300 experts guided by a 60-member Federal Advisory Committee produced the report, which was extensively reviewed by the public and experts, including federal agencies and a panel of the National Academy of Sciences.

For Educators

- [Climate Change and Human Health Lesson Plans](#)

Note: the screenshots above are not rendering a youtube video under the “U.S. Surgeon General Addresses UN Conference on Climate Change (COP-21)” section. See the Internet Archive section below or the live version of the page for a better representation of the page.

Screenshot 4.3

- Side-by-side View: 6/30/2017 - 7/6/2017
- Changes occurred between **July 5, 2017 11:50 PM ET** and **July 6, 2017 11:17 PM ET**

(4.3a) Removed section “Printable Fact Sheets.” The section included link text “Climate Change and Human Health” with link URL

https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/materials/climate_change_and_human_health_508.pdf

(associated page live on [August 9, 2017](#))

- This link URL is the same as the removed link on Page 3, Change 3.1

Comparison of https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/materials/climate_change_and_human_health_508.pdf — history — enable javascript — view as gist

Jun 30 2017 2:50 AM rendered: side-by-side Jul 6 2017 11:17 PM

Further Reading

Stories from the *Environmental Factor* (NIEHS Newsletter)

- Anniversary Year Features First NIEHS Global Environmental Health Day (July 2016)

Printable Fact Sheets

- Climate Change and Human Health (479KB)

Additional Resources

- Centers, Interagency Collaborations, and Consortia: Climate Change and Human Health Research - The NIEHS Climate Change and Human Health program funds research aimed at understanding the health impacts of climate change and how strategies used to adapt to or lessen climate change might affect health adversely.
- Climate Change and Human Health - The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) considers climate change to be one of the top public health challenges of our time. Our mission to protect the health and well-being of people in the United States depends on healthy and sustainable environments.
- Climate Change: What You Can Do - This site provides more than 25 easy steps you can take at Home, School, the Office, and On the Road to protect the climate, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution, and save money. Take action today! Small steps add up, if we all do our part.
- Climate and Health Program Prevention and Preparedness - This site provides more than 25 easy steps you can take at Home, School, the Office, and On the Road to protect the climate, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution, and save money. Take action today! Small steps add up, if we all do our part.
- Cookstoves and Indoor Air - NIEHS has invested over estimated \$8 million in research related to cookstoves and their health effects, primarily in community-based intervention studies in Guatemala, Ecuador, Nepal, Pakistan, Ghana, and the U.S. with study endpoints including lower respiratory infection (LRI) and tuberculosis in children, low birth weight, COPD, and other respiratory conditions in adult women. NIEHS seeks to expand the geographic reach of its studies and research training programs, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of new cookstove technologies.
- Global Environmental Health Program Global - Environmental Health may be defined as: Research, education, training, and research translation directed at health problems that are related to environmental exposures and transcend national boundaries, with a goal of improving health for all people by reducing the environmental exposures that lead to avoidable disease, disabilities and deaths.
- Health and Climate Change - Managing the effects of climate change: The UCL Lancet Commission.
- Programs and Initiatives: Climate Change and Human Health - The federal government has called for efforts to support adaptation and mitigation of climate change to create healthier, more sustainable communities. The goals of the NIEHS Climate Change and Human Health Program align with these efforts.
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Further Reading

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- United States Global Change Research Program's Interagency Crosscutting Group on Climate Change and Human Health - The National Climate Assessment summarizes the impacts of climate change on the United States, now and in the future. A team of more than 300 experts guided by a 60-member Federal Advisory Committee produced the report,

Internet Archive: previous versions from [April 29, 2017](#) and [July 4, 2017](#) and current version from [August 12, 2017](#)