



## Press Release

For Immediate Release  
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### **CDC awards \$5.25 million for state and local climate change programs**

Eight states and two cities will receive a total of \$5.25 million for climate change prevention initiatives, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced today. The awards for a three-year funding period will support health departments in meeting the public health challenges of climate change.

The funding recipients are Arizona, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, and New York City and San Francisco.

The programs will address health impacts including heat- related illness, animal- and insect-related illness, food- and water-borne diseases, conditions that worsen allergies and respiratory problems, and health effects linked to intense weather events.

CDC is funding two types of activities to expand capacity in health departments. Some health departments will use the funds to conduct risk assessments identifying the most likely health impacts and most threatened populations. Arizona, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina and San Francisco each will receive up to \$360,000 over the next three years for this type of assessment and planning.

Health departments that already know their likely climate change health needs and vulnerable populations will begin developing strategies and projects to protect those communities. Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Oregon and New York City each will receive up to \$750,000 over the next three years.

“Climate change represents one of the most significant challenges to public health in the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” said [Christopher Portier, Ph.D.](#), director of CDC's [National Center for Environmental Health](#). “These projects will lead the way in anticipating and preparing for those extreme weather events and their impact and reducing the burden on the health of our communities.”

For example, more frequent extreme heat events are of particular concern for the Michigan Department of Community Health. In the last 20 years the number of days Detroit residents’ swelter in temperatures exceeding 90 degrees has doubled. Projections show that these events could triple in number to about 30-50 days per year during which temperatures will likely go above 97 degrees for at least half of the 50 days. These changes likely will lead to increased heat related deaths among the elderly, the very young and those with underlying medical conditions.

In New York City, half a million residents of lower Manhattan live in areas that are vulnerable to flooding, sea level rise, and strong storm surges. Harbor water levels surrounding the area have already risen almost 15 inches since 1900.



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The [U.S. Global Change Research Program](#) forecasts that as a result of sea level rise, flooding associated with coastal storms and storm surge will increase in intensity, frequency, and duration. These weather phenomenon would place great stress on New York City's infrastructure possibly creating utility outages, problems with mold and indoor air quality and underground flooding. The extreme weather events, would lead to increased hospitalizations from injury due to traffic collisions and human exposure to flood waters and storm surge.

“Many of the potential health effects of climate change are related to threats we already face, including heat waves, extreme weather events, and emerging infectious diseases. These threats may seem overwhelming, but by state and local health departments preparing through necessary planning and adaptation, communities can be ready for these changes and remain safer and healthier when they do occur,” said George Luber, Ph.D., director of CDC's [Climate Change program](#) at the [National Center for Environmental Health](#).

The U.S. Global Change Research Program also predicts that in Oregon, a warmer climate is likely to lead to reduced snow packs. Melt from snow-packs is a vital source of water in Oregon and other areas of the West. Climate change could increase the frequency of droughts and wild fires affecting ground cover, carbon dioxide emissions and air quality. A change in these natural functions will likely lead to displacement of families. Over time, the diminished clean air and water will lead to increased complaints of respiratory illness, limiting resident's access to food, medical care and other public services as seen previously during the Oregon wildfires of the 1990s.

CDC works to conduct and support applied research throughout the nation to track data on environmental conditions, disease risks, and disease occurrence related to climate change, and to expand capacity for modeling and forecasting health effects that may be climate-related.

For more information, please visit [www.cdc.gov/climatechange](http://www.cdc.gov/climatechange).

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