

EXTREME WEATHER

**ARMED
WITH THE
FACTS**

THE DANGER OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is triggering more extreme weather, which leaves behind a trail of death and destruction and costs billions in health care. This is our weather on steroids.

Citizens across America are sounding the alarms—backed by science: NASA, the US National Academy of Sciences, the NOAA, doctors, nurses, public health officials, the insurance industry, the US military, and mayors of major cities.

We need a serious, large scale plan of attack...fast. Droughts, superstorms, wildfires, floods, and deluges harm all of us. But our children and the elderly are always the most vulnerable.

WHY IS OUR CLIMATE CHANGING?

The earth is heating up because gases produced from human activities—including carbon, soot and methane from burning coal, oil, and gas for fuel—are building up in the atmosphere, trapping the sun's heat. This pollution acts like a thick blanket over our planet. We are throwing off the natural balance of our atmosphere, and raising the planet's average temperatures. This is the "greenhouse effect." Of course there were catastrophic climate events in the past. But they weren't caused by human activity.

Greenhouse gases make our planet hotter and wetter; they load the dice for megastorms, severe heat waves, fierce wildfires, and wild hurricanes and tornadoes. We are measuring more CO₂ in our atmosphere, created by human activity.

The terms climate change, global warming, climate disruption, and climate chaos say the same thing: DANGER — DANGER—DANGER

CAN WE WAIT AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

"The "wait and see" approach may seem rational, but it is incredibly risky. By the time we are seeing the full impact of global warming, it will be too late to fix it."

~ Dr. Heidi Cullen, chief climatologist for Climate Central

Waiting to see how bad the climate gets is incredibly risky. It's like waiting to see how bad a disease gets before you start treating it. Chances of disaster intensify, and the cost of treatment sky rockets.

If you are in a car and you know you are speeding towards a cliff—but you just don't know exactly where it is in the road ahead—wouldn't you put your foot on the brakes? We must put a brake on our emissions while there is room and time to stop safely.

It is much less expensive—and much safer—to take steps in advance of catastrophe. We must address climate change now.

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HOW DOES CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECT OUR HEALTH?

Hot days and air pollution mean ripe conditions for ground-level ozone, or smog, which forms when pollutants from cars, trucks, and smokestacks mix with sunshine. Ozone is a powerful oxidant that can irritate the airways, causing a burning sensation, coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath. Ozone has been linked to a host of maladies, including premature mortality, heart failure, and increased hospital admissions and emergency room visits for respiratory causes among children and adults with asthma and inflammation of the lungs.

HERE ARE THE THREE BIG WEATHER EVENTS THAT AFFECT OUR HEALTH:

- 1. Heat and mega-heat waves.** These cause air-pollution problems related to higher temperatures, like ozone levels. Heat waves cause massively high air conditioning use, which only sends up more greenhouse gases and makes the problem worse.
- 2. Heavy rainfall.** A warmer atmosphere holds more moisture and causes more heavy rainfalls and storm surges. We're also seeing an increase in insect-borne diseases carried by the bugs that thrive in moist conditions.
- 3. Drought.** In areas of the Great Lakes, water levels are 25 inches lower than normal due to a lack of winter ice cover and the dry summer. Texas and the Southwest have been suffering from severe drought conditions. Food prices increase as less food can grow. Increased drought is also increasing the severity and number of wild fires.

OUR CHILDREN NEED A SAFE, CLEAN FUTURE.

As temperatures continue to climb, our climate will worsen. The World Bank concluded that the world could warm by 7.2 degrees Fahrenheit by the end of this century if concerted action is not taken now.

It's not too late to step off this roller coaster and make a significant impact on future climate change and its effects on our families. When governments, communities, individuals, and businesses work together to curb climate change, we can reduce the amount of heat-trapping greenhouse gas pollution released into the atmosphere and lower the risk of severe consequences.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW:

- 1. Push for clean energy.** Renewable energy, such as wind and solar, and alternate forms of fuel, will reduce the greenhouse gases causing climate change
- 2. Advocate for strong regulations.** America should be leading the world in cleaning up emissions from power plants. Our children need strong laws to protect their health.
- 3. Tell Washington: Listen to your mothers.** Visit our website, Facebook, and Twitter pages to become part of the conversation.

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