

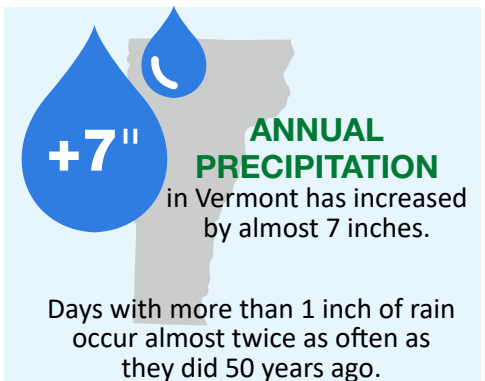
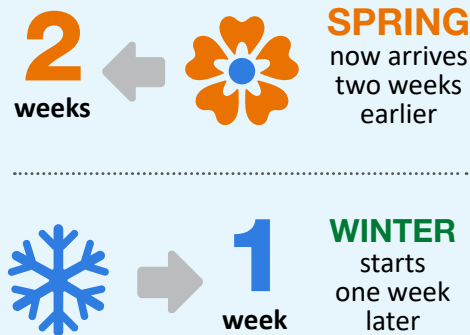
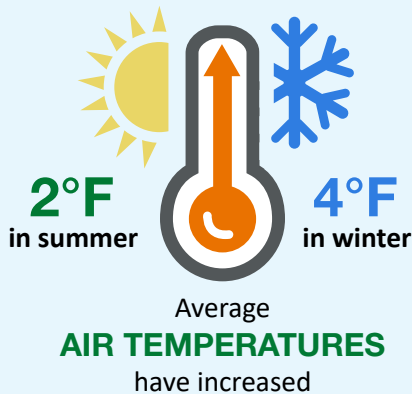
# CLIMATE CHANGE + HOT WEATHER

## NEARLY 100% OF CLIMATE SCIENTISTS AGREE:

Greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel combustion in cars, power production, and manufacturing are causing the temperature of the earth to rise.

Climate change is real and has already affected Vermont.

### IN THE PAST 50 YEARS:

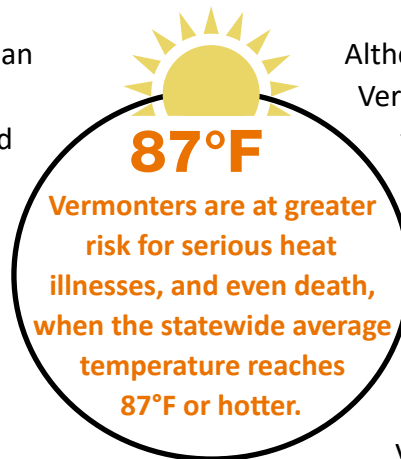


## THE HEALTH BURDEN OF HOT WEATHER

Between 1981 and 2010, Vermont had an average of six days per year when the statewide average temperature reached 87°F or hotter.

Climate models from the Vermont State Climate Office predict an average of 15 to 20 days per year reaching 87°F or hotter by mid-century, and 20 to 34 days per year doing so by the end of the century.

Hot weather can lead to heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, other heat illnesses, and even death. In fact, hot weather is the leading cause of weather-related deaths in the United States. Heat can also make other pre-existing conditions worse, make it harder to sleep, limit activities, and generally make life uncomfortable.



Although it may not seem that hot, recent Vermont data showed that on days when the state average temperature reached at least 87°F:

- there was **one additional death per day among individuals age 65 and older**, and
- there were **eight times more heat-related emergency room visits**.

Vermonters may be particularly at risk because we don't have much experience with hot weather. Many homes do not have air conditioning, and we like to work and play outside during the summer months. Vermont also has a large population of older adults, who tend to be at higher risk for heat illnesses. **Vermonters may not be well-prepared when hot weather hits.**

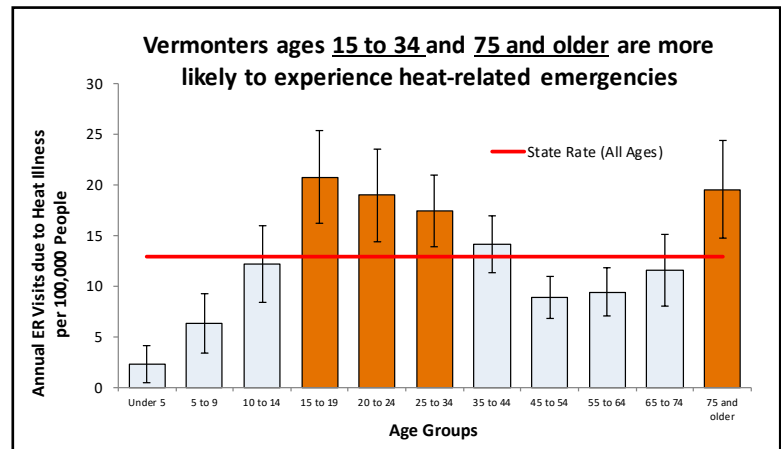
**Unless we adapt to the warming climate, more Vermonters will be affected by heat-related illnesses.**

## WHO IS AT RISK?

In Vermont, teens, young adults and older adults are more likely to go to the emergency room due to heat illness. Heat-related emergencies most often occurred at home for older adults and outdoors for younger adults and teens.

**In general, risk for heat illnesses is greater for people with:**

- **More exposure to hot conditions** – especially outdoor workers and hobbyists, urban residents and homeless persons.
- **More sensitivity to heat exposure** – anyone not accustomed to hot weather, older adults and young children, those overweight or with a chronic medical condition, and those using recreational drugs, alcohol or some prescription medications.
- **Limited resources** – especially people who live alone, have limited transportation options, have no air conditioning or can't afford to run their air conditioner.



Learn more about risk factors for heat illnesses in your town or city using the Vermont Heat Vulnerability Index, which can be found at [healthvermont.gov/climate](http://healthvermont.gov/climate)

## WHAT YOU CAN DO



Most heat illnesses can be prevented or treated through rest, shade and water. Learn more about how to stay safe during hot weather at [healthvermont.gov/climate/heat](http://healthvermont.gov/climate/heat). Individuals, communities, businesses and other organizations can take the following actions to be better prepared for hot weather.

### Be prepared and stay informed:

- » Learn to recognize symptoms of heat illnesses and basic first aid.
- » Identify loved ones and neighbors to check on.
- » Follow local weather and news reports.
- » Try out the Hazardous Weather Outlook from the National Weather Service: [weather.gov/btv/ehwo](http://weather.gov/btv/ehwo).
- » Sign up to receive emergency alerts: [vtalert.gov](http://vtalert.gov).

### Modify buildings and landscapes to stay cooler:

- » Increase cool air flow while venting out hot air.
- » Seal air leaks and properly insulate buildings.
- » Install light-colored shades.
- » Replace incandescent light bulbs with LED bulbs.

- » Put in air conditioners, heat pumps or similar cooling devices.
- » Plant trees and shrubs in residential and urban areas.

### Prepare a hot weather emergency plan:

- » Identify roles and responsibilities.
- » Identify locations that could be used as cooling centers.
- » Identify individuals at high risk for heat illnesses and establish plans to check on them.
- » Establish practices and policies for limiting or canceling athletic activities, outdoor work, public events, or other outdoor activities.

Learn more about climate-related health impacts and other actions you can take to prevent them at: [healthvermont.gov/climate/heat](http://healthvermont.gov/climate/heat)