



# Children's Health and Climate: A Federal Perspective

Creating Health Virtual Learning Series  
June 27, 2024

# Upcoming Webinars:

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## Building Pediatrician Capacity to Address Food Insecurity Webinar Series

### **Connecting Pediatrics With WIC Through Data Sharing: A Conversation With USDA**

July 26 | 1 p.m. ET

Learn from the U.S. Department of Agriculture on the success and barriers to data sharing with the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

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### **USDA's Efforts Promoting Food Security: Words From Dr. Cotwright**

Aug. 14 | 1 p.m. ET

Caree Cotwright, PhD, RDN, director of Nutrition Security and Health Equity at the USDA, will share how the USDA is working to connect families with nutritious foods.



# Upcoming Webinar: Save the Date

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## Children's Health and Climate: How Children's Hospitals Are Taking Action

August 15, 2024  
2 pm E.T.



# Today's Presenter

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## **Aparna Bole, MD**

Senior Consultant, Office of  
Climate Change and Health  
Equity; Adjunct Professor, Case  
Western Reserve University



CHILDREN'S  
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*Champions for Children's Health*

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[childrenshospitals.org](http://childrenshospitals.org)

# Climate-smart pediatric healthcare delivery

Office of Climate Change and Health Equity  
June 27, 2024



Office of  
Climate Change  
and Health Equity

## Objectives

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- Explain why climate-smart care delivery aligns with children's hospitals' mission and mandate
  - **Climate action protects children's health**
  - **Reducing emissions and investing in resilience can increase operating efficiency and help prevent costly disruptions**
- Describe HHS resources to support children's hospitals' emissions reduction and resilience
  - **Navigating Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) programs**
- Briefly review additional OCCHE resources

## Air Pollution & Increasing Allergens

Asthma, allergies, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases

## Extreme Heat

Heat-related illness and death, cardiovascular failure

## Drought

Water supply impacts, dust storms, Valley Fever

## Environmental Degradation

Forced migration, civil conflict, loss of jobs and income

## Wildfires & Wildfire Smoke

Injuries, fatalities, loss of homes, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases

## Degraded Living Conditions & Social Inequities

Exacerbation of racial and health inequities and vulnerabilities, loss of employment

## Changes In Vector Ecology

Lyme disease, West Nile Virus, hantavirus, malaria, encephalitis

## Food System Impacts

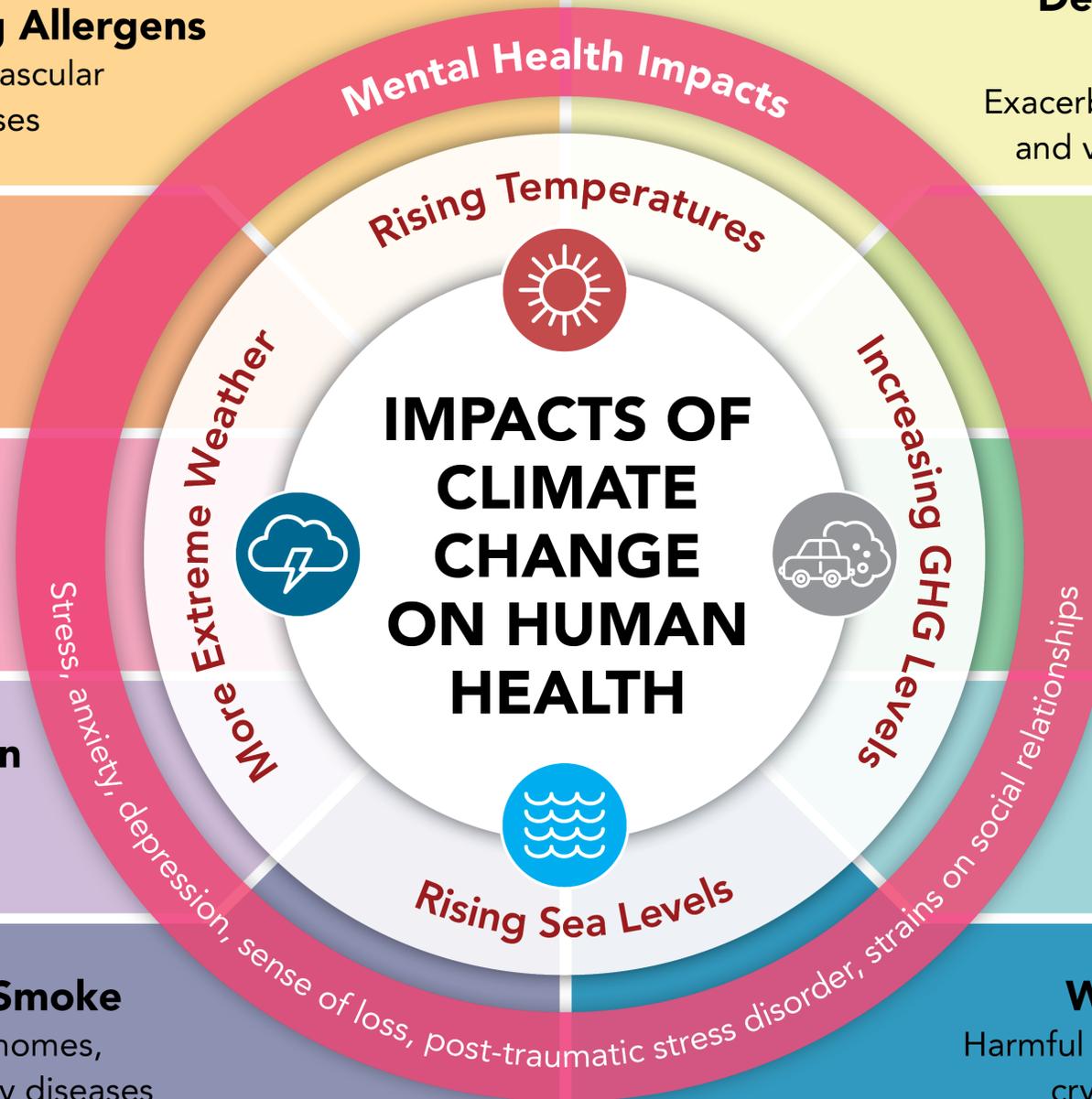
Malnutrition, food insecurity, higher food prices, foodborne illness

## Severe Weather & Floods

Injuries, fatalities, loss of homes, indoor fungi and mold

## Water Quality Impacts

Harmful algal blooms, campylobacteriosis, cryptosporidiosis, leptospirosis



CDPH (Adapted from CDC, J. Patz)

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OHE/pages/CCHEP.aspx>

## Children are disproportionately impacted

2023 EPA report projections (for 2-4 degrees Celsius of global warming):

- Childhood asthma incidence increases by 4-11% due to air pollution
- Annual pediatric asthma ED visits increase 14-30% due to increased pollen exposure
- Annual childhood Lyme disease cases increase 79-241%
- 1-2 million children displaced due to flooding
- Disproportionate impacts for low-income and minority children

American Academy  
of Pediatrics   
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

### Climate Change and Children's Health: Building a Healthy Future for Every Child

Samantha Ahdoot, MD, FAAP;<sup>a</sup> Carl R. Baum, MD, FACMT, FAAP;<sup>b</sup> Mary Bono Cataletto, MD, FAAP, FCCP;<sup>c</sup> Patrick Hogan, MD,<sup>d</sup> Christina B. Wu, MD, MPH, FAAP;<sup>e</sup> Aaron Bernstein, MD, MPH, FAAP;<sup>f</sup> COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE; COUNCIL ON CHILDREN AND DISASTERS; SECTION ON PEDIATRIC PULMONOLOGY AND SLEEP MEDICINE; SECTION ON MINORITY HEALTH, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The warming of our planet matters to every child. Driven by fossil fuel-generated greenhouse gas emissions, climate conditions stable since the founding of modern pediatrics in the mid-nineteenth century have shifted, and old certainties are falling away. Children's physical and mental health are threatened by climate change through its effects on temperature, precipitation, and extreme weather; ecological disruption; and community disruption. These impacts expose and amplify existing inequities and create unprecedented intergenerational injustice. Fossil fuel extraction and combustion cause harm today and reach centuries into the future, jeopardizing the health, safety, and prosperity of today's children and future generations. Appreciating the unique vulnerability of their patients, pediatricians have become leading health advocates for climate actions necessary to protect all living and future children. Policies that reduce reliance on fossil fuels and promote cleaner air, facilitate walking and bicycling, encourage more sustainable diets, increase access to nature, and develop more connected communities lead to immediate gains in child health and equity, and build a foundation for generations of children to thrive.

#### abstract

<sup>a</sup>University of Virginia School of Medicine, Charlottesville, Virginia; <sup>b</sup>Section of Pediatric Emergency Medicine, Yale School of Medicine, New Haven, Connecticut; <sup>c</sup>Division of Pediatric Pulmonology and Sleep Medicine, Department of Pediatrics, New York University Long Island School of Medicine, Mineola, New York; <sup>d</sup>Pediatric Residency Program, Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, Oregon; <sup>e</sup>O'Neill Center for Global and National Health Law, Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, District of Columbia; and <sup>f</sup>Division of General Pediatrics, Boston Children's Hospital, and Center for Climate, Health, and the Global Environment, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston, Massachusetts

Drs Ahdoot, Baum, Cataletto, Hogan, Wu, and Bernstein drafted the original manuscript, considered input from all reviewers and the Board of Directors, revised the manuscript, approved the final document as submitted, and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

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Policy statements from the American Academy of Pediatrics benefit

## Local effects in NE Ohio

Extreme precipitation & water quality



Extreme heat



Longer, more intense allergy seasons



Surface ozone (smog)

## Direct effects of fossil fuel combustion on air quality

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- Fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>)
- Nitrogen & sulfur oxides (NO<sub>x</sub> & SO<sub>x</sub>)
- Heavy metals



Asthma



Birth outcomes



ENVIRONMENT

## Air pollution might be the new lead

Scientists now think it might put young brains at risk.

By Nicole Wetsman April 5, 2018



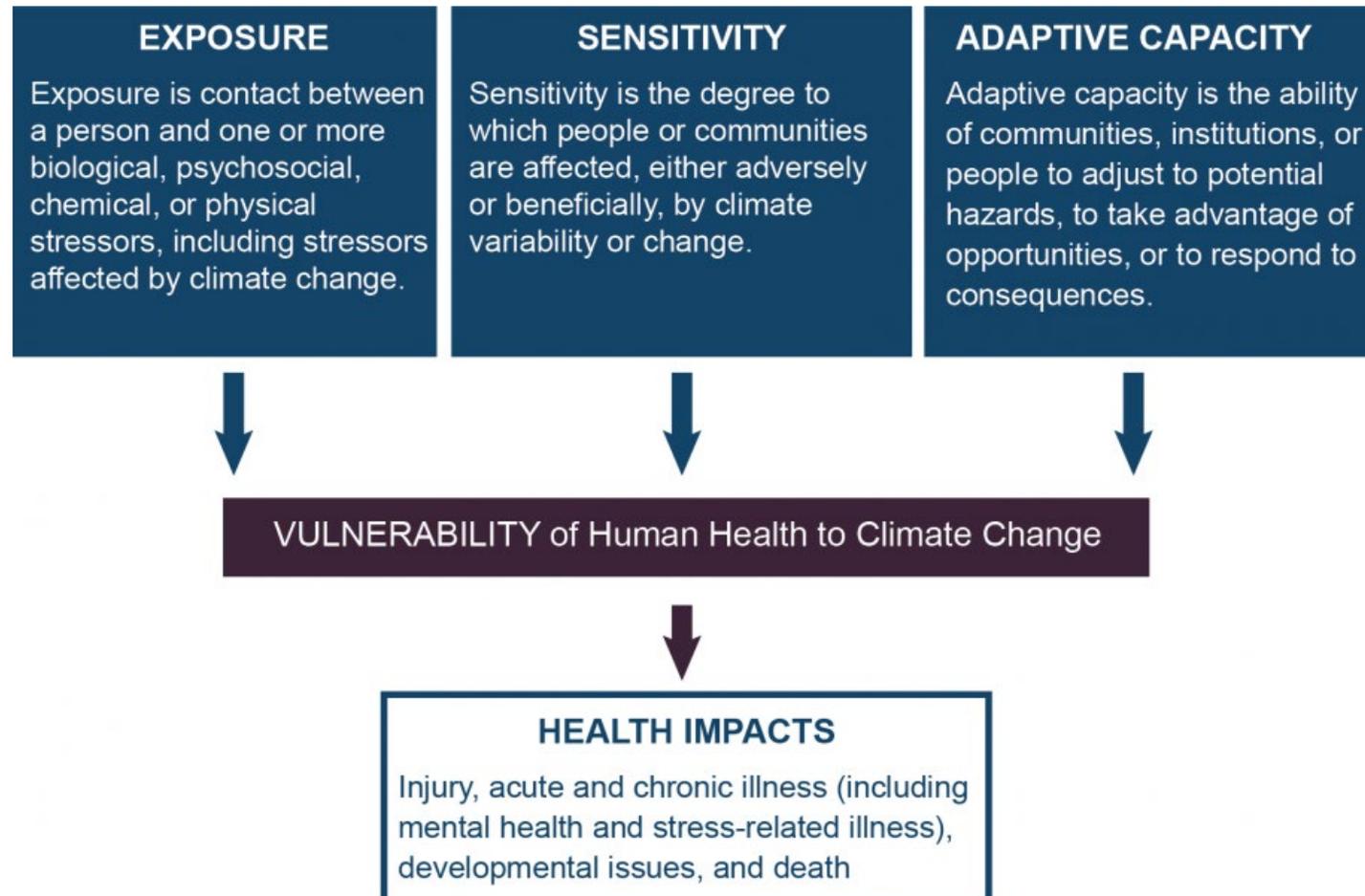
## Climate solutions are child health solutions

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## Climate change and health equity are closely intertwined

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## Climate change as a social determinant of health (SDOH)

“Similar to other SDOHs, climate change worsens health, increases health care costs, disproportionately impacts vulnerable communities, and exacerbates the effects of other SDOHs”

Ragavan MI, Marcil LE, Garg A. Climate Change as a Social Determinant of Health. Pediatrics. 2020 May;145(5):e20193169



Image source:  
Centers for Disease Control  
& Prevention

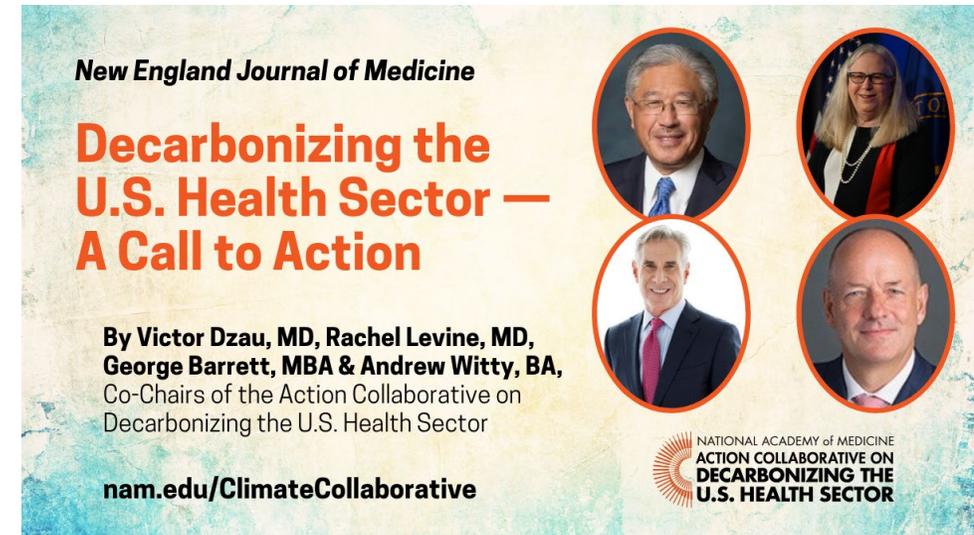
## Reducing healthcare GHG emissions aligns with our mission

- The health sector contributes 8.5% of all U.S. GHG emissions
- U.S. health sector = 25% of global health sector emissions

Scope 1: direct emissions (e.g. wholly owned energy production, vehicle fleets, anesthetic gases)

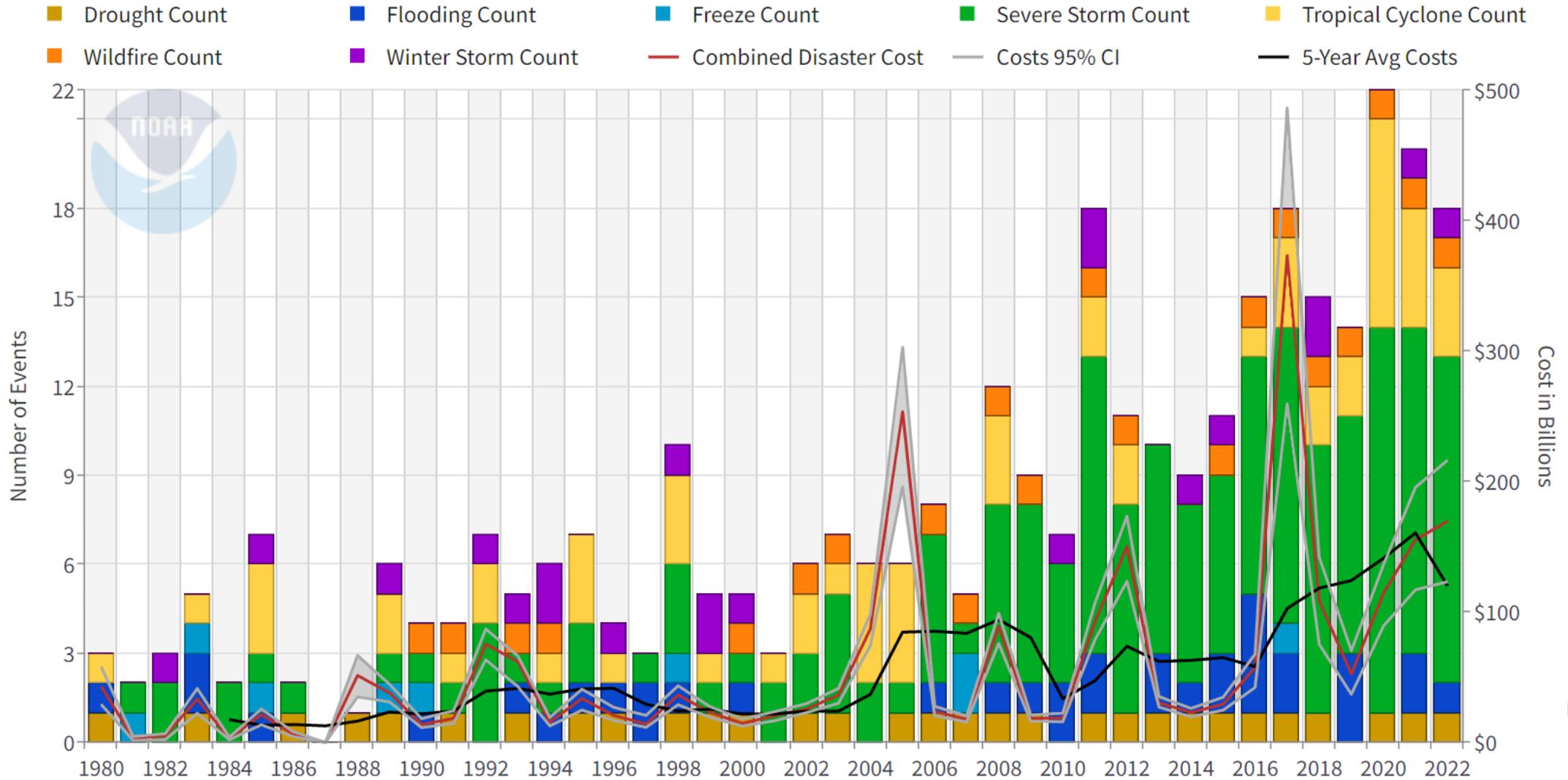
Scope 2: indirect emissions from purchased energy

Scope 3: all other indirect emissions (e.g. supply chain (including food), staff/ patient transportation, investments)



Dzau V, Levine R, Barrett G, Witty A . Decarbonizing the U.S. Health Sector — A Call to Action. N Engl J Med 2021; 385:2117-2119

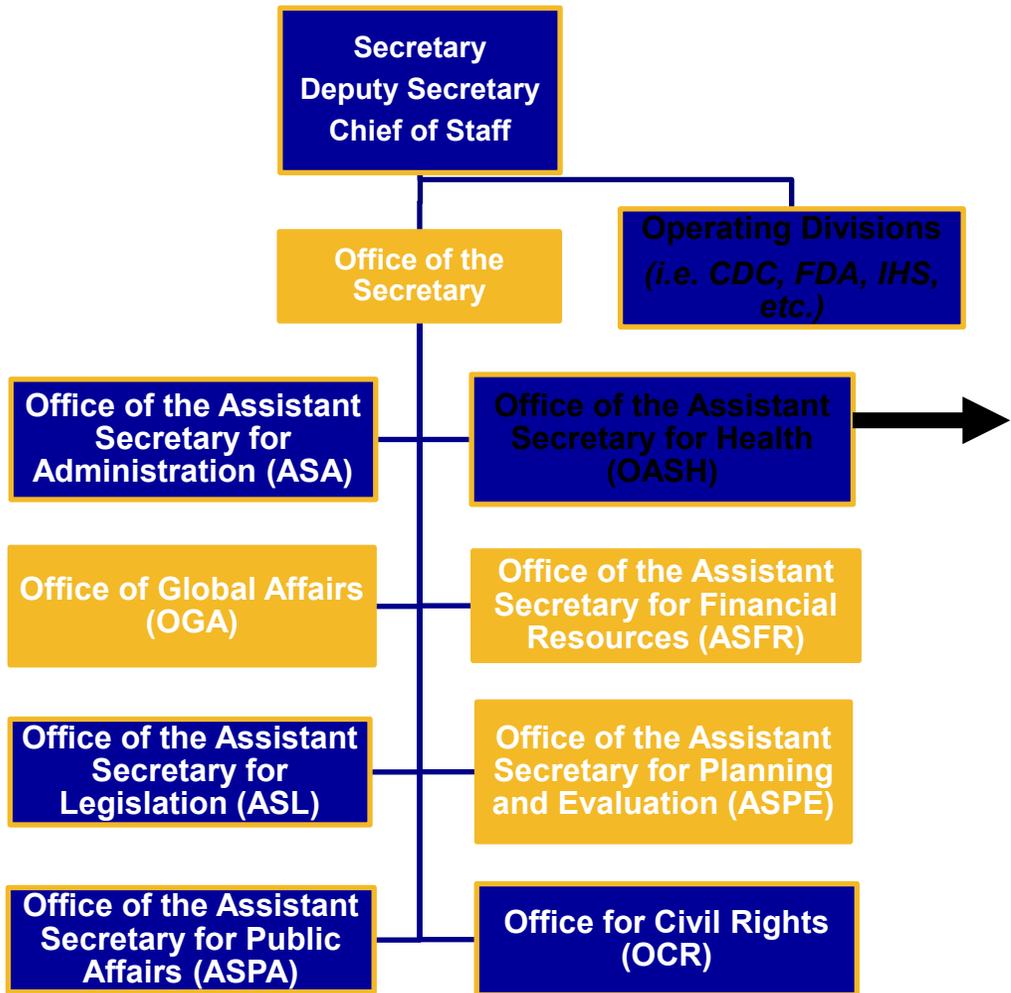
## United States Billion-Dollar Disaster Events 1980-2022 (CPI-Adjusted)



<https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/billions/time-series>



# Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health



**Assistant Secretary for Health  
Admiral Rachel L. Levine**



**Office of Environmental Justice - Est. 2022  
Dr. Sharunda Buchanan  
Interim Director**



**Office of Climate Change and Health Equity - Est. 2021  
Dr. John Balbus  
Director**

# The Office of Climate Change and Health Equity

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- Officially created August 31, 2021, in fulfillment of HHS mandate from E.O. 14008
- 3-fold mission: health protection of most vulnerable people, climate resilience of health systems, sustainability of health sector
- Serves as catalyst and coordinating hub to:
  - **HHS Divisions and Agencies**
  - **Federal Health Systems (e.g., Military, Veteran's, and Indian Health Systems)**
  - **Other federal agencies**
- Develops unique informational resources like Climate Health Outlook and Portal
- Stimulates private sector actions through National Academy of Medicine Climate Collaborative, HHS-White House Health Sector Climate Pledge, technical assistance

## Health Sector Resource Hub

The Office of Climate Change and Health Equity (OCCHE) Health Sector Resource Hub is a place where organizations committed to becoming more resilient and sustainable can find helpful resources and supports.

OCCHE envisions an American health sector that both: (1) adapts to increased crises and chronic stressors in service of its most vulnerable populations and (2) uses the best available evidence and technology to mitigate its own emissions. However, despite a growing recognition of the health problems associated with climate change and the need for action, many organizations – and particularly those serving the most at-risk communities – struggle to make investments in sustainability and resilience because of insufficient funding.

All federal resources and opportunities



**Compendium of Federal Resources for the Health Sector**

**Quickfinder for Leveraging the IRA for the Health Sector**



Inflation Reduction Act resources

Webinars



**Accelerating Healthcare Sector Action Webinar Series**

**Protecting Vulnerable Patient Populations from Climate Hazards: A Referral Guide for Health Professionals**



Referral guide for health professionals

The Resource Hub is designed to help the health sector understand what resources, tools, and informational materials are available to accelerate the important work of emissions reduction and climate resilience. It includes the Compendium of Federal Resources, which reviews the relevant programs and policies and maps them to key steps in a health organization’s journey to meet the challenges of climate change. These steps align closely with the commitments of the [White House-HHS Health Sector Climate Pledge](#). One important tool featured in the Compendium is [\\*Guidance for the Health Sector - PDF](#) on using the Environmental Protection Agency’s free benchmarking tool ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager to track building-related energy and greenhouse gas (GHG)

## White House/HHS Health Sector Climate Pledge

1. Reduce organizational emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve net-zero by 2050, publicly accounting for progress on this goal.
2. Designate an executive-level lead for work on reducing emissions and conduct an inventory of Scope 3 (supply chain) emissions by the end of 2024.
3. Develop and release a climate resilience plan for continuous operations by the end of 2023, anticipating the needs of groups at disproportionate risk of climate-related harm.



*June 30, 2022 White House Event*

## Children's hospital & health system pledge signees

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- Advocate Children's, Boston Children's, Children's Hospital LA, Children's National, Gillette Children's, Seattle Children's, Stanford Children's, Texas Children's, Valley Children's
- Children's Hospital Association
- Ascension, Atlantic Health System, Atrium Health, Baystate Health, Hackensack Meridian, Jackson Health System, Kaiser Permanente, Keck Medicine of USC, Legacy Health, Mass General Brigham, MemorialCare, Montefiore, Mt. Sinai, Northwell Health, NYU Langone, Oregon Health & Science University, Providence Health, Rush University System for Health, RWJ Barnabas, SSM Health, St. Luke's Health System, Stony Brook University Hospital, SUNY Upstate Medical University, Tufts Medicine, University Medical Center of El Paso, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, University of California Health (includes UC Davis, UC Irvine, UC LA, UC Riverside, UCSD, UCSF), University of Michigan Health, University of Nebraska Medical Center, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, University of Utah Health, University of Washington Medicine

# Compendium of federal resources for health sector emissions reduction and resilience

**Primary Protection:  
Enhancing Health Care Resilience  
for a Changing Climate**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
December 2014

## Reducing Healthcare Carbon Emissions

A Primer on Measures and Actions for Healthcare Organizations to Mitigate Climate Change

AHRQ  
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

AHRQ Publication No. 22-M011  
September 2022  
www.ahrq.gov

**Using ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager  
to Track Energy Use and GHG Reductions**  
Guidance for the Health Sector

**Introduction**

On Earth Day 2022, the White House and HHS launched the [Health Sector Climate Pledge](#), a voluntary commitment to climate resilience and emissions reduction that includes cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by 2030 and achieving net zero emissions by 2050. Over 100 organizations representing almost 900 hospitals have joined the Health Sector Climate Pledge, demonstrating a commitment to sustainability that the Inflation Reduction Act and other [federal supports](#) will help them pursue. Together with the federal health systems, these organizations represent over 15% of domestic hospitals.

This document has been created to assist White House-HHS Health Sector Climate Pledge signatories and other interested health organizations in using the U.S. EPA's free benchmarking tool ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager® to track their building-related energy use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. While HHS encourages all health sector organizations, including those who have joined the pledge, to track and share their progress, organizations are not obligated to submit their data to the federal government in association with the pledge initiative. An Appendix is available to help different health care provider types learn how to designate their facility to be able to use the tool.

Since 1992, ENERGY STAR has helped American families and businesses avoid \$500 billion in energy costs and achieve 4 billion metric tons of GHG reductions.

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**Use ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager to Track GHG Emission Reductions**

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Using ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager to Track Energy Use and GHG Reductions | April 2023 | 1

# Climate Resilience for Healthcare (updated toolkit)

Guidance organized around 5 elements of climate resilience:

1. Prospective risk assessment
2. Health equity and community engagement
3. Assessment and remediation of vulnerabilities in infrastructure and operations
4. Collaboration between healthcare organizations
5. Interdisciplinary planning, oversight, and evaluation



## Impact of Extreme Heat on Health Care Facilities

### 1. Prospective Risk Assessment



Extreme heat risk assessments in emergency preparedness plans are traditionally retrospective. For example, the [Risk Identification and Site Criticality \(RISC 2.0\) Toolkit](#) measures a hospital's risk based on the average number of days above 95oF recorded per year over the past twenty years.<sup>1</sup> Adding forward-facing climate projections to the risk assessment can help health care organizations plan for changing exposures and vulnerabilities, such as more frequent, severe, and/or longer heat waves. For example, a study found that New York City's decision in 2008 to lower its threshold for activating the local heat emergency plan was subsequently associated with a daily reduction of 0.8 heat related illness hospital [BA(6)] admissions among patients over 65 years.<sup>2</sup>

#### EXTREME HEAT

##### Climate Resilience Actions:

**ACTION:** Add projected temperature and heat measures to organization extreme heat risk assessment ■ ■

**SUMMARY:** Consider adding one or more of the projected temperature and heat measures in the CDC's National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network data portal to your organization's extreme heat risk assessment.

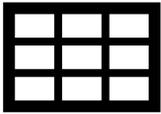
**ACTION:** Local and regional climate change vulnerability assessment

**SUMMARY:** Consider adding local and regional climate change vulnerability assessments to your organization's emergency preparedness plan to

#### Data & Tools

TOOL NAME	TOOL SUMMARY
<a href="#">Climate Resilient Health Clinics Toolkit</a>	Guidance on how to create a heat action plan for your health care organization.
<a href="#">National Risk Index (NRI)</a>	Interactive map highlighting at-risk communities by measuring community vulnerability and resilience against heat waves, drought, and wildfires.
<a href="#">Climate Mapping for Resilience and Adaptation (CMRA) – Extreme Heat</a>	Non-disaster funding to support develop, maintain, and revise peer-review assessment processes for emergency management.
<a href="#">CDC Heat &amp; Health Tracker</a>	View historical, current, and projected heat and heat-related illness maps and information.
<a href="#">National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network</a>	Download climate change-related exposure, vulnerability, and health

# Investments and actions potentially facilitated by the IRA

Investment	Examples Strategies/Actions	Example IRA Program(s)
 <p>Investing in On-Site Renewable Energy Generation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microgrid w/ battery storage</li> <li>• Solar array</li> </ul>	<p>Investment Tax Credit with Direct Pay, Low-Income Communities Adder</p>
 <p>Energy Efficiency Building Improvements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LED lighting</li> <li>• Optimizing air exchange rates</li> </ul>	<p>Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Rural Energy for America Program</p>
 <p>Low-Emissions Transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install EV charging stations</li> <li>• EV fleet acquisition</li> </ul>	<p>Qualified Commercial Clean Vehicles Credit, Alternative Fuel Property Credit</p>
 <p>Increased Building Resilience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hurricane resistant shell</li> <li>• On-site power system</li> </ul>	<p>Stafford Act authority for low-carbon and net-zero energy projects</p>
 <p>Increased Community Resilience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigating climate and health risks from urban heat islands</li> </ul>	<p>Environmental and Climate Justice Program: Community Change Grants Program</p>

## Why are these tax credits creating so much excitement?

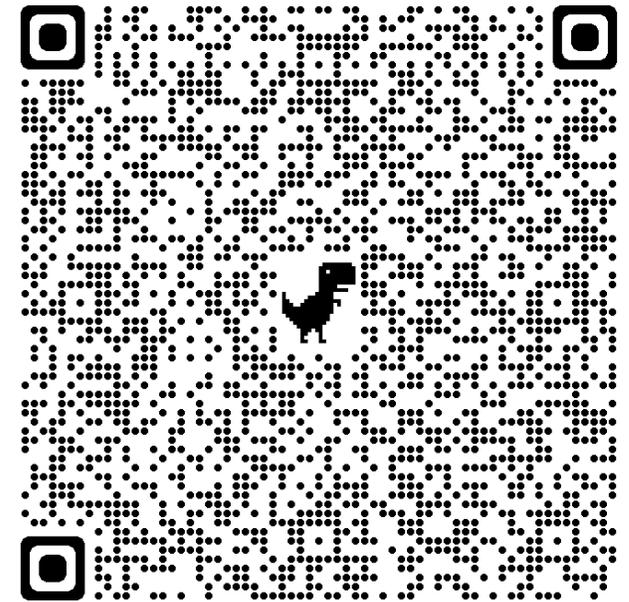
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- Tax-exempt and governmental entities that do not owe Federal income taxes will, for the first time, be able to receive a **payment equal to the full value of tax credits for clean energy projects or making qualifying investments.**
- Unlike competitive grant programs, elective pay allows entities to get their payment if they meet **the requirements for both elective pay and the underlying tax credit.**
- Entities can receive **tax-free cash payments** from the IRS for clean energy tax credits earned so long as all requirements are met.
- Applicable entities can use elective pay for **12 of the IRA's tax credits.**

## Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund overview

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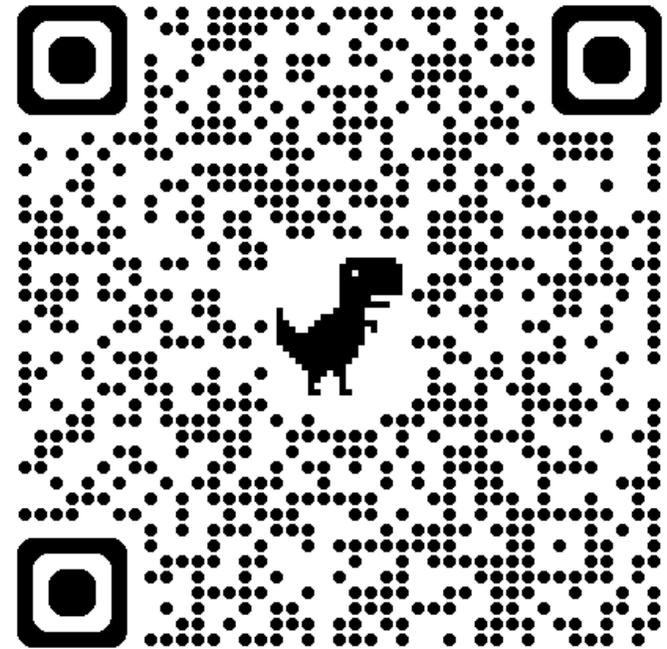
- On April 4, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced selections for **\$20 billion** in awards to stand up a national financing network that will fund tens of thousands of climate and clean energy projects across the country
- Can support projects like distributed clean power generation and storage, net-zero retrofits of homes and small businesses, and zero-emission transportation
- At least 70% of the funds will be invested in low-income and disadvantaged communities
- Selectees plan to mobilize almost \$7 of private capital for every \$1 of federal funds—approximately **\$150 billion** total



# Environmental and Climate Justice Program: Community Change Grants Program

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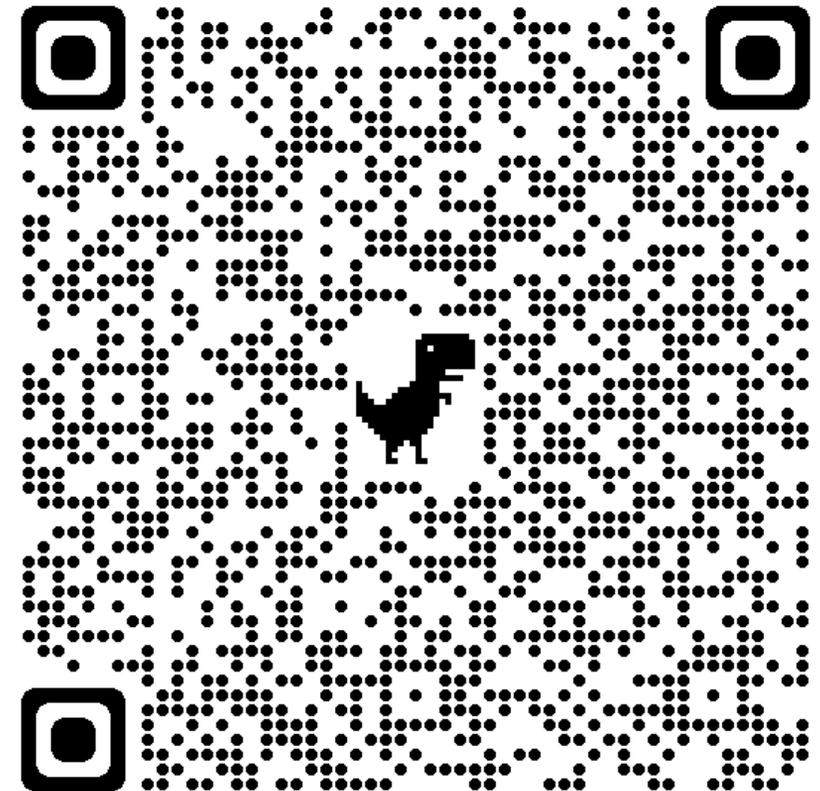
- EPA expects most awards will be between **\$10-20 million**
- Activities funded may include:
  - Energy-Efficient, Healthy, and Resilient Housing and Buildings
  - Microgrid Installation for Community Energy Resilience
  - Community Resilience Hubs
- A community-based non-profit organization (CBO) may apply in partnership with another CBO, a Federally-Recognized Tribe, a local government, or an institution of higher education.
- The deadline to apply is **November 21, 2024** and applications will be reviewed and selected on a rolling basis based on available funding



# Catalytic program on utilizing the IRA

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- National Webinar Session 3 Recording: Direct Pay and the Investment Tax Credit + associated breakouts for essential hospitals, health centers, and rural providers
- Session 4 Recording: Energy Efficient Buildings, Clean Vehicles, and Vehicle Refueling Tax Credits + associated breakouts
- Session 5 Recording: Other IRA Opportunities (includes the Community Change Grants) + essential hospital and health centers breakouts
- **June 5 session for state hospital associations**
- June 6 session on the GGRF and Low Income Communities Bonus Credit



# HHS Office of Climate Change and Health Equity Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Case Study



not-for-profit

1 rural  
more than

## HHS Office of Climate Change and Health Equity Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Case Study

**Organization name:** Boston Medical Center  
Health System

**Organization tax status:** Tax-exempt not-for-profit

**Facility name:** Boston Medical Center

**Facility location:** Boston, Massachusetts

**Brief description of facility:** Boston Medical Center (BMC) is a 616-bed academic medical center located in Boston, Massachusetts and is the primary teaching affiliate for Boston University School of Medicine. As the largest safety-net hospital in New England, BMC offers comprehensive healthcare services to individuals regardless of their socioeconomic status. Over 70% of the BMC patient population is covered by public insurance and over 70% self-identify as people of color. BMC provides over 1.2 million outpatient visits per year annually and is the largest provider of trauma services in New England. BMC's affiliated health plan, WellSense, has over 750,000 members.

### Boston Medical Center HEALTH SYSTEM



**by the IRA:**

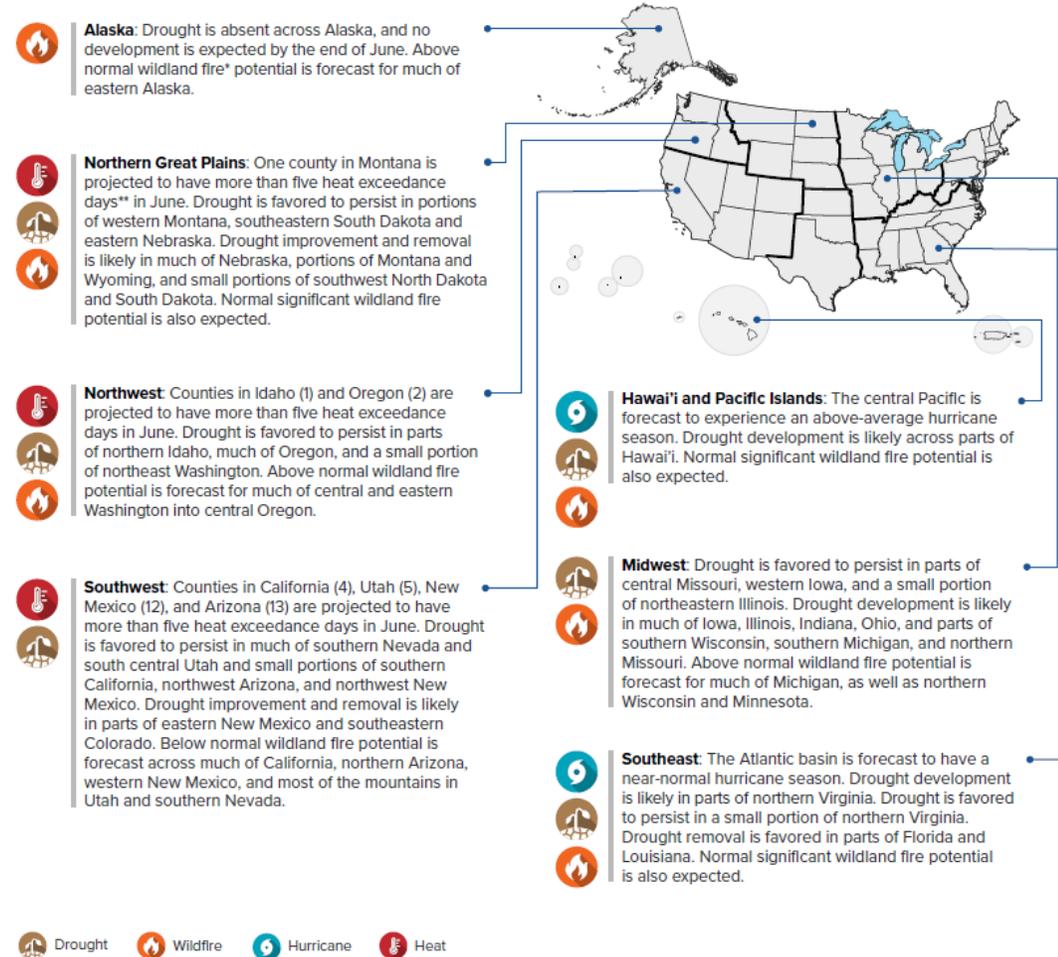
10 (EV) charging stations at Mansfield Hospital to allow for



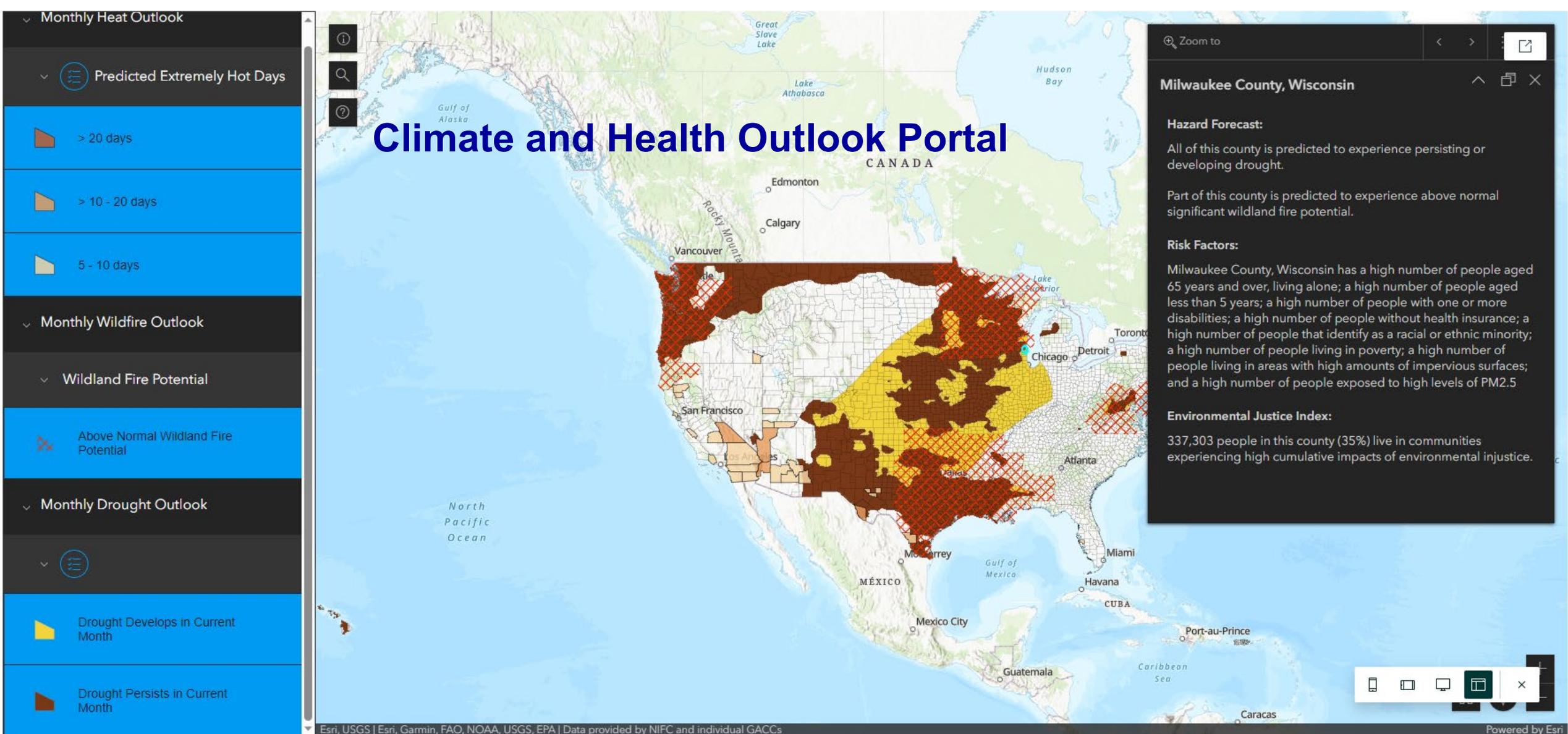
The Climate and Health Outlook is an effort to inform health professionals and the public on how our health may be affected in the coming months by climate events and to provide resources for proactive action. An [associated webpage](#) includes additional resources and information, including more detail on the wildfire and drought outlooks and populations at risk.

# Climate and Health Outlook

- 18 issues produced since May 2022
- Includes information on climate hazards:
  - Extreme Heat
  - Wildfire
  - Drought
  - Hurricane
  - Tickborne Illnesses
  - Pollen
  - Spring Flooding



\*Smoke from wildfires can impact health hundreds of miles from site of the fire.  
\*\*A "heat exceedance day" is when the daily maximum temperature is above the 95th percentile value of the historical temperature distribution in that county.  
Developed with data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the National Interagency Fire Center.



This interactive map shows county-level forecasts for **heat**, **wildfire**, and **drought** in the U.S. in the current month, as well as county-level individual risk factors that may increase vulnerability to the impacts of these climate-related hazards. These social, environmental, and health indicators characterize an increased risk of negative health outcomes for individuals who have these risk factors and are exposed to relevant climate-related hazards.



## 2024 HHS Resources on Heat and Health

Extreme heat is the leading cause of weather-related deaths in the U.S. 2023 was the warmest year on record, with heat-related illness affecting communities across the country. Planning, education, and action can help prevent heat-related health harms<sup>1</sup>.

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of information and resources from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and federal partners to support frontline healthcare providers, public health practitioners, and human services providers in protecting those at risk of heat-related illness.

### Assistance programs

- Administration for Children and Families (ACF): The [Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program \(LIHEAP\)](#) provides federal funds to reduce the costs associated with home energy bills, energy crises, weatherization, and minor energy-related home repairs. To find their local LIHEAP office and to access benefits, households should visit [energyhelp.us](https://energyhelp.us) or call the National Energy Assistance Referral hotline at 1-866-674-6327.
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS): Section 1115 demonstrations and waiver authorities in section 1915 of the Social Security Act are vehicles states can use to test new or existing ways to

## Protecting Vulnerable Patient Populations from Climate Hazards: A Referral Guide for Health Professionals

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### For Providers:

- ✓ Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- ✓ Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)
- ✓ Weatherization Assistance Program
- ✓ Cooling Centers
- ✓ Medicaid state plan amendments, demonstrations and other authorities
- ✓ Medicare Advantage Plans
- ✓ Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP)

### For Patients:

- ✓ Climate and Health Outlook
- ✓ HEAT.gov
- ✓ Tips for People Who Take Medication: Coping with Hot Weather
- ✓ Ready.gov
- ✓ Climate Change and Extreme Heat: What You Can Do to Prepare







**OASH**

Office of  
Climate Change  
and Health Equity



**Thank you!**

**Contact us: [OCCHE@hhs.gov](mailto:OCCHE@hhs.gov)**

**Visit us online and sign up for our  
listserv at [www.hhs.gov/ocche](http://www.hhs.gov/ocche)**