



Climate and Health E-News (No. 204)
Climate Change and Public Health in the Circumpolar North

Local Environmental Observer (LEO) Network – View our May map for new observations from LEO Network members. Nikolski observes spawning event of marine worms, dry conditions in Wasilla, early fish in Shaktoolik, low water and poor air quality in Anchorage. [ANTHC](#) Visit our map [archive](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#).

Climate Events in the Circumpolar North - View our May map to see news reports from across the circumpolar north. Savoonga has a spring whaling first, fires in Southcentral, early bears in Norway, record warm in Finland, and sea horses in Nova Scotia. [ANTHC](#) See our map archive [here](#).

Forest fires drove widespread surface melting of Greenland ice sheet May 19, 2014. Rising temperatures and ash from Northern Hemisphere forest fires combined to cause large-scale surface melting of the Greenland ice sheet in 1889 and 2012, contradicting conventional thinking that the melt events were driven by warming alone, a new study finds. The study did not focus on analyzing the ash to determine the source of the fires, but the presence of a high concentration of ammonium concurrent with the black carbon indicates the ash's source was large boreal forest fires during the summer in Siberia and North America in June and July 2012. [ScienceDaily](#)

An investigation into a mysterious disease afflicting Pacific walrus has been closed with no culprit identified May 13, 2014. *Yereth Rosen* - During the summer of 2011 large numbers seals and walrus began showing up with bleeding skin lesions, labored breathing, lethargy and hair loss. While the investigation in ice seals continues, the one into walrus has been closed. Investigators are now looking at the possibility of multiple causes. [Alaska Dispatch](#)

Fairbanks incident serves as reminder that ticks live in Alaska April 20, 2014. *Tim Mowry* - When Linda Roberts told friends she was bitten by a tick, they thought she was crazy. When Roberts discovered a tick on her dog this week she felt vindicated. Roberts took the tick to ADF&G veterinarian Dr. Kimberlee Beckmen. In the past three years, Beckmen has found at least two other types of ticks that have taken up residence in the Last Frontier and appear to be here to stay: the American dog tick and brown dog tick. [Fairbanks Daily News Miner](#)

Study shows Alaska kids need more Vitamin D May 21, 2014. State health officials say some Alaska children are not getting enough Vitamin D. A [bulletin](#) from the state health department says this is especially true for Alaska Native children who live in higher latitudes. Not getting enough Vitamin D can lead to tissue damage, weak bones and in extreme cases, bone deformities known as rickets. In the last 10 years, the state says Alaska children have had higher deficiency rates and more reports of rickets than anywhere else in the country. Subsistence foods are high in Vitamin D. And people are encouraged eat either vitamin-rich foods like salmon, eggs and lichen, or take a supplement. [KNOM](#)

Video of the Week – Effects of Weather and Climate on Subsistence Communities 2014. *Sarah Betcher* – This documentary (35 min), highlights climate change in seven villages in Northwest Alaska and the impacts on subsistence and the lives of northern people. [Farthest North Films](#)

Climate and Health E-News is read by people who are interested in climate change and public health in the circumpolar north. For back issues at the Alaska Medical Library, click [here](#). To subscribe or unsubscribe, click [here](#).

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