

Climate and Health E-News

Connecting People and Raising Awareness in the Interests of Public Health

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News from the Alaska Forum on the Environment, Climate Change Track:

New National Climate Service – Amy Holman the Alaska Region Coordinator for the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced that the Obama Administration has established a new National Climate Service. The proposal has been in the works for a couple of years after increasing requests from individuals, companies and decision-makers on how to deal with and track climate change. It will be modeled after NOAA's National Weather Service (see [org chart](#)). A new NOAA climate portal has already been launched (www.climate.gov) providing a one-stop shop for climate information, data, products and services. Alaska will be its own division for the new service.

New ADEC Alaska Water System Survey – Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Larry Hartig announced on Friday that the ADEC Village Safe Water Program will be performing a climate vulnerability assessment of rural water systems in Alaska. The assessment will include a data review and interviews with RMWs. The report is expected this spring.

Research News:

Team Finds Subtropical Waters Flushing through Greenland Fjord. A team of researchers from Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute has found warm subtropical waters flowing through Greenland's fjords, accelerating melting. Researchers suspect that changes in ocean circulation patterns are to blame. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/02/100216163339.htm>

Climate and Health Note: Sea level change is occurring in Alaska, rising in some locations and dropping in others. You can look at a map of changes occurring in Alaska at the [NOAA Sea Level](#) website, According to USGS Scientist Bruce Molnia, who presented at the Alaska Forum on the Environment, the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projection of an average global sea level rise of 7.2 to 23.6 inches by 2100, assumes the melting of glaciers around the planet. Currently 97% of Alaska's glaciers are rapidly thawing. However, the IPCC model does not include melting of the ice sheets in Greenland or Antarctica. Changes in ocean currents have implications for climate and melting of the ice sheets, but also for the transport of pollutants to and from the Arctic, the movement and distribution of marine life, and potentially for the diet of Arctic people.

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Safe, Healthy, Sustainable Communities

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