

## Climate and Health E-News

*Connecting People and Raising Awareness in the Interests of Public Health*  
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**Grizzly Bears Move into Polar Bear Habitat in Manitoba, Canada.** Biologists affiliated with the American Museum of Natural History and City College of the City University of New York have found that grizzly bears are roaming into what was traditionally thought of as polar bear habitat -- and into the Canadian province of [Manitoba](#), where they are officially listed as extirpated. The preliminary data was recently published in *Canadian Field Naturalist* and shows that sightings of *Ursus arctos horribilis* in Canada's Wapusk National Park are recent and appear to be increasing in frequency. Between 1996 and 2008 there were nine confirmed sightings of grizzly bears, and in the summer of 2009 there were three additional observations. "Although we don't yet know if they are wandering or staying -- the proof will come from an observed den or cubs -- these animals will eventually be residents of this national park, the Cree elders we talked to feel that now that grizzly bears have found this food source they will be staying." ... [full story](#)

Source: Science Daily [www.sciencedaily.com](http://www.sciencedaily.com)

**Dry winters linked to seasonal outbreaks of influenza** (February 23, 2010) -- The seasonal increase of influenza has long baffled scientists, but a new study has found that **seasonal changes of absolute humidity** are the apparent underlying cause of these wintertime peaks. The study also found that the onset of outbreaks might be encouraged by anomalously dry weather conditions, at least in temperate regions. Shaman and colleagues discovered that the start of many influenza outbreaks during the winter was directly preceded by a period of weather that was drier than usual. "The virus response is almost immediate; transmission rates increase and about 10 days later, the observed influenza mortality rates follow."

... > [full story](#) Source: [Public Library of Science](#)

**Climate and Health Comment** – *As climate changes, so likely will the season for flu and other infectious diseases. How this will effect (positive of negative) Alaska is not yet understood, but explaining the factors that effect transmission of influenza (such as humidity) will help health and climate researchers to better understand potential changes to the flu season and the effects on public health. To view a global flu trends map see link to google.org*

[http://www.google.org/flutrends/intl/en\\_us/#utm\\_campaign=ft-en&utm\\_source=ft-en-ha-na-us-bk&utm\\_medium=ha&utm\\_term=google%20flu](http://www.google.org/flutrends/intl/en_us/#utm_campaign=ft-en&utm_source=ft-en-ha-na-us-bk&utm_medium=ha&utm_term=google%20flu)

Regards – Mike

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