

***Alaska Center for Climate and Health E-News***  
***Raising Awareness about Climate Change Impacts on Public Health***  
***No. 50, January 6, 2011***

**Did Climate Change Play a Role in the Savoonga Power Outage?** (January 4, 2011) On December 27<sup>th</sup> an ice storm combined with high winds damaged the electrical system in the community of Savoonga. At one point 90% of the homes were without electricity. With wind chill down to -45 F, the school was used as an evacuation shelter. Over the week electricity was restored but new problems cropped up such as frozen and broken water lines. Currently there is a request for a state disaster declaration. As reported by Kyle Hopkins, the root cause was delayed sea ice development, potentially related to climate change. [Anchorage Daily News](#)

**Allure of Mendenhall Glacier Masks Dangers** (January 3, 2011) The beauty of Mendenhall Glacier near Juneau masks the incredible danger for those who venture out onto frozen Mendenhall Lake. As reported by **Klas Stolpe**, the face of the glacier will calve even in winter and water still pours underneath the ice and out to Mendenhall River. On December 26<sup>th</sup>, a man fell through the ice and was pulled to safety by a hiking companion. "The ice is never safe," said District Ranger Marty Marshall Marvin, "and we have had warmer weather as of late so it is especially unsafe." [Juneau Empire](#)

**Low Vitamin D Levels Increase Risk for Infant Respiratory Infections** (December 28, 2010) Risk for respiratory infection in Alaska Natives has been associated with poor indoor air quality, crowded housing, and lack of piped water and sewer. A recent study in the January issue of *Pediatrics*, explores deficiency of vitamin D, as a new variable for respiratory health in infants. The vitamin D levels of newborn babies appear to predict their risk of respiratory infections during infancy and the occurrence of wheezing during early childhood. [ScienceDaily](#)

**Alaska Climate Events Map, Weekly Updates** – (December 31, 2010) End of year wrap up: soaring temperatures, ice storms, slip and fall death, and a northern elephant seal carcass washes up in Unalaska. [See our Google Map](#)

The Climate and Health E-News is received around the circumpolar north by people who are interested in climate change impacts on health. If you have an observation or an update you would like to include in our *Climate Events Map*, please send a message to [mbrubaker@anthc.org](mailto:mbrubaker@anthc.org). To join the E-News mailing list just reply to this message with your contact (e-mail/name/organization/location) information. Click [here](#) to find past issues of E-News archived at the University of Alaska Arctic Health website.

*Regards - Mike*

Michael Brubaker  
Center for Climate and Health  
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium  
Tel. 907-729-2464  
<http://www.anthc.org/chs/ces/climate/index.cfm>  
*Safe, Healthy, Sustainable Communities*

*If you wish to be removed from the Climate and Health E-News distribution list, just send me an e-mail.*