

Climate and Health Resources: MASSACHUSETTS



Climate change poses risks to human health. [Already in the United States](#), we are seeing rising temperatures, increased frequency and intensity of some types of extreme weather, sea level rise, and other changes in weather and climate patterns. We are all vulnerable to the health impacts associated with climate change. However, these climate and health risks vary across the country.

Massachusetts has warmed by more than 2°F in the last century. This and other climate impacts, like more severe storms, mean increasing risks to health. Examples of risks and actions for Massachusetts residents include:

- **Higher temperatures will increase heat-related illnesses, hospital visits, and deaths.** In Boston and other large cities, the urban heat island effect will make heat events worse. [Learn how you can take action to protect against heat waves](#), such as:
 - **Respond:** Drink plenty of water.
 - **Respond:** Watch for signs of dehydration and overheating, especially in children.

- **More intense rain can overwhelm combined sewer systems** (where storm water and sewage share the same pipes). This can contaminate recreational water and sources of drinking water, and lead to disease outbreaks. [Learn how you can take action to ensure drinking water safety](#), such as:
 - **Prepare:** Have an emergency water supply ready for your family (1 gallon per person/pet per day).
 - **Respond:** Check the news for tap water safety notices, such as boiling water before use.

- **Longer warm seasons mean that Lyme disease-carrying ticks will emerge earlier in the season and move north into new areas.** [Learn how you can take action to protect against ticks](#), such as:
 - **Respond:** Check for and remove ticks promptly after coming indoors. Remember that pets may bring ticks into the house.
 - **Respond:** Wear protective clothing (such as high boots and long sleeves and pants), and consider using insect repellent.

Learn more in the [USGCRP Climate and Health Assessment](#).

The examples of risks and actions provided in this document are not a comprehensive list. They provide users with illustrative impacts and resources for further information. Examples were selected based on relevance to the state or region and representation of a diversity of health threats. Selection does not imply ranking of severity of impacts nor prioritization of actions. The examples of impacts are based on "The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment," available at <https://health2016.globalchange.gov>, as well as the National Climate Assessment at <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/>

RESOURCES FOR MASSACHUSETTS RESIDENTS

Resource Topic	Information	Source
Climate Change Impacts	Learn More: What Climate Change Means for Massachusetts	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
	Learn More: National Climate Assessment: Northeast	U.S. Global Change Research Program. 2014.
	Find Resources: EPA Region 1 (New England)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
	Explore Actions: Massachusetts Climate Change Adaptation Report, 2011	State of Massachusetts
	Explore Actions: Climate Ready Boston	City of Boston. October 2013.
Public Health Information	Find Resources: Massachusetts Department of Public Health	State of Massachusetts
	Find Resources: Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency	State of Massachusetts