

Will global warming heat us beyond our physical limits?

By Cheryl Katz, National Geographic

If greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced, rising temperatures and humidity wrought by global warming could expose hundreds of millions of people worldwide to potentially lethal heat stress by 2060, a report suggests.

The greatest exposure will occur in populous, tropical regions such as India, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. But even in the northeastern United States, as many as 30 million people might be exposed at least once a year to heat that could be lethal to children, the elderly, and the sick, according to the study.

It's the first study to look at future heat stress on a global basis, says Ethan Coffel, a doctoral candidate in atmospheric sciences at Columbia University, who presented the results last week at the American Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco. Coffel and his colleagues used climate models and population projections to estimate how many people could face dangerous heat in 2060—assuming that greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise sharply on a “business-as-usual” course.

The findings are based on forecasts of “wet bulb” temperatures, in which a wet cloth is wrapped around a thermometer bulb. Whereas standard thermometer readings measure air temperature, a wet bulb measures the temperature of a moist surface that has been cooled as much as possible by evaporation.

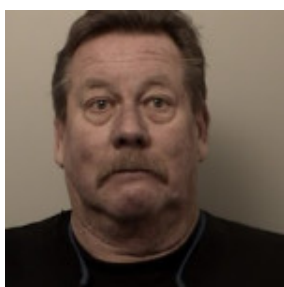
Read the whole story

West Slope fire chief accused of DUI

Updated Dec. 21, 1:36pm:

An El Dorado County fire chief was arrested last week in the middle of the afternoon on charges of driving under the influence.

William Dekker, who is the top guy with Garden Valley fire, has a history with alcohol.



William Dekker

The 60-year-old's latest arrest came Dec. 17 at 1:49pm in Greenwood.

According to El Dorado County sheriff's deputies, they were called to a dispute about a loose dog between neighbors in Greenwood. The neighbor told deputies that Dekker threatened to shoot him.

Deputies flagged Dekker down as he was driving by. They suspected he had been drinking, conducted several field sobriety tests and then arrested him for suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol.

In 1996 Dekker was arrested in Dayton with a blood alcohol

level of 0.10. A settlement resulted in no jail time even though he hit a firefighter while driving a fire engine.

A no contest plea to disorderly conduct led Dekker to resign as chief of the Pine-Strawberry Fire District in Arizona in September 2007. Three months later he became chief of Garden Valley.

In 2012 the El Dorado County District Attorney's Office began an investigation into Dekker's **credit card use**.

In 2011, his current fire district paid for him to get substance abuse treatment.

Dekker has a 10-year contract that expires in 2020. To fire him takes all five board members to agree. He makes nearly \$130,000 a year.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Calif. may propose water conservation changes

By Scott Smith, AP

State regulators are expected to propose changes this week to California's water conservation mandate that has required communities throughout the state to reduce use by 25 percent.

The move comes as California is in its driest four-year span on record, and officials anticipate a possible fifth year of drought. Weather forecasters say a strong El Nino weather system could drench the state, but one good year won't be enough to rehydrate the parched landscape.

Gov. Jerry Brown earlier this year required communities throughout the state to reduce water use by one-quarter. State water regulators set individual targets for local agencies to meet, varying between 4 and 36 percent compared with 2013, but those targets will expire in February.

Brown recently extended his executive order, giving regulators authority to enforce conservation measures through October 2016, if California still faces drought this January.

Local community leaders have criticized the individual targets as unfair and unrealistic. In Southern California, local governments argued state officials should acknowledge huge investments in new supplies to prepare for drought.

This year, the San Diego region completed a \$1 billion seawater desalination plant, the largest in the Americas. Orange County recently expanded wastewater recycling to produce 100 million gallons of drinking water daily.

"It has been difficult to tell our ratepayers that their investments in local supply projects have not resulted in providing the buffer against drought as intended," Halla Razak, the city of San Diego's public utilities director, wrote state regulators this month.

Some environmental groups oppose giving local governments credit for new supplies, saying it might discourage conservation.

After the State Water Resources Control Board staff releases its proposed changes, the public will have about two weeks to comment, spokesman George Kostyrko said. A formal proposal is expected in January, he added.

Associated Press writer Elliot Spagat in San Diego contributed to this report.

Early snow a confidence booster for resorts

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Compared to last year's dry winter it seems like Sierra Nevada skiers and snowboarders are practically swimming in snow, at least in the opening days of the winter of 2015-16.

But it's still too early to tell if a snowier winter will help California and Nevada winter resorts bounce back from their worst performance since 2001-02 in terms of skier visits.

The 2015-16 snow season is off to a good start. But it will take a lot to offset the low total of skier visits to west coast winter resorts during the drought winter of 2014-15.

[Read the whole story](#)

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Allori

Allori is a 5-year-old Chihuahua mix who is great with other dogs and cats. She prefers men to women, but does warm up, and will quickly jump into your lap. She is a bit fearful and so would be best in a home with children older than 12. Allori is only about 10 pounds, seems to be housetrained, and likes to go for walks.

Allori is spayed, microchipped, tested for heart worm, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go **online**.

– Karen Kuentz

Nevada food bank helping Tahoe's working poor

By Linda Fine Conaboy

RENO – The Food Bank of Northern Nevada services an area of about 90,000 square miles. Included within their client base are communities on the eastern slope of the Sierra, which covers California locations such as Lake Tahoe, Susanville, Bridgeport, Bishop and many points in between. In Nevada, a food truck makes the rounds of Ely, Winnemucca, Gerlach, Elko as well as other small towns in Nevada once a month.

“It would be pretty drastic for us not to show up with our food truck,” Laura Hellen, one of two development officers at FBNN told *Lake Tahoe News*. “About two weeks ago, when we had a major snowstorm, our patrons wondered if we were coming. It would have to be something pretty drastic for us not to show up.”

Not surprisingly, the Food Bank is extremely busy this time of year.



Volunteers with the
Food Bank of Northern

Nevada load boxes for
recipients.
Photo/Provided

According to marketing director Jocelyn Lantrip, "This is when we raise a lot of money and a lot of food, but the truth is, we feed people year-round. If you talk to our partner agencies, they'll tell you they are even busier in the summer because kids are out of school then."

The client base includes more than children, although kids and seniors make up half of the 103,000 people who receive food each month. Additionally, the Food Bank supplies food to emergency food pantries, mobile pantries, commodity supplemental food programs and other senior programs.

"We feed kids after school, distribute fresh produce and also feed kids in the summer. We work with senior centers and operate another USDA program, which provides boxes of food to about 2,500 seniors monthly," explained Hellen.

The USDA money is considered "pass through" money. "We raise money to hire cooks, but we're reimbursed by the government for meals. This includes summer meals and after-school meals."

It's easy to see why record keeping is meticulous. "Counts are important. We must be very careful to note both the number of kids fed as well as the location. In Nevada, 53 percent of the children qualify for a free lunch," Hellen said.

Lantrip told *Lake Tahoe News* that if a school qualifies for free lunch, then the entire neighborhood is eligible. "That relieves us of having paperwork on each child."

Seniors can receive a box of food containing staples like beans, rice, oatmeal, cheese as well as canned fruits and vegetables. There is also a mobile pantry offering mostly fruits and veggies, which is available to all of the FBNN partner agencies depending upon their

refrigeration capabilities.

The refrigeration unit at the Food Bank's new headquarters east of Sparks is massive and can easily accommodate the fresh produce they provide—at least 50 percent of all their food consists of fresh fruit and vegetables.

"We happen to have moved next door to the Walmart distribution center," Hellen said. "Consequently, we get about 2 million pounds of food from them, including lots of fresh produce. We tell other food banks to try to build next door to a Walmart," she laughed. "Their employees even come here to donate time."

While much of the produce is sourced from California, not all of it can be returned there. According to Lantrip, there is a list of fresh food that cannot be returned back across state lines to California distribution points.

"Food like some citrus and yams. We follow this list carefully. It's an isolated thing based on state agriculture laws," Lantrip said.

Many of the service boundaries within FBNN's distribution locales are decided by Feeding America, their parent organization, populated not only by the Nevada facility, but also by 200 other food banks throughout the United States.

"We've had underserved counties and areas identified by them and now we're meeting that need," Lantrip said.

One of these partner agencies, which distributes food not only to Nevadans, but also to California residents, is Project MANA based in Incline Village.

Heidi Allstead, the executive director, told *Lake Tahoe News* that each year Project MANA serves 3,000 people more than 11,650 meals through their four mobile food distribution sites, including Tahoe City, Kings Beach and Truckee.

This group receives food not only from FBNN, but also Placer

Food Bank and several local grocery stores, weekly.

“We assist the working poor,” Allstead said. “Most of the people we serve work seasonal jobs and many have multiple jobs, but still can’t make ends meet. This is mostly due to low wages and the high cost of living at Tahoe.”

She added that nearly 10 percent of the people living in her local service area are below the poverty line. According to statistics provided by the Placer Food Bank, 1 in 8 individuals in Placer, Nevada and El Dorado counties—43,000 people—struggle with hunger.

With two vehicles, one being a refrigerated truck and the other a refrigerated van, employees and volunteers deliver food and also rescue food from grocery stores and food drives. Besides weekly distribution to the local sites, they also make once-a-week rounds to home-bound people.

Project MANA’s offices and warehouse are in the Don W. Reynolds Community/Non-Profit Center in Incline Village, where, among other activities, they train volunteers, meet with the public and pack bags for the Food and Companionship Exchange program.

Opinion: California has pension dilemma

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

California has long prided itself on having an upwardly mobile, egalitarian gestalt, so there’s much irony in its evolution into a two-tiered society.



Dan Walters

But there's also much angst as the relative few in the top tier prosper and the many in the lower tier deal with stagnating incomes and very high living costs, particularly for housing.

One aspect of California's socio-economic stratification is that more than 60 percent of California's private-sector workers lack any employer-based retirement plan, either a defined benefit pension or a 401(k) savings/investment plan.

In fact, according to a study by UC Berkeley's Center for Labor Research and Education, 84 percent of those working for employers with 25 or fewer employees lack such benefits.

Read the whole story

Sleep may make the difference for athletes

By Gordy Megroz, Outside

For my 40th birthday, I decided to climb the Grand Teton, a 13,770-foot peak in my backyard of Jackson, Wyoming. The Grand is technical, requiring rock climbing and rappels on exposed faces with 5,000-foot drops. Make a mistake and you're dead. I'd decided the ascent would help me feel less 40. I gathered

the gear I needed and did all the necessary training, including steep, hourlong hikes wearing a 60-pound weight vest. The one thing I was missing to perform at my best? Enough sleep.

If you're like me, work and life prevent adequate time to snooze. That's bad. Besides weakening your immune system (a recent study shows that getting only six hours of sleep a night makes you four times more likely to catch a cold, compared with those who get more than seven), not getting enough rest can sabotage athleticism.

A study in Sports Medicine determined that inadequate sleep results in decreased motor skills and cognitive function, as well as increased inflammation—symptoms similar to overtraining.

Conversely, researchers at Stanford University found that when the school's basketball players got 10 hours of sleep each night, their shooting accuracy improved by 9 percent.

Read the whole story

K2 skis changing ownership

By Matthew Townsend, BloombergBusiness

Newell Rubbermaid Inc. agreed to buy Jarden Corp., parent company of K2 skis, for about \$15.4 billion, creating a consumer-products giant with a sprawling portfolio that will use its increased size to cut costs and bolster investment in its most-promising businesses.

The new company, called Newell Brands, will have \$16 billion in sales, according to a statement. Jarden investors will

receive cash and stock valued at about \$60 a share – 24 percent higher than the closing price on Dec. 4, the last trading day before media reports said merger talks had begun. Newell will issue \$5 billion of debt to complete the transaction and expects to keep its investment-grade debt.

The move is a bet that Newell can gain efficiency and clout with large vendors such as Wal-Mart Stores Inc. from Jarden's more than 100 far-flung brands, including everything from Oster appliances and K2 skis to Yankee Candle. Newell Rubbermaid Chief Executive Officer Michael Polk, who will run the combined entity, is aiming to squeeze \$500 million in costs out of the business within four years.

Read the whole story

U.S. men regroup to put in respectful runs

By USSA

ALTA BADIA, Italy – Ted Ligety (Park City) led a recharged men's tech team, just missing the podium, as the Americans rebounded from a disappointing first run performance. Ligety led the way, finishing fourth, followed by Tim Jitloff (Reno) in seventh, and Tommy Ford (Bend, Ore.) in 12.

Austria's Marcel Hirscher won his third-straight Audi FIS Alpine World Cup giant slalom, and became the only racer in history to win three times at Alta Badia. Henrik Kristoffersen of Norway was second, followed by Victor Muffat-Jeandet of France in third.

Following a disappointing first run for the Americans, the athletes and coaching staff made a few changes to re-charge for the second run. Ford was first to start the second run and posted the fastest second run of the day.

"I finally let it go second run and skied really well ... skied clean," Ford said.

Ligety and Jitloff sat 1-2 on the leaderboard midway through the second run after nailing the middle section and carrying speed into a pair of rollers (that will be used for Monday's parallel giant slalom) into the finish. They watched as racer after racer failed to knock them off the leaderboard.

France's Mathieu Faivre and Alexis Pinturault finally split the U.S. leaders, knocking Jitloff to fourth as Ligety remaining atop the leaderboard with three racers remaining. However, the victory wasn't meant to be for Ligety as Muffat-Jeandet moved into the lead, followed by the 21-year-old Kristoffersen, and finally Hirscher, whose victory solidified his lead atop the World Cup giant slalom standings.

"I knew going into the second run that I needed to throw down a great run, because my performance to this point has just been OK and not up to my capabilities," Jitloff said. "I was very nervous for sure, but that nervousness helped push me."