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BUSINESS, 4A

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Climate change 'fingerprint' seen in heat



At least 44 deaths have been reported as a result of the early July heat wave, but it will be weeks or months before researchers finalize the data on heat deaths. ED OU/REUTERS FILE

Scientists look to causes of hot July 4 weekend

Dinah Voyles Pulver
USA TODAY

Early July brought historic extreme weather for the fourth year in a row, and scientists again see the "fingerprint" of climate change in a deadly Fourth of July.

In 2023, it was a record-smashing heat wave. In 2024, history-making Hurricane Beryl ripped through the Caribbean. In 2025, a shockingly deadly flood. And in 2026? Another deadly heat wave.

Days later, the heat warnings have finally faded for much of the Eastern United States, but the grim number of heat-related deaths continued to rise.

At least 44 deaths have been reported as a result of the July 1 to July 4 heat wave, but it will be weeks or months before researchers finalize an estimate of the number of people who died or suffered injuries as a result of the extreme heat. More than 1,300 heat records were matched or broken for maximum high temperatures and warm overnight lows across 40 states and territories over the four days.

From June 29 to July 5, 201 million



Climate Central reported in a recent study that summer nights have warmed across 231 U.S. cities by 3.1 degrees since 1971.

BRIAN JOHNSTON/ASBURY PARK PRESS FILE

Americans experienced at least one day when climate change made warm temperatures at least three times more likely, Shel Winkley, chief meteorologist at Climate Central, told USA TODAY. Temperatures on July 3 had "a very strong fingerprint of climate change," he said,

affecting 136 million Americans.

By July 7, New Jersey officials had reported 29 deaths related to the heat and the complications it created for people with preexisting conditions.

In New York City, officials blamed the heat for three deaths, and in Philadelphia, the city reported seven heat-related deaths since July 1, according to NBC10 Philadelphia.

A heat-related death was reported on July 2 in Jackson, Mississippi, and multiple media outlets reported the medical examiner's office in Cook County, Illinois, attributed heat as a contributing factor to four deaths.

It's not new or novel that summer is hot, that temperatures reach triple digits, or that there are heat waves, Winkley said. With climate change, Winkley said "these heat waves are not only getting more intense, we're seeing higher temperatures because of them."

Climate Central reported in a recent study using its Climate Shift Index that summer nights have warmed across 231 U.S. cities by 3.1 degrees since 1971.

World Weather Attribution, an international science consortium, said the July heat wave would have been "virtually impossible" without climate change.

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Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall coming to area

Beth Ann Miller
Beaver County Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

A traveling tribute to over 58,000 American military members who gave their lives in service to their country during the Vietnam War is coming to Patterson Township, and volunteers are needed to help with the event.

A group effort by Patterson Township, Patterson Heights, White Township, Franciscan Manor, the Vietnam Veterans Association and the Beaver County Commissioners has arranged to bring The Moving Wall to the Beaver Falls area on July 16-20 for America's 250th anniversary, said Kayla Hall, an administrative assistant for Patterson Township who is involved with the group.

The Moving Wall is a half-size

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