Climate change puts New Mexicans’ health and well-being at risk. We must take action to help our communities adapt and build a healthy future.

**THE ISSUE**

Climate change is increasingly harming the health of New Mexicans, and the rate of its associated extreme weather events, such as periods of extreme heat, drought and flooding – along with wildfires and air pollution – is quickly accelerating. These hazards impact our physical and mental health in many ways, including increased rates of heat stress, insect-borne diseases, lung and heart disease, and allergies, which can lead to many downstream effects such as financial and food insecurity and a deterioration in overall well-being. New Mexico’s children, communities of color, older adults, people with disabilities, and families earning low incomes are most likely to suffer serious, long-term health consequences from these climate impacts.

![Diagram showing climate change, hazards, impacts, and downstream effects](source: Adapted by Nathaniel Matthews-Trigg from Climate Central, 2021)
BY THE NUMBERS

• New Mexico now has an average of 50 more days of extreme wildfire risk conditions (hot, dry, windy) than in 1970.¹
• New Mexico saw an 18% increase in respiratory emergency room visits during the wildfire season, compared to previous years.²
• The number of emergency room visits for heat-related illness in New Mexico more than doubled between 2009 and 2019.³

THE SOLUTION

We need to protect all New Mexicans from threats to our health caused by extreme weather events related to climate change, which are causing harm today and will be more frequent and intense in the future. This Act will help address these threats to public health by:

• Creating a Public Health and Climate Resiliency Program at the Department of Health to build capacity and expertise, support development and implementation of response systems, and improve interagency collaboration.
• Establishing a Public Health and Climate Resiliency Fund to assist and enable local and tribal communities to adapt to climate change and respond to public health emergencies from extreme weather events.

These two approaches, combined with meaningful engagement with the communities most harmed by climate change, will help improve health outcomes, equity, climate adaptation, and climate resiliency in New Mexico.

Pass the Public Health and Climate Resiliency Act!*


Endnotes
2. Environmental Public Health Tracking Program, New Mexico Department of Health