

# Science Says record heat, fires across the globe worsened by climate change

By **SETH BORENSTEIN AND FRANK JORDANS**  
Associated Press

according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Heat waves are setting all-time temperature records across the globe, again. Europe suffered its deadliest fire in more than a century, and one of nearly 90 large fires in the U.S. West burned dozens of homes and forced the evacuation of at least 37,000 people near Redding, California. Flood-inducing downpours have pounded the U.S. East this week.

The explanations should sound as familiar as the crash of broken records.

“We now have very strong evidence that global warming has already put a thumb on the scales, upping the odds of extremes like severe heat and heavy rainfall,” Stanford University climate scientist Noah Diffenbaugh said. “We find that global warming has increased the odds of record-setting hot events over more than 80 percent of the planet, and has increased the odds of record-setting wet events at around half of the planet.”

It’s all part of summer — but it’s all being made worse by human-caused climate change, scientists say.

“Weirdness abounds,” said Rutgers University climate scientist Jennifer Francis.

Japan hit 106 degrees on Monday, its hottest temperature ever. Records fell in parts of Massachusetts, Maine, Wyoming, Colorado, Oregon, New Mexico and Texas.

And then there’s crazy heat in Europe, where normally chill Norway, Sweden and Finland all saw temperatures they have never seen before on any date, pushing past 90 degrees. So far this month, at least 118 of these all-time heat records have been set or tied across the globe,

Climate change is making the world warmer because of the build-up of heat-trapping gases from the burning of fossil fuels like coal and oil and other human activities. And experts say the jet stream — which dictates weather in the Northern Hemisphere — is again behaving strangely.

“An unusually sharply kinked jet stream has been stuck in place for weeks now,” said Jeff Masters, director of the private Weather Underground. He says that allows the heat to stay in place over three areas where the kinks are: Europe, Japan and the



AP Photo/Lee Jin-man

Visitors rest in the shade in the midday heat at Cheonggye stream in downtown Seoul, South Korea, Monday. The temperature in a city north of Tokyo reached 106 degrees Fahrenheit on Monday, the highest ever recorded in Japan, as a deadly heat wave gripped a wide swath of the country and nearby South Korea.

western United States.

The same jet stream pattern caused the 2003 European heat wave, the 2010 Russian heat wave and fires, the 2011 Texas and Oklahoma drought and the 2016 Canadian wildfires, Pennsylvania State University climate scientist Michael Mann said, pointing to past studies by him and others. He said in an email that these extremes are “becoming more common because of human-caused climate change and in particular, the amplified warming in the Arctic.”

Climate scientists have long said they can’t directly link single weather events, like a heat wave, to human caused climate change without extensive study. In the past decade they have used observations, statistics and computer simulations to calculate if global warming increases the chances of the events.

A study by European scientists Friday found that the ongoing European heat wave is twice as likely because of human-caused global warming, though those conclusions have not

yet been confirmed by outside scientists. The World Weather Attribution team said they compared three-day heat measurements and forecasts for the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland with historical records going back to the early 1900s.

“The world is becoming warmer and so heat-waves like this are becoming more common,” said Friederike Otto, a member of the team and deputy director of the Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford.

## FUNDING: Had a year to gather signatures

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issues for us is it forces the state to set a dangerous precedent by cherry picking what will and won’t be covered by insurance,” McLain said.

She said public employees, teachers, nurses and others serving the state would be affected if the measure passes because their insurance would no longer cover abortions. The measure also “targets the most vulnerable and low-income Oregonians,” McLain said.

The Oregon secretary of state’s website showed Friday that petitioners gathered 117,799 valid signatures, just over the 117,578 needed to qualify for the ballot.

The effort had a year to gather signatures, Shannon said, in contrast to previous efforts when challenges left backers with too little time to gather enough signatures.

Oregon is one of a handful of states that allows public funds to pay for abortions through its Medicaid program, with the full cost paid by Oregon taxpayers.

“We think public funding of abortion is wrong,” Shannon said.

In 1969, Oregon became one of the first states to decriminalize abortion, four years before the U.S. Supreme Court’s Roe v. Wade decision that affirmed a woman’s right to abortion.

## POOL: The most common way to pay for an aquatic center is via public bond

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He and parks and recreation director Larry Fetter have been working with consultants from ALSC Architects of Spokane to put together a report about preliminary designs, and what the Hermiston-area market would support.

“They’ve helped us work through a lot of analysis,” Smith said.

He said the city was looking at the indoor pool in the context of a “health and wellness center” that would provide other recreational opportunities beyond year-round swimming. He said the city would need to determine what the project would include before looking at

possible locations.

After the consultants’ part of the study is put together, city staff plan to do further work looking at possible financing options. Smith said there probably wouldn’t be much in the way of grants available for the project.

The most common way for cities to pay for aquatic centers is through bonds. The city has been paying off its bond obligations for the Hermiston Family Aquatic Center — which opened in 2004 — using Transient Room Tax funds assessed on local hotel stays and an increase in the city’s operating levy. Two separate attempts at a bond failed to pass). The indoor Boardman

Pool and Recreation Center that opened last summer was paid for by a bond levy passed by voters in 2014, adding a property tax of 95.5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Another option that has been discussed is creation of a recreational taxing district that would possibly include Umatilla, Stanfield

and Echo.

Hermiston had a small privately owned indoor pool at the Columbia Court Club until 2016, when the workout center had a fire that destroyed much of the inside of the building. After two years of fighting with insurance companies, owner Steve Watkinds posted on Facebook in May that he

would likely not rebuild.

Hermiston also lost another year-round swimming option when the Blue Mountain Community College pool in Pendleton closed. The Hermiston High School swim team had been commuting to Pendleton to practice there.

Briana Cortaberria, executive assistant to the super-

intendent for Hermiston School District, said the district “fully intends” to have a high school swim team in the coming year, but the details were still being worked out. In the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association, which Hermiston just joined, boys swim season is in winter and girls swim is in fall.

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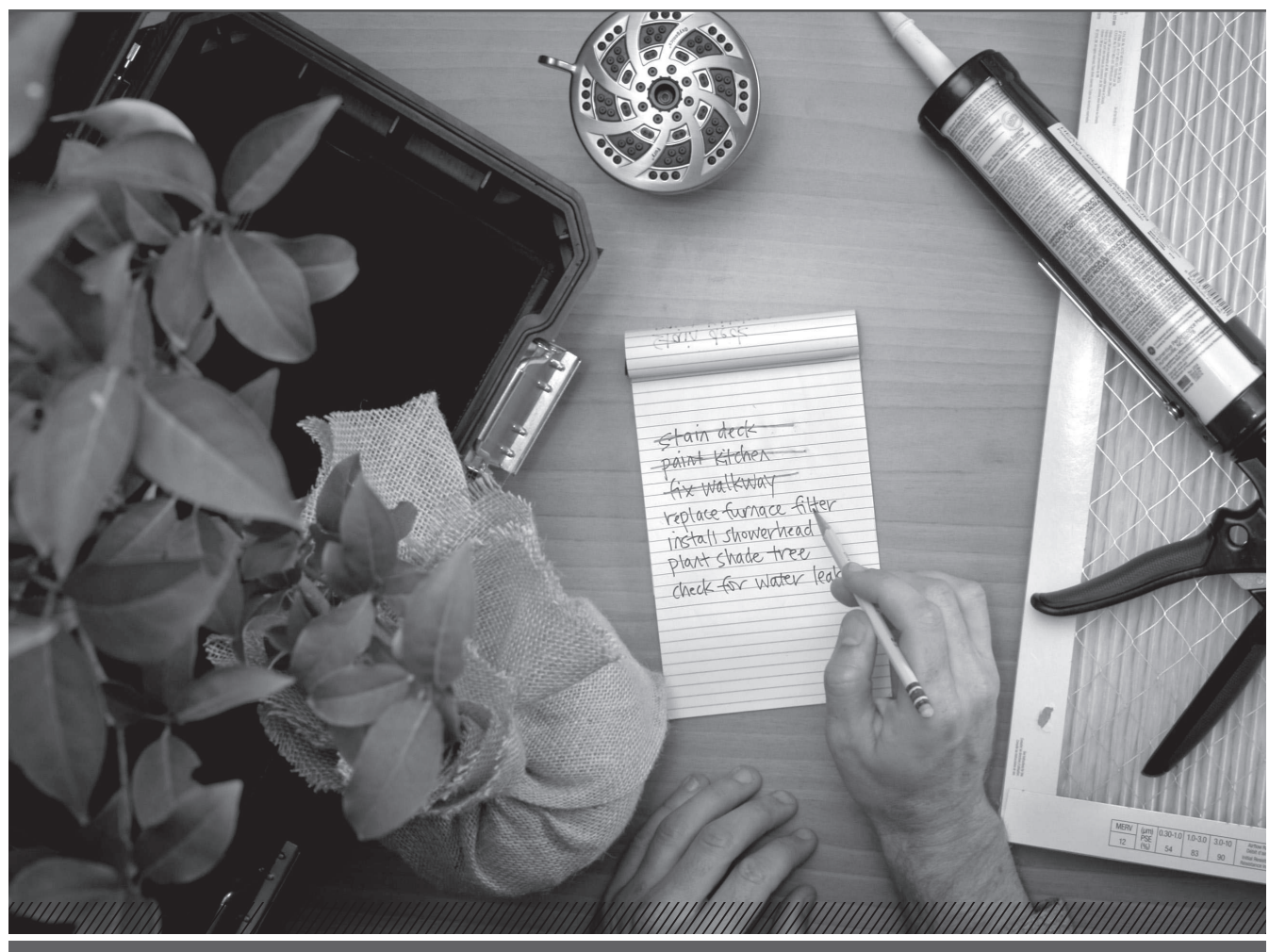
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