



Report: Rural communities face obstacles amid climate change

By RFD-TV News Staff
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WASHINGTON, D.C. (RFD-TV) Climate change is here, says a new report release Tuesday, and it's already wrecking homes, harming health and hurting our economy. The scientists who put together the study say it connects the dots to show global warming is making life tougher for many Americans right now.

Rare winter wildfires, record snowfall and an extremely cold winter this year are all proof our climate has changed, according to the [National Climate Assessment](#) released Tuesday, which was meant to jolt the nation into action.

"Really the loudest alarm bell to date signaling the need for urgent action," said White House Science Advisor John Holdren.

Scientists detailed regional effects, like the sea level rise that puts East Coast cities on tidal rivers, like Washington and Philadelphia, in more danger of flooding, or the record drought the West is facing.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's director of the Climate Change Program Office, William Hohenstein, wrote about the new report, which includes a chapter on rural communities, in a [blog post](#) after its release.

"The authors found that climate disruptions to agricultural production have increased in the past forty years and are projected to increase over the next twenty five years. By mid-century and beyond, these impacts will be increasingly negative on most crops and livestock," Hohenstein wrote.

He says researchers found that climate change will create obstacles for rural communities highly dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods.

While climate change can be lessened by tougher tailpipe standards and less use of fossil fuel, University of Maryland climatologist Raghu Murtugudde says there's another way.

"The heating and cooling of the buildings contributes over one-third of the greenhouse gas

emissions," said Murtugudde.

That would mean requiring more solar power, more efficient lighting and heating and cooling, he argued.

"These things actually can make a tremendous contribution from buildings to reducing carbon emission," said Murtugudde.

Opponents say new regulation is not warranted.

"I think that the American public is not motivated by trying to mitigate climate change, but probably more motivated by the impact on their pocket book," said Chip Knappenberger, with the CATO Insitute.

But global warming is already hitting the wallet, a point of the report President Barack Obama says he will use to push for tougher pollution controls.