

## **CLAIM: Global Warming Will ‘Prevent A Large Number Of Deaths’**

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The weight of evidence suggests global warming may, on net, end up saving lives through reducing the number and severity of cold spells, according to scientists.

“Based upon real-world data, it is obvious that global warming is going to directly prevent a large number of deaths,” Cato Institute scientists Patrick Michaels and Craig Idso wrote in a blog post Thursday analyzing weather mortality data.

“The truth be told, as shown by real-world numbers, humanity has much more to gain in terms of physical health from rising, as opposed to falling, temperatures,” they wrote.

The Cato scientists also pointed to a recent study looking at emergency room visits in 12 Chinese cities. Researchers found cold spells put more people in emergency rooms than heat waves.

That study found “the effects of cold spells on emergency department visits were much more persistent, lasting a full 30 days compared to the more acute, but short lived, effects of warm spells that lasted a mere three days,” Michaels and Idso wrote.

For years, environmentalists have argued global warming will result in more heat wave deaths. A recent study by the Natural Resources Defense Council even claimed President Donald Trump’s withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement “could cause summertime deaths to jump by almost 2,100 percent by the 2090s.”

Global warming-driven heat waves could kill “as many as 29,850 a year by the end of the century,” NRDC found in a June study analyzing future heat deaths in the 45 largest U.S. cities.

Michaels and Idso take issue with such predictions, pointing to a 2003 paper (co-authored by Michaels) that found as “heat waves become more frequent, heat-related deaths decrease because of adaptation,” the two wrote in their blog post.

Basically, people will adapt to rising temperatures. People can buy air conditioners and come up with better ways to warn the public about the dangers of heat waves.

“Given that our cities are heating up on their own—without needing a push from greenhouse gases—under our hypothesis, heat-related mortality should be dropping, which it is,” Michaels and Idso wrote.

Even if it's true that more people could die due to increased heat waves, one needs to take into account fewer cold spells in the future. Real-world data suggests lives would be saved, on net, because of fewer cold spells.

The Lancet published a study in 2015 on temperature-related mortality that analyzed more than 74 million deaths going back to the mid-1980s. Researchers found deaths from cold spells outweighed heat deaths by a 17 to 1 ratio.