



Experts Plant False Climate Narrative

By: John Stossel- August 7, 2013

Global average temperature has been flat for a decade. But frightening myths about global warming continue.

We're told there are more hurricanes now. We're told that hurricanes are stronger. But the National Hurricane Center says it isn't so.

Meteorologist Maria Molina told me it's not surprising that climatologists assumed hurricanes would get worse. "Hurricanes need warm ocean waters," but it turns out that "hurricanes are a lot more complicated than just warm ocean waters."

Computer models have long predicted nasty effects from our production of greenhouse gases. But the nasty effects have not appeared. As far as hurricanes, more hit the United States in the 1880s than recently.

Why do people believe that global warming has already created bigger storms? Because when "experts" repeatedly tell us that global warming will wreck the Earth, we start to fit each bad storm into the disaster narrative that's already in our heads.

Also, attention-seeking media wail about increased property damage from hurricanes. And it's true! Costs have grown! But that's because more people build on coastlines, not because storms are stronger or more frequent.

Also, thanks to modern media and camera phones, we hear more about storms, and see the damage. People think Hurricane Katrina, which killed 1,800 people, was the deadliest storm ever. But the 1900 Galveston hurricane killed 10,000 people. We just didn't have so much media then.

Climatologist Patrick Michaels, director of the Center for the Study of Science at the Cato Institute, says humans don't have as much impact on global temperature as the doomsayers feared.

"Forecasts of global warming — particularly in the last two years — have begun to come down," he says. "We're seeing the so-called 'sensitivity' of temperature being reduced by 40 percent in the new climate models. It means we're going to live."

Michaels is tired of dire predictions. "I have lived through nine end-of-the-world environmental apocalypses, beginning with (the 1962 environmental book) 'Silent Spring,' and, you know, we're still here."

As a consumer reporter, I fell for dire predictions about cellphones, Y2K, and pesticides.

Maybe the new scare will be killer bees, flesh-eating bacteria, or bird flu. The media always hype something.

Since this is hurricane season, let's at least debunk one specific myth about preparing for hurricanes: the idea you should use masking tape to put X's on your windows. Government brochures did recommend that in the 1930s, but now the National Hurricane Center calls it a mistake.

It won't stop glass from shattering, says Molina, but "now you have larger pieces of glass — potentially deadlier pieces of glass — flying around . . . What you should be doing during a hurricane is be in a room with no windows and in a lower part of your home."

I'm a global warming skeptic not because I don't believe the world will get warmer. It may. Climate changes. It always has. Man's carbon output *might* make it worse.

But just because humans sometimes damage the environment doesn't mean government is competent to fix the problem. That's the biggest myth of all.

Government is the same institution that takes over forests to "protect" them — but then builds logging roads into forests to cut down trees that unsubsidized, private roads might never have reached. The forests end up smaller, but people still assume they're safer in government hands than in greedy private hands.

Government is the institution that puts itself in charge of caring for wildlife but recently sent a dozen armed agents into a Wisconsin animal shelter to seize and kill a baby deer named Giggles who was being nursed back to health there, since Giggles wasn't in the right type of approved shelter.

When government screws up, we're supposed to say, "They meant well." When individuals pursuing their own interests screw up, we're supposed to feel ashamed of industrial civilization and let government punish and control us all. If we let it do that, government will do to the economy what it did to Giggles.