

Federal report: Arctic much worse since 2006

December 1 2011, By SETH BORENSTEIN , AP Science Writer

(AP) -- Federal officials say the Arctic region has changed dramatically in the past five years - for the worse.

It's melting at a near record pace, and it's darkening and absorbing too much of the sun's heat.

A new report card from the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) gives the polar region close to failing grades. It faults both global warming and recent localized weather shifts.

A [NASA satellite](#) found that 430 billion metric tons of ice melted in Greenland from 2010 to 2011, and the melting is accelerating.

What's even more troubling to scientists is that there's been a record darkening of the normally white Arctic land and sea. White snow and ice reflects solar energy, but a melting darker Arctic in the summer absorbs that heat.

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