

# Global warming skeptics cite personal weather observations as the key reason for their views

July 9 2015, by Greta Guest

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The number of Americans who believe there is evidence of global warming rose to 63 percent after a memorable winter that included record cold and snow in the Northeast and historic warmth and drought in the West, according to a University of Michigan survey.

A new report from the National Surveys on Energy and Environment showed an 8 percentage point increase in the belief in global warming from Spring 2014 and a 3 percentage point increase from last fall.

The survey is a joint effort of the Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy at U-M's Ford School of Public Policy and the Muhlenberg Institute of Public Opinion at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pa.

"Having gathered public opinion about belief in [climate change](#) twice a year for the last seven years allows us to link [public opinion](#) to weather data," said Barry Rabe, U-M professor of [public policy](#) and director of the Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy.

"It allows us to see, for example, that while belief in global warming typically falls over the cold winter months, in winters with temperatures substantially above average—such as winter 2012 and winter 2015—belief in climate change actually rises."

The survey continues to find evidence that views on global warming and perceptions of weather are closely connected. Those who think global warming is occurring increasingly attribute their position to the effects of severe droughts and extreme weather in areas of the United States, while those who do not believe global warming is happening are also increasingly citing personal observation of weather as the primary factor for their position.

The spring survey marks the highest percentage—45 percent—of weather-observation reasoning among those expressing doubt in global warming since the NSEE began in 2008.

Majorities of Democrats (76 percent) and Independents (60 percent) believe there is evidence of global warming while Republicans remain divided with 45 percent who agree that [global warming](#) is occurring and 42 percent who do not think it exists.

The random telephone survey of 751 American adults was conducted April 8-30. The [survey](#) had a margin of error of 3.5 percent.

Provided by University of Michigan

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