

# Extreme heat waves expected to intensify as global temperatures rise, says expert

July 22 2022

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Credit: Pixabay

Record high temperatures and extreme weather patterns, like those happening now throughout Europe and the U.S., are predicted to increase in frequency and intensity in the future, says Craig Ramseyer,

an assistant professor who studies climate modeling in the department of geography at Virginia Tech.

"Climate change is here and it's already changing human behavior and causing significant societal impacts," he said. "As [global temperatures](#) rise, historically excessive temperatures are more likely to occur."

Ramseyer says [heat waves](#) are the most concerning because of the lack of attention they normally receive.

"Hurricanes, tornadoes, and [flash floods](#) drive more media attention because of the innate fascination with the visual intensity of those types of hazards. However, heat does not tend to be as fascinating and it becomes very difficult to communicate the danger to the public," said Ramseyer. "Around the world, more fatalities occur due to [extreme heat](#) than from hurricanes, flooding, and drought combined. It disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable of our citizens who do not have adequate access to [air conditioning](#), water, and other important resources."

Since the Earth is running warmer than it used to, Ramseyer says that when these heat wave related weather patterns are in place, it results in higher extreme temperatures than we used to experience 30 years ago.

"As a global community, we need to prioritize decreasing carbon emissions. We have rapidly evolving technologies that are going to help expedite the process, but the faster the better, there is no time to waste."

Craig Ramseyer is an assistant professor in the Department of Geography at Virginia Tech. His primary area of research focuses on tropical rainfall, particularly in the Caribbean, and how climate change is likely to change drought and flooding. His other published research has examined weather impacts on football player mortality, [climate change](#)

impacts on severe convective environments, and moisture impacts on Greenland ice melt.

Provided by Virginia Tech

Citation: Extreme heat waves expected to intensify as global temperatures rise, says expert (2022, July 22) retrieved 23 June 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2022-07-extreme-global-temperatures-expert.html>

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