

Wild Weather

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Recently, storms of all kinds have increased in severity. You've probably heard about massive snowstorms in the East, stronger hurricanes in the Southeast, and more tornadoes in the Midwest.

No one knows for sure what's causing this stormy weather. Natural weather cycles have probably contributed to the deluge, but global climate change is likely playing a role.

These storms are impressive and some can be dangerous. If one is headed your way, listen to the warnings and stay safe!



Photo Credit: iStockphoto.com

Weather Fact

The most common type of storm is the thunderstorm: There are about 50,000 of them on Earth every single day. Lightning strikes Earth more than 100 times each second!

A dust storm blows through the valley near Independence, CA. Dust storms are common in arid and semi-arid regions. They arise when strong winds blow loose sand and dirt from a dry surface. Massive dust storms can be observed by Earth orbiting satellites. They mostly occur in the Sahara and drylands around the Arabian peninsula as well as China.



Photo Credit: UCAR

Deadly Lack of Warning

You wouldn't have wanted to be in Galveston, Texas in September 1900. A hurricane smashed into the low-lying coastal city, killing between 6,000 and 12,000 people and leaving another 30,000 homeless. Modern prediction methods didn't exist yet, so the onslaught caught everyone off guard. Such devastation is unlikely today because we monitor hurricanes carefully and can accurately predict when and where they will make landfall.



Photo Credit: Library of Congress

The 1900 hurricane wiped out nearly all of Galveston, including telegraph lines. Survivors had to travel by boat to seek help.