



THEY CAN'T KEEP THE LIGHTS ON!

Heatwaves, Climate Change
& Energy!



August 2026

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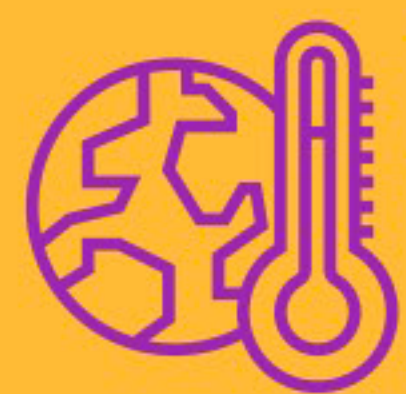
Heatwaves, Climate Change & Energy!

? WHAT IS A HEATWAVE?

A heatwave is an extended period of warmer than average weather. It can last for several days to weeks, with temperatures that are higher than normal for the region. Heatwaves are incurred by moving warm air "heat domes".



Warm SSTs, increasing air temperatures and intensified humidity are additions to heatwaves which can be a threat to public health.



Globally, heatwaves can bring more risks which can impact agriculture, wildfires and power outages.



HEAT WAVES & THE CARRIBEAN

In the Caribbean, the El Niño Southern Oscillation or ENSO may influence heat extremes by driving regional circulation, which can make conditions drier.

There has been an increase in frequency, intensity and the lifespan of heatwaves in the Caribbean over the past several decades, which show the increase in daily minimum temperatures.

It is also notable that there's higher heat after tropical cyclones and storms pass the region!

⚡ HOW DO ENERGY GRIDS WORK WITH HEAT?

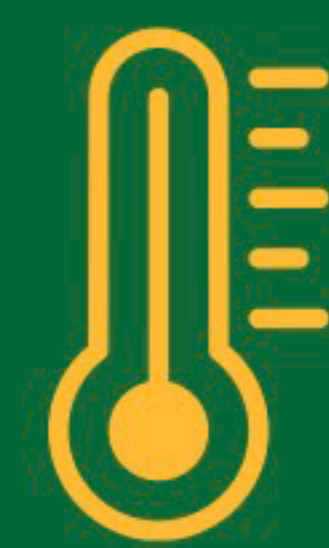


There is a higher demand for energy when there is increased heat, which puts strain on the energy grid as more people use electricity to cool down.

- Generally, transmission lines and transformers can overheat and too much heat can degrade their performance which can lead to potential failures or fires.
- Over power lines, heat can increase resistance and make them less efficient. This can make it more difficult to move electricity over long distances.



Fossil fuels, such as coal and gas, are currently used for energy generation which can cause a climate change feedback loop.



Higher temperatures can also make power plants, such as nuclear plants, less efficient especially if they rely on water for cooling when the water is too warm. Therefore, this makes these power plants give less output or plants may have to shut down.

- For example, Romania shut down nuclear plants in August 2026 according to CNBC!

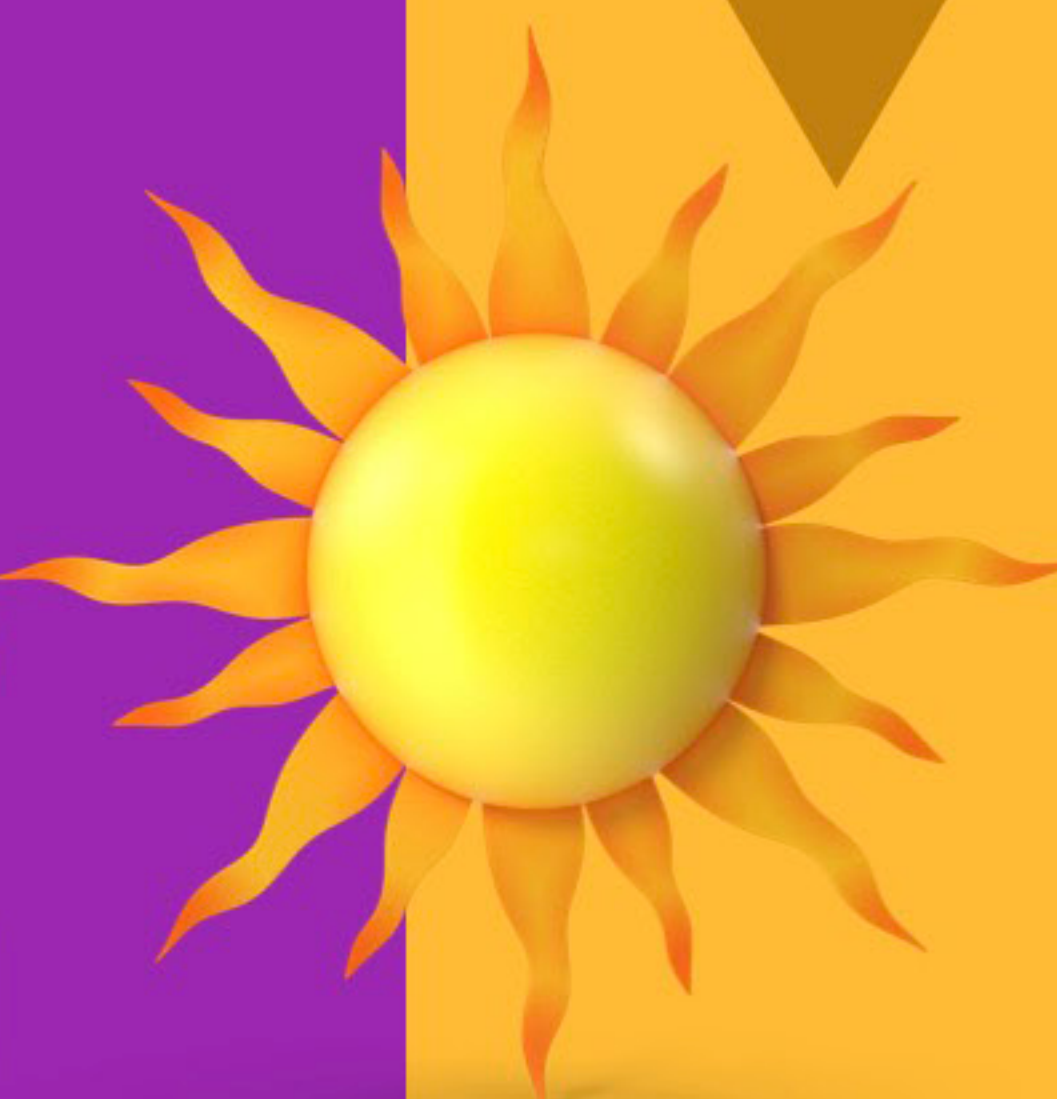


Ironically, heat can also impact alternative energy. Solar panel output efficiency can be reduced by 10 - 25% due to hot temperatures.

HEATWAVES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

With climate change, heatwaves are expected to become more frequent.

- Over the past fifty years, Caribbean summer heatwaves have increased by one event by decade with peak heat index values going up by 0.11°F or 0.06°C every summer.
- The days for heatwaves have also increased by 2 - 3 days per decade in Cuba, the Yucatán Peninsula, Haiti, and Puerto Rico.



Strong El Niño phases, such as the one projected this year, have been known to amplify heatwaves in the Caribbean with increases in temperature and time period of the heatwaves.

- While La Niña events (cool phase) have been shown to suppress heatware activity.
- Urban heat indexes, landscape transformation and development also have impacts on heatwaves.

According to the Energy Adaptation Roadmap from the Climate Impact Lab at the University of Chicago, most of Latin America and the Caribbean should consume more electricity due to climate change compared to now! 46 out of 50 countries are expected to increase electricity for cooling (like for A/C) by 2050. The Bahamas is projected to see one of the countries with largest absolute increases in electricity consumption.

HEATWAVES & HEALTH



According to the World Health Organization, heat is also an occupational health hazard as heat stress is a main cause of weather-related mortality and can amplify other illnesses, such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, asthma and mental health.

Along with heatstroke, there can be higher transmission of infectious diseases.

The global increase of exposure for people due to climate change is increasing, with higher mortality for people over 65 years old.



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WHAT CAN WE DO?

Keep a cool home:

- With open windows at night, air can cool down your home if the temperature is lower.
- During the day, close windows and cover them with blinds or shutters to block sunlight.
- Unplug as many electrical devices as possible. Only use electrical fans when temperatures are below 40°C or 104°F or else the fans will heat the body rather than cool it.
- With air conditioning, have the thermostat to 27°C or 81°F with an electric fan to keep the room cool and to save on your electric bill.
- It will be cooler outdoors under the shade!



Stay out of the heat:

- Trying to keep inside during the hottest time of the day and avoid arduous activity.
- Stay under the shade.
- Spend 2 - 3 hours in a cool place in the day.
- If you go swimming, be careful! Pay attention to official heat warnings.
- Avoid direct sunlight and watch for the UV



Stay cool and hydrated:

- Keep light and loose-fitting clothes and bed linens.
- Take cool showers and baths.
- Wet a damp cloth or light cloth to keep your skin cool.
- Drink water regularly with about one cup of water per hour or maybe 2 - 3 litres per day.
- Keep checking in with vulnerable people in your community.



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