

## How climate change and the rise of severe weather affects A-State

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NEWS EDITOR

Jonesboro and much of the state was forecast for severe weather over the past two weeks, causing Arkansas State University to go on high alert. As the amount of severe weather systems has increased, climate scientists and meteorologists are pointing to climate change as the cause.

According to the National Climate Assessment, which analyzes the effects of climate change on the environment, economy and human health, they have "observed the impacts of climate change for decades and that more frequent and intense extreme weather and climate-related events are creating new and increasing risks across U.S. communities."

Arkansas is located in the Dixie Alley, an area of the southern United States which is particularly vulnerable to tornadoes. March through May is peak tornado season for the state.

"We are seeing an increase in tornadic activity in Arkansas," said Amy Hyman, program director for disaster preparedness and emergency management. "We have more densely populated areas compared to the Midwest. We are seeing greater effects from these events because there's more people and infrastructure in those areas that are being hit."

According to a study by the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society,

the number of supercells nationwide will increase by 6.6%. How long the storms last will increase by 25.8%.

This opens the door for more situations similar to March 31, which saw a series of tornadoes ripping across The South. The outbreak spawned nine EF-3 tornadoes and resulted in five deaths in Arkansas.

In response to the March 31 storm, A-State shut down campus at 1 p.m. Although the tornado did not strike campus, Hyman saw the move as "putting safety first."

"We could potentially see more closings on campus in future events," Hyman said. "If we have legislation and codes that are in place that help us build better infrastructure and buildings to withstand these hazard events and will have less deaths and more minimal effects from these hazards."

Wyatt Reed, emergency operations and occupational safety specialist, said regardless of what is causing the weather patterns, Safety and Emergency Management prepares for the storms all the same.

"It doesn't change the way we prepare. I actively monitor weather-related research that examines trends and patterns in weather. We recognize them, mitigate and prepare for them and if needed respond to any incidents that occur from them," Reed said.

Climate change does not just result in increased storms. As the planet warms, more water evaporates into the atmosphere.

This causes a rise in precipitation, resulting in heavier snowfall.

This can result in snowstorms similar to the one that struck A-State over winter break, causing sprinkler systems to freeze and multiple buildings flooding. If climate change continues, the possibilities for another incident like this increases.

To prepare for more cold snaps, A-State would need to work on upgrading infrastructure.

"As we progress as a society, our building codes get stricter on things like that. The sprinkler systems that we have, actually by code, cannot be insulated. There's some things that you can't necessarily prepare for. A lot of that just goes back into upgrading infrastructure," Reed said.

As severe storms increase, Hyman wanted students to be aware of what to do during a tornado, saying she's had students tell her they've completely ignored tornado warnings.

Hyman said students need to identify a safe space, whether that be a storm shelter or basement. If a student can't get underground, they need to go to the innermost portion of their house or apartment.

"If you're on a higher floor like a second or third storey apartment, maybe make friends with someone on the first level or hopefully your apartment complex has a common area," Hyman said. "The city of Jonesboro has several community shelters you can go to, the Student Union is even

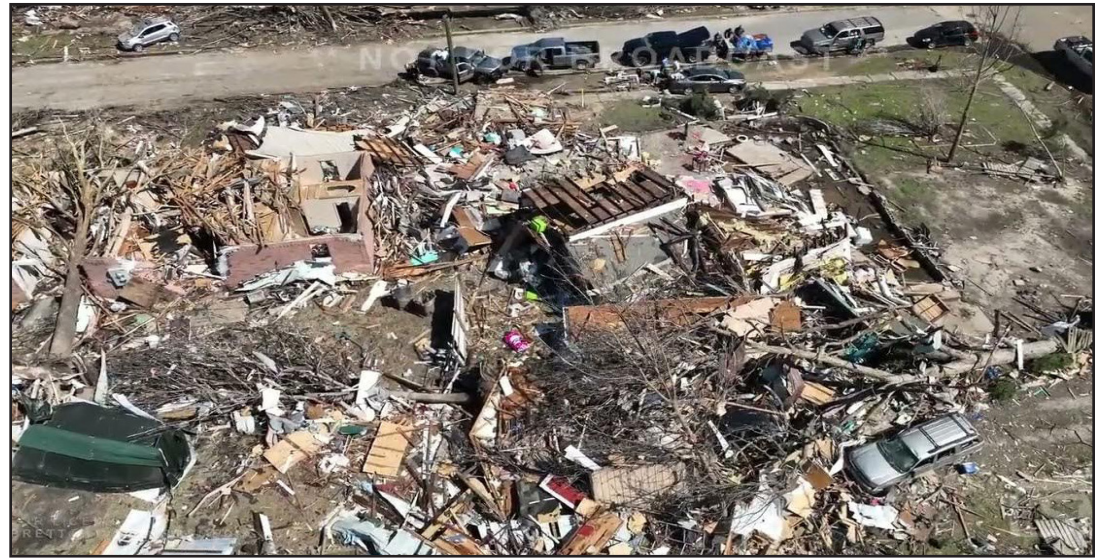


PHOTO COURTESY OF YOUTUBE

An overhead shot of Wynne after the tornado blew through on March 31. Storms similar to this could increase as the planet warms.



Photo by Rachel Rudd | News Editor

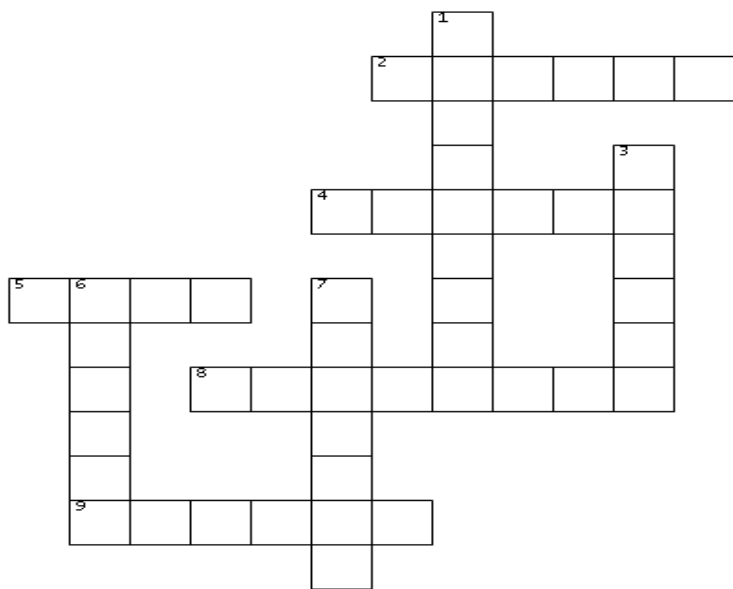
The A-State campus after an ice storm closed campus for three days. As the planet warms, increased water evaporation leads to more moisture in the atmosphere, causing more snowfall.

opened up to the community." Finally, Hyman recommends having a backpack ready containing an extra change of clothes, medication, important documents, as

well as some food and water. If students want to learn more about preparing for severe weather, April 17 will be Severe Weather Awareness Day. It will take place on

the Heritage Front Lawn from 11 a.m. through 1 p.m. Meteorologist Ryan Vaughan from KAIT-8 will be there, along with the StormTracker.

## This week's crossword puzzle



**DOWN**

- 1. a person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task.
- 3. a hard crystalline metamorphic form of limestone, typically white with mottling or streaks of color, that is capable of taking a polish and is used in sculpture and architecture
- 6. moral principles that govern a person's behavior or the conducting of an activity
- 7. belonging to the present time; happening or being used or done now

**ACROSS**

- 2. a starchy plant tuber which is one of the most important food crops, cooked and eaten as a vegetable
- 4. a long curved fruit which grows in clusters and has soft pulpy flesh and yellow skin when ripe
- 5. a long, sturdy piece of squared timber or metal spanning an opening or part of a building, usually to support the roof or floor above
- 8. a large, tall cabinet in which clothes may be hung or stored
- 9. the season after winter and before summer, in which vegetation begins to appear

**THEATRE, CONTINUED**

Kit Joseph of Poplar Bluff, Mo., serves as sound engineer, and the light board operator is Lindsey Zimmer of Jonesboro. Wardrobe crew consists of Abi Adams of Charlotte, N.C., and Connor Zane Brewer of Conway. Fernanda Posadas of Sherwood is the house manager. Baylor McElhancy is the publicist. All crew members

also are theatre majors. Parents are cautioned the show is not suitable for all ages because of profanity and mature themes. Tickets for "Trail to Oregon" can be purchased 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday at the A-State Box Office in First National Bank Arena or by calling (870) 972-2781. Tickets

may also be purchased online at [AState.edu/tickets](https://www.astate.edu/tickets). Prices are \$10 for seniors and A-State faculty and staff, and \$12-17 for the general public. A-State student tickets are free at the box office with a student ID. Limited seating is available, so it is recommended that patrons reserve seats in advance.

**CAMPUS CRIME, CONTINUED**

She stated that she was not sure why the alarms were going off and all she had done was turned on the heat. UPD did not smell any smoke or see any sign of fire. Jonesboro Fire Department arrived on scene and said the alarm could be silenced. Suspect one received a residence hall violation for failing to comply. **April 4 | 11:42 p.m.** Officer Dustin Mitchell

was dispatched to 1115 University Loop East Building 3 for an intoxicated woman. On scene, officers made contact with three individuals who said arrestee one was highly intoxicated and they could not get her back to her room. All suspects said they were drinking alcohol in their room prior to the incident. Mitchell made contact with arrestee one and she could not

stand without assistance. She also had bloodshot eyes, slurred speech, and smelled of alcohol. Due to her being a danger to herself and others, Mitchell elected to arrest arrestee one. Arrestee one was transported to the Craighead County Jail for public intoxication date of April 26, 9 a.m.

**EXHIBIT, CONTINUED**

The story that was from the only child in the exhibit said this, "I was sleeping. He would come into my room at night. I didn't like what he did to me. I cried and wet the bed."

If you or someone you know is or has been sexually assaulted please reach out to one of the contacts listed: NEA Family Crisis Center emergency hotline at (870)

933-9449, the Title IX office at (870) 972-2015, University Police at (870) 972-2093 or the National Sexual Assault hotline at 1-800-656-4673.