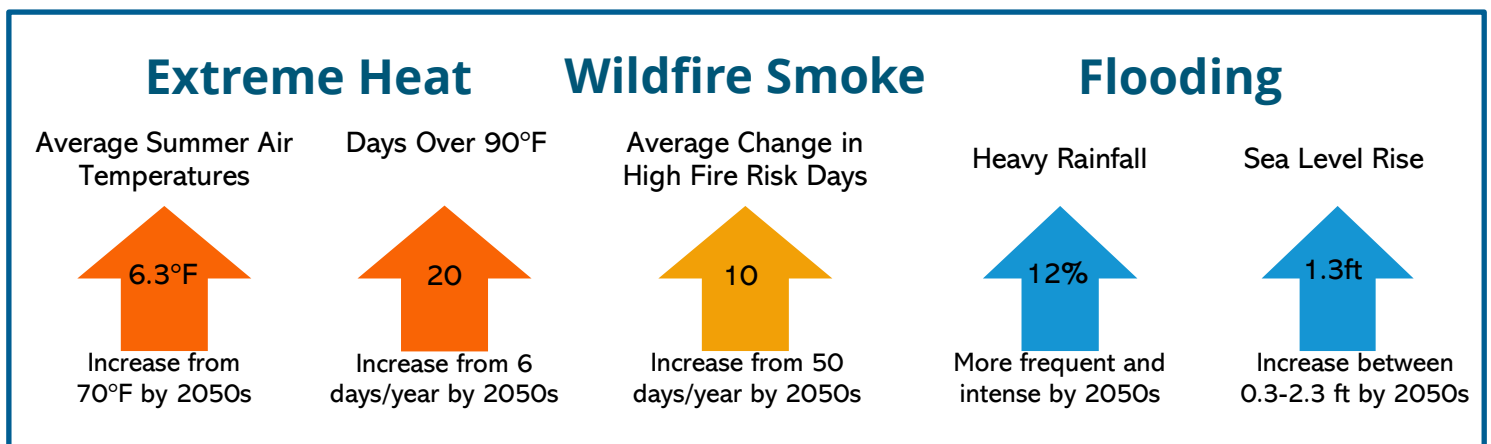


Climate Change & Pierce County: Communities

Pierce County Planning and Public Works conducted a climate vulnerability assessment to better understand what changes the county is likely to experience, which communities and county assets are most at risk, and what the county and its partners can do to reduce the potential harms caused by climate change.

Climate change presents many challenges for Pierce County. Warmer temperatures, more extreme heat days, wildfire smoke, and flooding will be among the most challenging for community members.



Infrastructure

- Increased heat causes wear and tear on roads and other asphalt surfaces, making them unsafe to drive on and increasing maintenance costs.
- Extreme heat is more noticeable in areas with little shade and high pavement cover.
- There is likely to be an increased need for cooling centers such as libraries during high heat days.
- Wildfire smoke can cause transportation delays and cancellations by reducing visibility.
- Flooding may cause road closures and transit delays.



Between June 26-28, 2021, temperatures reached 107°F in South Prairie causing the pavement along SR 162 to warp and elevate nearly four inches. Source: WSDOT

Homes and Buildings

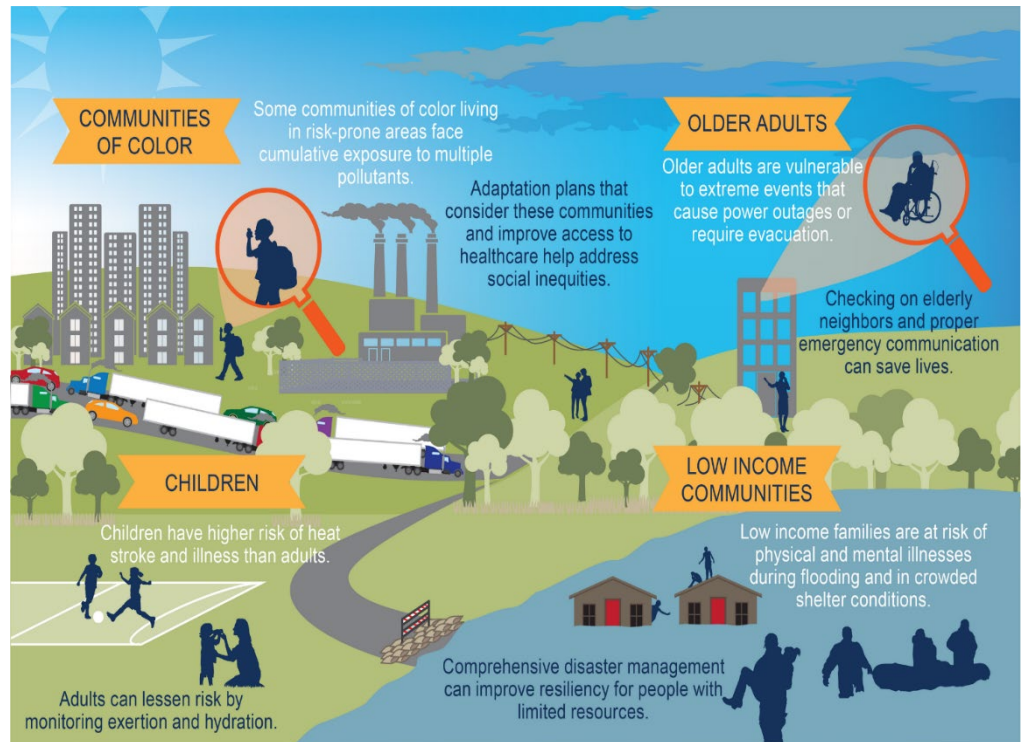
- Flooding will affect homes, roads, community centers, hospitals, grocery stores, farms, and other facilities.
- There will be an increased demand for air conditioning and energy. Many homes and buildings are not currently equipped with adequate cooling or ventilation.
- Extreme heat can cause some building materials to warp (e.g., wood) or crack (e.g., concrete).
- Wildfires may damage or destroy homes and buildings.



Flooding in Purdy, January 2022. Source: Pierce County

Human Health

- Heat and wildfire smoke will affect human health, especially for those that are already at risk, such as those with respiratory diseases, older people, children, low-income families, and persons of color.
- Heat and smoke may cause closures of important community centers, such as schools, businesses, and parks.
- Extreme heat, wildfires, and flooding may damage treaty-protected resources for the Nisqually, Puyallup, and Muckleshoot tribal communities.



Source: EPA in the Fourth National Climate Assessment.

Actions You Can Take

- Engage with Pierce County PPW on climate change, land use planning, and more to make your voice heard by taking the survey at the QR code to the right or emailing CompPlanUpdate@PierceCountyWa.gov.
- Connect with your local Neighborhood Emergency Team (PC NET) to create a network of people who can provide and receive assistance in the event of an emergency.
- Plant trees and other plants around your property to provide local shade and air quality improvements.
- Support companies that are taking action on climate change (www.behindthebrands.org).



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