

# Toolkit on Municipal Extreme Heat & Air Quality Preparedness in Connecticut



12.06.2024

Reece Pauling & Sena Wazer

# Team Introductions

## Reece Pauling

- 1st year, Master of Environmental Management Student, Yale School of the Environment
- From Washington, D.C.



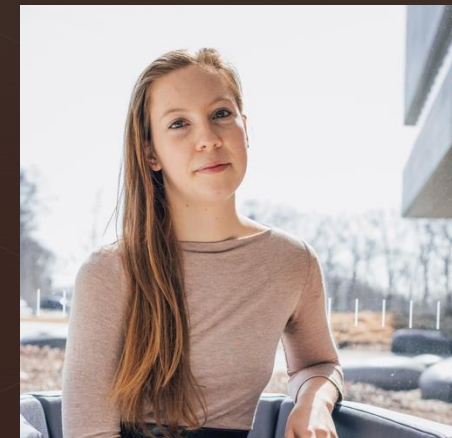
## Jennifer Wang

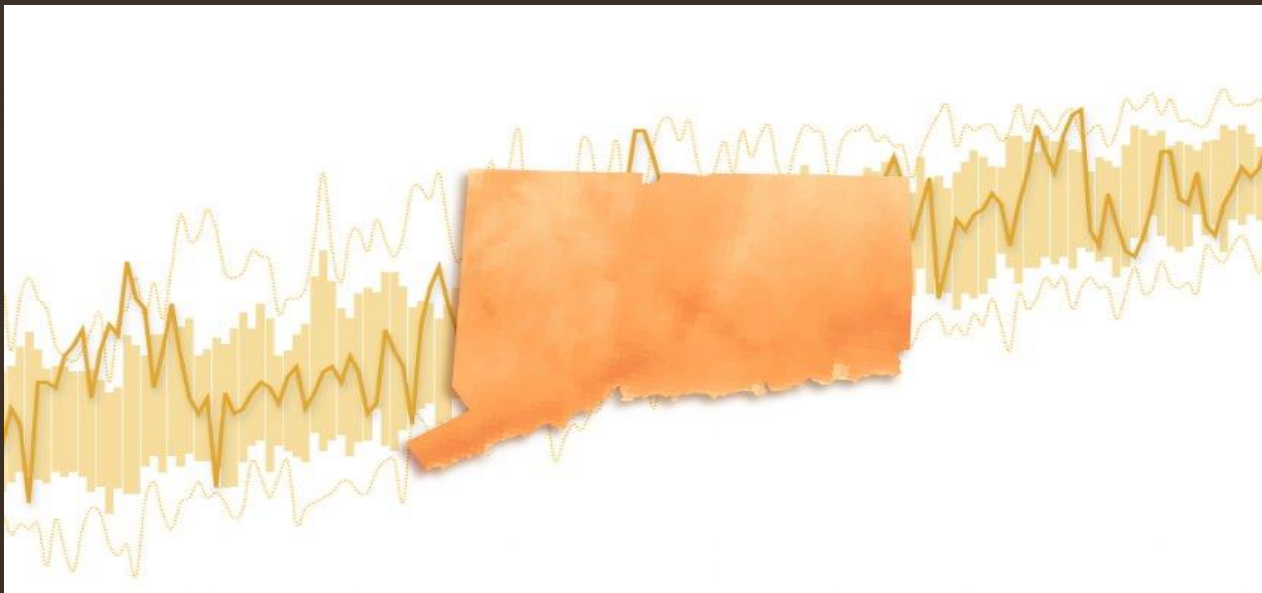
- Faculty Supervisor; Executive Director of the Yale Center on Climate Change and Health
- From Glastonbury, CT



## Sena Wazer

- 1st year, Master of Environmental Management Student, Yale School of the Environment
- From Mansfield, CT





Weiss, A., Haseman, J., Huang, L., & Zhao, Y. (2024). How does Connecticut's weather compare to "normal"? check the charts.

# Webinar Agenda

- Introduction to the project
- Introduction to the Template for Municipal Extreme Heat and Air Quality Response Plan
- Introduction to the website and additional resources
- Future considerations
- Questions

# Introduction to the Toolkit

- **Purpose:**
  - To serve as a **guiding resource** for Connecticut local health departments, *including but not limited to* those receiving Pilot Grants for Local Heat and Air Quality Preparedness and Response Planning.
  - To be a **living document** that will be periodically updated based on feedback gathered from its usage.
- **Developed based on:** ~20 extreme heat and air quality response plans across the U.S., including municipalities in California, Maine, Connecticut, and Colorado
- **Partners:**
  - Connecticut Department of Public Health
  - Connecticut Climate and Health Equity Coalition
  - Staff from local health departments in CT
- **Supported by:** Climate-Ready States and Cities Initiative grant from CDC

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# Template for Municipal Extreme Heat and Air Quality Response Plan

## TEMPLATE: MUNICIPAL EXTREME HEAT & AIR QUALITY RESPONSE PLAN

Version 1.0: December 6, 2024

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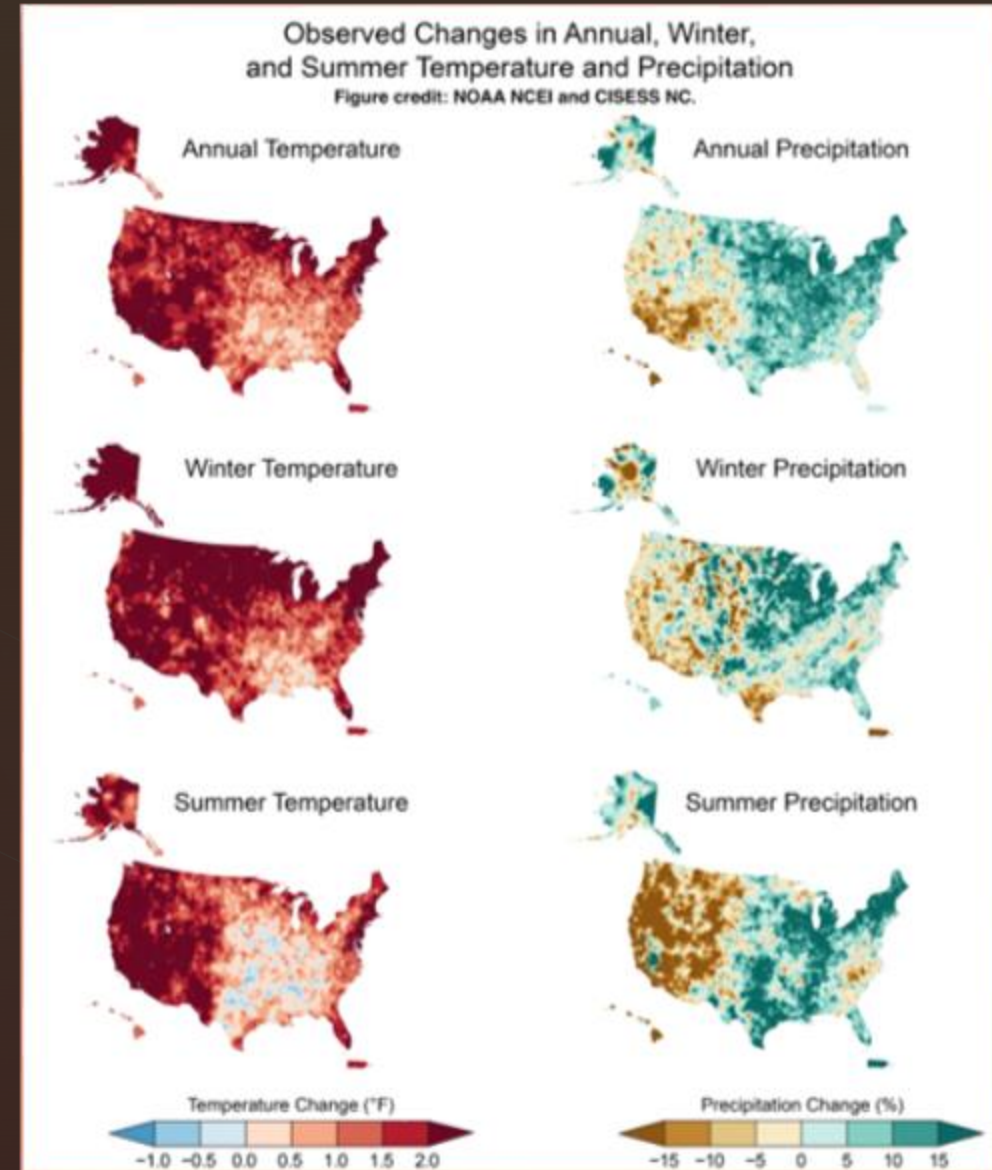
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# Template Scope

- Extreme heat
- Air quality, with a specific focus on ground-level ozone and PM2.5
- Effects on vulnerable populations
- Interactions with other impacts, such as indoor air quality

## Why is this important right now?

- As climate change worsens, so does the impact of extreme heat in CT
- Extreme heat is positively correlated with both ground-level ozone and PM2.5 from wildfire smoke
- CT already faces high asthma rates, among other respiratory diseases and health disparities



# Stakeholder Roles & Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Responsibility	Example
Federal Government	Track weather and notify of weather conditions, triggering state and local action accordingly.	National Weather Service (NWS) and State of Connecticut
State Governments	Deploying social media alerts, issuing notices to towns throughout the state, and contacting state agencies.	Division of Emergency Management & Homeland Security (DEMHS)
Local Governments	Serve as the primary initiator and coordinator of the Response Plan.	Mayor's office
Community Based, Local and Non-profit Organizations	Support service provision and plan operationalization based on local government guidance.	Places of worship and Senior Centers



# Activation Phases & Activities

- Pre-seasonal
- Seasonal
- Heat Emergency
- Air Quality Event
- Post-Event

**Heat Emergency**  
 Outline actions taken immediately before and during a heat emergency++

**Example:**

Task	Office of Emergency Management	Health Department	Mayor's Office	Other
Activate community cooling resources (e.g., cooling centers, pools, splash pads) and notify the city of any closures or other operational changes	X		X	211 Connecticut  Places of worship, senior centers, and other community centers  Community Services Administration (i.e., department or office dedicated to addressing residential health and social well-being)  Parks & Public Works  Public libraries
Boost public communication materials on safety and protective measures during periods of extreme heat	X	X	X	Public libraries; police, fire, and EMS; parks & public works; public schools; CBOs, NGOs, and Direct service organizations
Coordinate sheltering and additional services (e.g., food, water, shelter hotline) for houseless and underhoused community members		X	X	Community Services Administration (i.e., department or office dedicated to addressing residential health and social well-being)  Local shelters (e.g., Columbus House and Martha's Place in New Haven, Pacific House in Stamford)  Social Services  Local organizations serving underhoused populations and those experiencing homelessness

*Example from Heat Emergency activation phase*

## Additional Action Oriented Sections

### Plan Maintenance

- Strategies for the local department in charge of annual review and updates
- Suggestions to gather stakeholder feedback and review resources

### Climate Change Resilience

- Short and long-term resilience strategies
- Focused on how the municipality can create a more resilient community and support residents in their resilience

### Communication Strategies

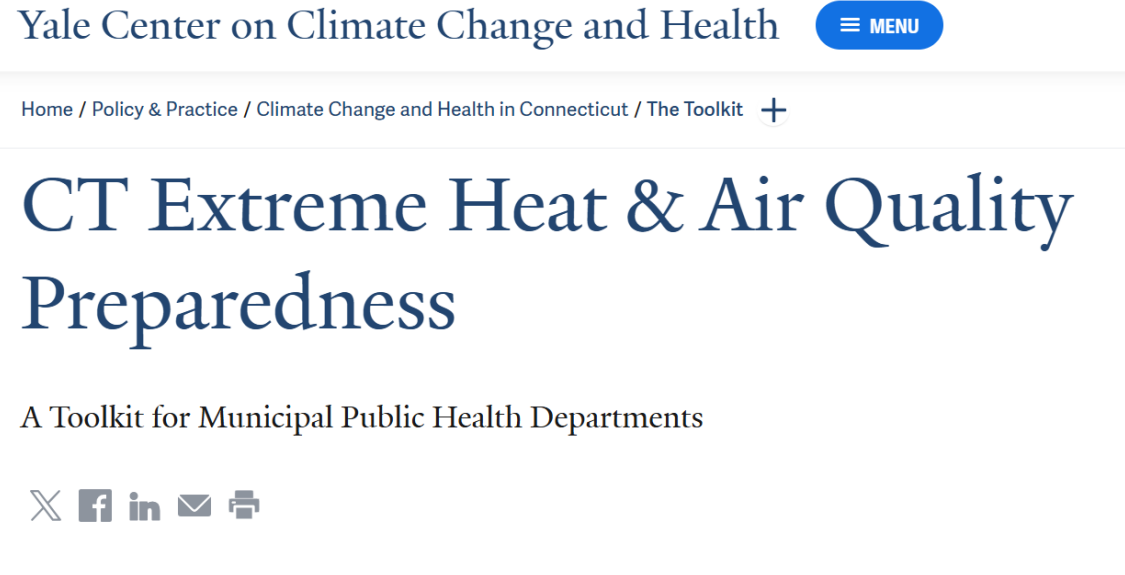
- Recommendations for internal / stakeholder and external public communication during different phases

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# Website

# Website & Additional Resources

- Easily accessible template
- Additional resources
- Updated as time goes on



The screenshot shows the top portion of a website. At the top left is the text 'Yale Center on Climate Change and Health' in a dark blue serif font. To its right is a blue button with a white hamburger menu icon and the word 'MENU' in white. Below this is a breadcrumb trail: 'Home / Policy & Practice / Climate Change and Health in Connecticut / The Toolkit +' in a smaller, dark blue sans-serif font. The main title 'CT Extreme Heat & Air Quality Preparedness' is displayed in a large, dark blue serif font. Below the title is the subtitle 'A Toolkit for Municipal Public Health Departments' in a smaller, dark blue sans-serif font. At the bottom of the page are five social media icons: a cross (likely for a print or share function), Facebook, LinkedIn, Email, and Print.

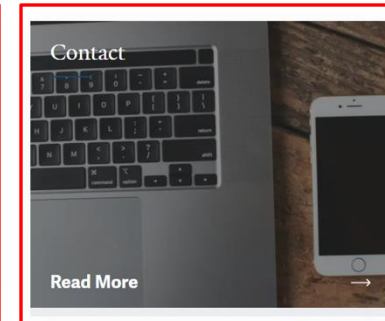
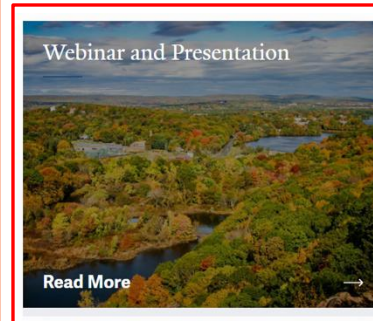
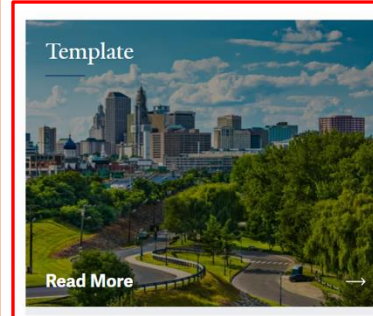
The Toolkit for Municipal Extreme Heat & Air Quality Response Planning in Connecticut is a set of resources developed by students and staff at the [Yale School of Public Health](#) and the [Yale School of the Environment](#) during Fall 2024 and prior semesters, with support from the [Yale Center on Climate Change and Health](#) and [Connecticut Department of Public Health](#), and with input from municipal health departments and professionals.

Drawing from nearly 20 extreme heat and/or air quality response plans across the U.S., the toolkit includes a template for local heat and air quality preparedness and response plans, highlights innovative strategies from municipalities in California, Maine, Connecticut, and Colorado, and provides shareable resources that can be adapted by local stakeholders.

Access the website now: [sph.yale.edu/climate-ct-toolkit](https://sph.yale.edu/climate-ct-toolkit)

# Website Pages

- Municipal Template
- Infographics + Additional Resources
  - Key considerations for communication and infographic tools
- Additional Info + Webinar
- Contact Info



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# Future Considerations

# Focus Group Feedback from Local Health Departments

Support	Actionability	Community Concerns	Collaborations
Roles and responsibilities overlap between government sectors, especially state and federal, and that becomes confusing. Knowing who does what for EHEs would be helpful.	Preparedness plans should also serve as a place with reminders for LHDs to know when to push out certain information.	Information regarding how vulnerable populations, specifically children, unhoused people, seniors and outdoor workers, can stay safe.	There are many people with different recommendations on climate resilience, and it is hard to know where to allocate or align funding most efficiently. A landing space for these opportunities would be helpful.

- Example responses:
  - “It would be helpful for LHDs to have a cadence for when different actions should be taken, including pre-scripted messages.”
  - “Schools look to public health departments for advice on how to go about activities and emergency announcements during extreme heat emergencies.”

# Opportunities to engage with the Toolkit & Climate and Health in Connecticut

- **TOOLKIT:**

- We welcome your feedback anytime → Email [jen.wang@yale.edu](mailto:jen.wang@yale.edu)
- Periodic updates → Check <https://sph.yale.edu/climate-ct-toolkit>

- **CLIMATE & HEALTH IN CONNECTICUT:**

- Save the date for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Connecticut Symposium on Climate Change and Health → **March 25, 2025, 9am-1pm @ Southern Connecticut State University**
- Join us at quarterly Climate and Health Equity Coalition meetings → **next meeting on January 15, 2025, 10:30am-12pm (virtual)**  
<https://portal.ct.gov/dph/climate-and-health/climate-and-health-equity-coalition>





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Connecticut Association of Directors of Health (CADH)

Annie Harper, PhD, Assistant Professor, Yale School of Medicine

Rin Dunleavy, Web Content Producer

Alix Rachman, MPH, Program Administrator for YCCCCH

Yanjia Li, 2nd Year MPH candidate

Webinar attendees

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# Q & A

For further questions, contact us at: [Jen.Wang@yale.edu](mailto:Jen.Wang@yale.edu)

Bookmark the toolkit site: <https://sph.yale.edu/climate-ct-toolkit>

**THANKS FOR YOUR INTEREST IN CLIMATE + HEALTH RESILIENCE!**