

Kylie Acklin

acklink001@mymail.mssu.edu

A REVIEW OF THE 2003 EUROPEAN HEAT WAVE

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Abstract

Due to the increased temperatures and drought across Europe in 2003, the continent experienced one of the most devastating heat waves the earth has ever seen. A heat wave is a period of excessively hot weather usually accompanied by high humidity relative to normal temperatures for the season as a result of a high pressure system moving into an area. As a result of that heat strokes, sun burn, drowning, decrease in crop productivity, dehydration, and increase mortality rate are linked to this weather event. In this research, I conducted a literature evaluation of multiple scholarly articles and summarized the information. The heatwave caused the average temperatures to rise 20-30% above average and over 70,000 deaths. A review across Europe showed that France, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Germany suffered the most significantly from the heat wave's effects. Evidence from this study showed although not common a heat wave can have an enormous impact on things as fragile as our health, economy, and climate.