

## EPA Mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator's Statement on Climate Change Adaptation

Like many of you, I recall learning about greenhouse gasses in elementary school – a time when shoveling the driveway for snow was a common winter chore and flooding was as rare as an east coast earthquake. Without a doubt, times have changed for us in the Mid-Atlantic Region, as it has for virtually every area of our world.

Some of EPA's 10 regions are experiencing too little water, leading to utility shortages, crop failure, and wildfires. Here in Region III, we have the opposite problem... too much water. Increases in extreme precipitation events can cause flooding that leads to destruction of property, devastation of livelihoods, and loss of life.

Recent news reports from the last year tell the tale: destructive floods in West Virginia and Philadelphia; tornados in suburban Maryland; saltwater intrusion contaminating drinking water throughout Delmarva; shifts in temperatures, rainfall, pests, and diseases affecting crop yields in Pennsylvania; temperatures in our cities making summer days not just unbearable, but unsafe; sea level rise eroding Delaware beaches, swallowing the Chesapeake's historic inhabited islands, and undermining the Navy's ability to conduct and support operations in Virginia, the largest naval base in the world.

The climate we had been accustomed to is no longer a reliable guide for what to expect in the future. And so, we are stepping up to do our part to minimize the causes and safeguard our people and environment to its impacts, with a special emphasis on our most vulnerable communities.

This Climate Adaptation Implementation Plan serves as Region III's response to President Biden's [Executive Order 14008, "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad,"](#) and Administrator Regan's direction in [EPA's National Climate Adaptation Action Plan](#). Our plan incorporates climate adaptation into everything we do at EPA while at the same time working to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions.

The plan has five overarching goals that guide our actions: 1) supporting community infrastructure and disaster resilience; 2) improving watershed and ecosystem health; 3) providing training and outreach; 4) developing maps and tools; and 5) seeking innovation for program and decision support.

The plan describes over thirty adaptation actions under these goals including: ensuring municipal drinking water and wastewater facilities can withstand climate impacts; understanding how Superfund clean-ups along our coasts can adapt to more intense storm surges; promoting natural wetlands along rivers and bays to protect from surges and store carbon; and working with our partners to protect the Chesapeake Bay.

Above all, our plan is intended to be outcome and action oriented. We will track progress on the actions described in this plan and work closely with our partners to increase climate resilience for all. We invite you to join us in this effort, as we are all in this together.



Adam Ortiz

Regional Administrator