



Courtesy NOAA



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UNDERSTAND THE EARTH

NOAA programs to understand Earth's Weather, Oceans, and Climate help make our homes and communities safer, and are important for reliable commerce and transportation. Water transportation is the backbone of the U.S. economy. Almost everyone travels in aircraft and motor vehicles. But airplanes, ships, trucks, and automobiles are all affected by bad weather. Delays due to bad weather cost U.S. airlines more than \$4 billion every year. Bad weather is also involved with over 1.5 million motor vehicle accidents each year; and these accidents caused about 800,000 injuries and 7,000 deaths. NOAA contributes to safe travel and transportation in many ways, including up-to-the-minute weather information and warnings from the National Weather Service, nautical and navigational charts, satellites that gather data on weather and ocean conditions around the world, and creating accurate maps of Earth's surface.

Besides understanding Earth's weather, NOAA also works to understand climate. Earth's climate has changed many times, and those changes can have a big impact

on life in America. When some of the first people arrived in North America between 15,000 and 30,000 years ago, two great ice sheets covered much of the continent. About 1,000 years ago, a prolonged drought forced the Anasazi people of the southwestern United States to abandon large settlements in Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. A shorter drought caused to the "dust bowl" in the midwestern U.S. during the 1930's. NOAA's climate programs focus on detecting signs of climate change, and on helping individuals and communities decide how to cope with the effects of changing climate.

Have fun Understanding the Earth with these activities from NOAA programs:

Satellite Communications

- Follow That Hurricane!
- Build Your Own Weather Station
- Be a Citizen Weather Reporter
- Tornado in a Bottle
- Tree Ring Detective
- Your Own El Niño
- Wooly Magma and more!

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