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Climate and State High Temperature Records—Where's the Beef?

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by *Steve Goreham*



The summer of 2012 will be remembered as a hot one by most Americans. Beginning with an unseasonably warm spring, the year continued with a prolonged heat wave into July and August in the Midwest and other locations. Temperatures exceeded triple digits for days in Colorado, Missouri, Indiana, Illinois, and many other heartland states, producing the worst agricultural drought since the 1950s. Temperatures were described by the news media as “broiling,” “sizzling,” “scorching,” “frying,” and “unprecedented.”

The U.S. corn crop was heavily impacted. By September 12, the U.S. Department of Agriculture had designated over 2,000 counties in 32 states as natural disaster areas. The U.S. corn harvest totaled 10.7 billion bushels, down 13 percent from 2011. Soybean production finished at 2.9 billion bushels, down 8 percent from 2011.

Climate alarmism was as hot as the weather. Dr. James Overpeck of the University of Arizona told the *Associated Press*,

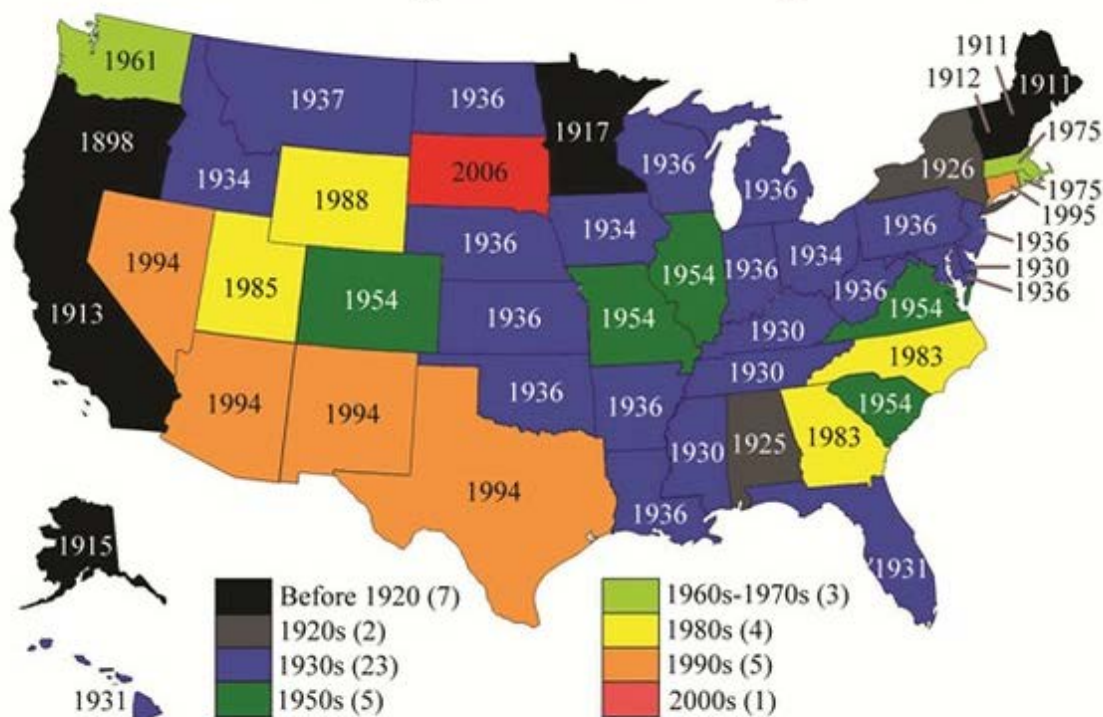
“This is certainly what I and many other climate scientists have been warning about...This is what global warming looks like at the regional or personal level.”

Articles in the *New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, and other publications blamed “human-induced climate change” for the heat wave. Proponents of Climatism, the belief that man-made greenhouse gas emissions are destroying Earth’s climate, proclaimed disaster from sea to shining sea.

The summer of 2012 is now over and all temperature data recorded. Guess how many states set new state high-temperature records in 2012? *None!* According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration (NOAA), not one of our 50 states set a new state high temperature record in 2012 (www.ncep.noaa.gov/extremes/seee).

Year and Decade of Highest U.S. State Temperature Records



The Mad, Mad, Mad World of Climatism, data from NOAA (2012)

When wildfires raged through Colorado in June, Dr. Michael Oppenheimer of Princeton University told *Reuters*,

“What we’re seeing is a window into what global warming really looks like...It looks like heat, it looks like fires, it looks like this kind of environmental disaster...”

Temperatures in Denver did reach 105°F in June, but this was far below the state record-high temperature of 114°F, set jointly in 1933 and 1954. Were Colorado wildfires worse in 1933 and 1954?

It was hot in Arkansas, reaching 111°F in Little Rock. But this high was well below the all-time state-high record of 120°F set in 1936. Lansing, Michigan, reached 103°F, but also fell short of the state record of 112°F set in 1936.

In fact, only one state high-temperature record has been broken in the last fifteen years, that in Ft. Pierre, South Dakota in 2006. High-temperature records for 23 of our 50 states date back to the decade of the 1930s, during worst-ever U.S. droughts in the period termed the “*dust bowl*.” Two-thirds

of state high-temperature records were set prior to 1960, countering claims that the recent decade was “the warmest ever.”

On the contrary, what we saw during the summer of 2012 was natural temperature variation in action, not the effects of CO₂, a trace gas in our atmosphere. In our United States it gets hot in the summer and sometimes also dry.

Steve Goreham is Executive Director of the Climate Science Coalition of America and author of the new book *The Mad, Mad, Mad World of Climatism: Mankind and Climate Change Mania*.