# Southeast
CLIMATE AND HEALTH

BACKGROUND

Burning fossil fuels, such as coal and gas, releases carbon dioxide. CO_2 builds up in the atmosphere and causes Earth's temperatures to rise. This extra, trapped heat disrupts many of the interconnected systems in our environment, posing risks to human health. Some impacts of climate change are already being felt throughout the United States. We need to safeguard our communities by protecting people's health from the effects of climate change.

ISSUE SUMMARIES

EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

Warming temperatures lead to an increase in the frequency and severity of natural disasters, such as heavy rains and oods, hurricanes, landslides and heat waves. These events come with health risks, such as injury and death, as well as diseases related to food and water contamination and poor sanitation. Major weather events and their long-term impacts on a community can lead to mental wellness concerns and stress-related disorders.

NUMBER OF EXTREME PRECIPITATION DAYS, 2006

NUMBER OF EXTREME PRECIPITATION D 2016

Source: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
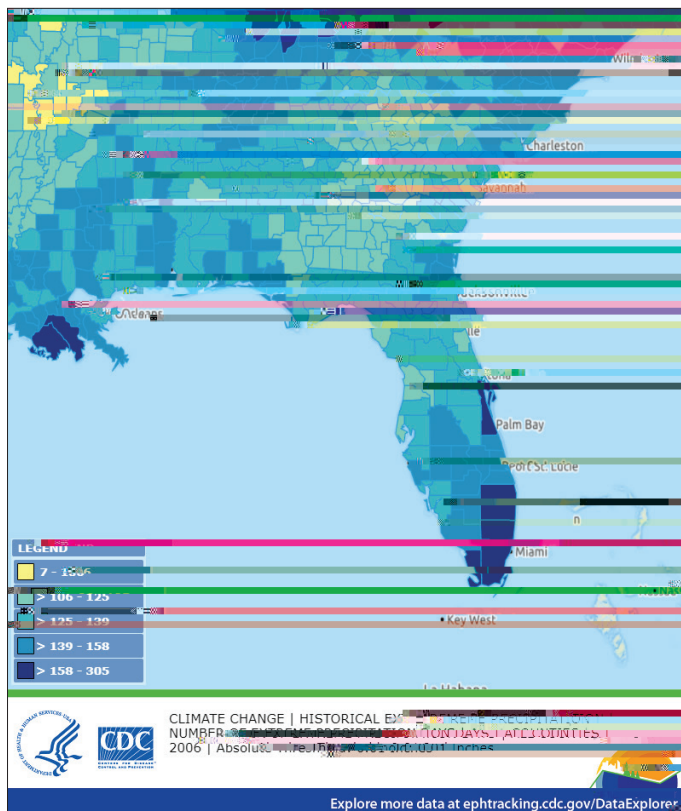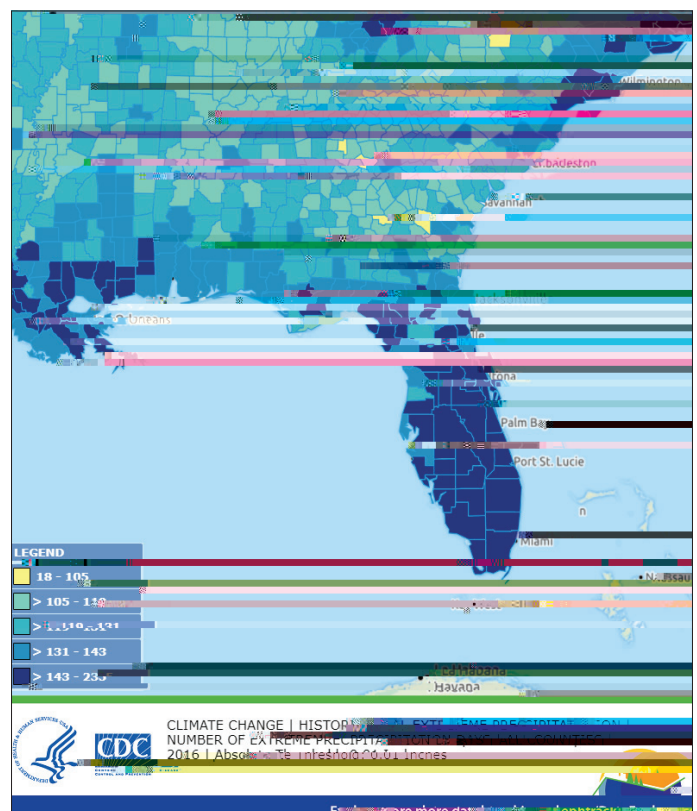
EXTREME HEAT

Extreme heat leads to increased hospitalizations and, sometimes, fatal health events. Children, the elderly, people with chronic diseases, low-income populations and outdoor workers are at the highest risk for heat-related illnesses. Extreme heat is also linked to increased aggression, raising the incidence of assaults, murders and suicides.