

Every year, NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) team up to assess global temperatures and climate trends. (Yes, that NASA. A big part of the space agency's mission is focused on Earth science, with the goal of better understanding the planet's interconnected systems.) The two groups released their findings for 2021 this past January, with several predictably alarming highlights:

- » 2021 was the sixth-warmest year on record, with the average global surface temperature about 1.5°F over the 20th-century baseline periods that the agencies use for comparison and nearly 2°F higher than in the late-19th century.
- » The surface temperature in the Northern Hemisphere was also the sixth-highest on record, at nearly 2°F over baseline, with the land temperature exceeding the baseline by 2.8°F.
- » Extreme climate events included an above-average Atlantic hurricane season, with 21 storms, and a severe heat wave in the northwestern United States and western Canada in June during which Canada recorded its highest temperature ever, at 121°F.

areas during warmer months. “Cities and urbanized areas that

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## Summer in the City

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One of the results of these developments is the “urban heat island effect” - a phenomenon that directly affects construction professionals working in heavily built-up and populated

With cities and metropolitan areas becoming larger and more densely populated across the country and around the world, the urban heat island effect will only become more pronounced. "A lot of folks don't realize that extreme heat is



