



DENVER HEALTH
— est. 1860 —
FOR LIFE'S JOURNEY

Climate Resilience Plan Summary

Denver Health & Hospital Authority | Denver Health Sustainability Committee

April 2026

Why This Matters

Climate change is already impacting the health of our patients, staff, and community. In Denver, we are experiencing hotter temperatures, worsening air quality, more extreme weather, and increasing drought—trends expected to intensify in the coming decades.

As Denver's safety-net health system, Denver Health serves populations that are disproportionately vulnerable to these changes, making climate resilience essential to our mission.

We are **already** facing the consequences of climate-related hazards across our system:

- Extreme temperatures disrupting clinic operations and infrastructure
- Wildfire smoke and ozone worsening respiratory illness
- Severe weather and power outages affecting access to care
- Increasing strain on emergency and inpatient services

These events reflect a growing pattern of climate-related risk.

Key Climate Risks

- Extreme Heat: Increased illness and healthcare demand
- Air Quality & Smoke: Rising respiratory and cardiovascular impacts
- Extreme Weather: Disruptions to infrastructure and care delivery
- Drought: Risks to water supply and long-term operations



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Health Equity is Central

Climate change worsens existing inequities shaped by historic disinvestment and systemic racism. Many communities served by Denver Health face higher heat exposure, poorer air quality, and greater chronic disease burden. Climate resilience efforts must prioritize these populations to reduce disparities and improve health outcomes.

Our Approach

The Denver Health Sustainability Committee is working to build resilience by:

Protecting Patients and Communities

- Expanding outreach to high-risk populations
- Addressing social needs (housing, cooling, air quality)
- Strengthening partnerships with public health and community organizations

Strengthening Healthcare Operations

- Enhancing emergency preparedness and surge planning
- Improving infrastructure resilience (power, HVAC, water systems)
- Expanding telehealth and flexible care delivery

Building a Sustainable Health System

- Reducing emissions, waste, and energy use
 - Investing in sustainable infrastructure and transportation
 - Aligning with national climate commitments
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Looking Ahead

Climate change is a growing health and operational challenge. Denver Health will continue to strengthen resilience by investing in early warning systems, climate-ready infrastructure, workforce protection, and targeted support for high-risk patients. By integrating climate considerations into care delivery and planning, we aim to ensure continuity of care, protect our community, and advance health equity in a changing climate.



DENVER HEALTH™

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FOR LIFE'S JOURNEY

PROTECTING OUR PATIENTS, STAFF & COMMUNITY

Why This Matters

Climate change is impacting our health **NOW**. Our community is at greater risk of:



KEY CLIMATE RISKS



HEALTH EQUITY is CENTRAL

Historic inequities mean

**GREATER HEAT & POLLUTION,
HIGHER RISK of ILLNESS**



OUR APPROACH TO CLIMATE RESILIENCE



LOOKING AHEAD



Building a **HEALTHIER, EQUITABLE & RESILIENT** FUTURE

