

Hot Topic #1

Breaking Records


2005
was the warmest
year **EVER** recorded.

The world has just experienced the warmest year ever recorded. 2005 edged out the previous record year, 1998, when a strong El Niño—a warm water event in the eastern Pacific Ocean—added warmth to global temperatures.

The top five warmest years worldwide, 1880–2005, were:

- 1 2005
- 2 1998
- 3 2002
- 4 2003
- 5 2004

Average global temperatures have been rising. The 20th century was almost certainly the warmest the world has seen in at least 1,000 years, and the **1980s** and **1990s** were the warmest decades on record.

What about Manitoba?

In the last century, Manitoba's temperature has increased by 1.0°C, which is higher than the global average of 0.6°C. This is largely due to our northern geography and location in the centre of the continent. Manitoba is predicted to face earlier and more severe climate change than many parts of the world.

Manitoba experienced record-breaking temperatures in the winter of 2005/06. The Prairie region was 5-7°C above normal. In Winnipeg, the 28-day period starting with December 21, 2005, was the warmest ever recorded (1872-2006). The average temperature was 12.9°C above normal!

Are you seeing a trend?

What impacts will these temperature changes have on Manitoba?

- Increased frequency, severity, and duration of extreme weather events
- Loss of agricultural and forestry production
- Increased stress on roads, bridges, buildings and other infrastructure
- Longer periods of isolation for northern communities that rely on winter roads
- Water quantity and quality issues
- Increased risk of forest fires
- Harm to and loss of wildlife habitat and species
- Loss of traditional economies

What are the predictions for the future?

The province is expected to experience average temperature increases of 4-6°C by the end of this century. This is at the higher end of the range predicted globally. Summer temperatures are predicted to increase by 3-4°C, while winter temperatures are predicted to increase 5-8°C.

* Remember: the difference between global temperatures now and those at the peak of the last ice age is a mere 5°C.

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