Summary of 2000 Natural Hazard Statistics

In 2000, there were 476 weather-related fatalities, less than half of 1999's fatalities with 908. The 10-year average (1991-2000) for weather-related fatalities is 603. As in 1998 and 1999, extreme heat ranked as the #1 weather-related killer with 158 deaths. This number is almost 25 percent lower than the 10-year average for heat-related fatalities, 206. After heat, the most dangerous weather killer was lightning, resulting in 51 fatalities, followed by tornadoes and winter storms with 41 each.

Weather-related injuries showed a sharp downward trend for 2000 with 2,796 injuries, down from 5,148 in 1999. Tornadoes and heat caused the greatest number of injuries with 882 and 469, respectively.

In 2000, severe weather accounted for almost $9 billion in damages. Drought caused the most crop damage with nearly $2.5 billion in losses. Fire weather generated more than $2.1 billion in property losses. States suffering more than a billion dollars in damage include Florida, New Mexico, and Texas. In October, flooding in Florida caused nearly $1 billion in property/crop losses. New Mexico had fire damage of $1.5 billion. During the month of August, Texas had $.5 billion in damages from drought.

Of the 476 weather-related fatalities, 306 were males and 168 were females. Age demographics were spread throughout the age groups.

July was the deadliest month with 99 fatalities; over two-thirds were from extreme heat. August ranked second with 68 fatalities, primarily from excessive heat and lightning.

In 2000, Texas suffered the highest number of deaths with 98; California had 42 deaths. Topping the injuries list were California with 313 and Georgia with 312.

For the years 1998, 1999, and 2000, extreme heat ranked as the #1 weather killer in the United States, outranking floods. The 30-year average (1971-2000) for floods is 127; for lightning, 73; for tornadoes, 69; and for hurricanes, 16. The 10-year average for cold-related deaths is 28, and for heat, 206.