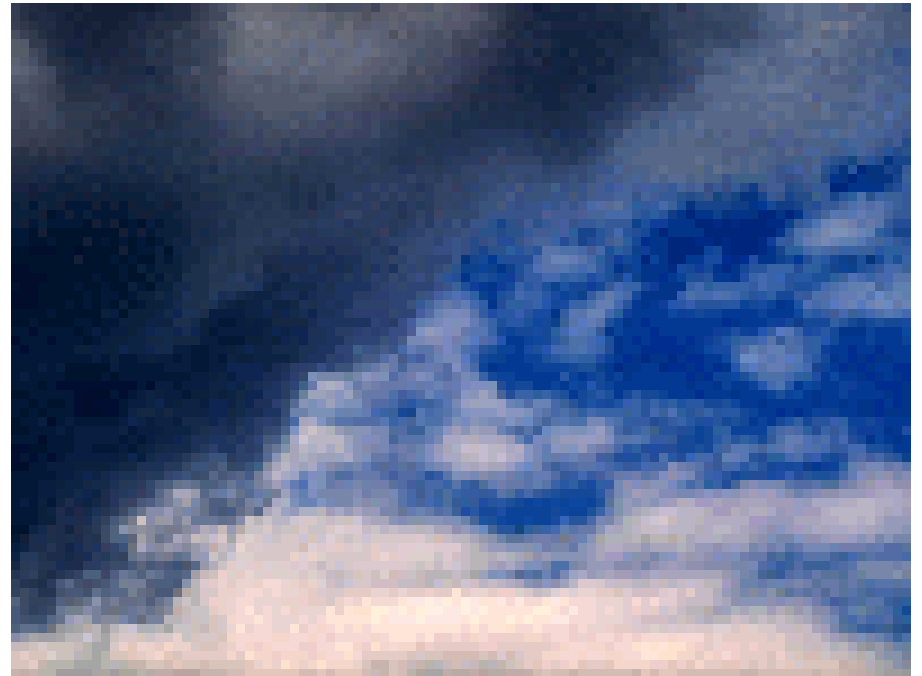


Media and Meteorology

☰ Holy tornado
Batman, is this
weird, global
warming, a
record, a trend, a
hoax, a plot, the
apocalypse or
what?



Your guide



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Why are weather stories written

- Because we love to talk about the weather
 - Because it's good visuals
 - Because it's strange. There are never hot days in the summer, cold days in the winter and tornadoes in the spring are there?
 - Because it might be part of something big
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But mostly



- Because it affected a boss somewhere.

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One day this spring we had...

- A volcano spewing
 - A tropical cyclone devastation worsening
 - An earthquake in China shaking
 - Tornadoes in the midwest killing
 - Wildfires in Florida flaming

 - And editors asking: What's happening?
 - The answer I gave: Random chance
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And we didn't write an end of world story.....

a victory for common sense

*Sometimes the question:
What's up*

Is right to write about



Number of Tornadoes

	2008		2007		2006	2005 Ave	2005-2007 ave	97-07 ave
	Prelim	Actual	Prelim	Actual	Final	Final		
JAN	136	84	29	21	47	33	34	40
FEB	232	148	87	52	12	10	25	30
MAR	151 ?		214	171	150	62	128	82
APR	192 ?		187	165	245	132	181	148
MAY	480 ?		282	251	139	123	171	283
JUN	? ?		152	128	120	316	188	226
JUL	? ?		55	69	71	138	93	118
AUG	? ?		87	73	80	123	92	85
SEP	? ?		63	51	84	133	89	91
OCT	? ?		115	87	76	18	60	69
NOV	? ?		7	6	42	150	66	68
DEC	? ?		22	19	40	26	33	25
Total	1191	232	1300	1093	1106	1264	1159	1209

Number of Tornado Deaths

	2008	2007	2006	2005	Ave 2005-2
	Prelim	Final	Final	Final	
	7	2	1	4	2
	58	22	0	0	7
	4	27	11	1	13
	0	9	38	0	16
	41	14	3	0	6
?		0	0	0	0
?		0	0	0	0
?		1	1	4	2
?		0	1	1	1
?		5	0	0	2
?		0	10	28	13
?		1	2	0	1
	110	81	67	38	62

WASHINGTON -- Another week, another rumbling train of tornadoes that obliterates entire city blocks, smashing homes to their foundations and killing people even as they cower in their basements.

With the year not even half done, 2008 is already the deadliest tornado year in the United States since 1998 and seems on track to break the U.S. record for the number of twisters in a year, according to the National Weather Service. Also, this year's storms seem to be unusually powerful.

But like someone who has lost all his worldly possessions to a whirlwind, meteorologists cannot explain exactly why this is happening.

"There are active years and we don't particularly understand why," said research meteorologist Harold Brooks at the National Severe Storms Lab in Norman, Okla.

Over the weekend, an extraordinarily powerful twister ripped apart Parkersburg, Iowa, destroying 288 homes in the town of about 1,000 residents, said Gov. Chet Culver. At least four people were killed there. Among the buildings destroyed were City Hall, the high school, and the lone grocery store and gas station. Some of those killed were in basements.

The brutal numbers for the U.S. so far this year: at least 110 dead, 30 killer tornadoes and a preliminary count of 1,191 twisters (which, after duplicate sightings are removed, is likely to go down to around 800). The record for the most tornadoes in a year is 1,817 in 2004. In the past 10 years, the average number of tornadoes has been 1,254.

Let's play science reporter

How do you know if a scientist is
telling the truth?

You ask and you read...

Who do you ask

Ask the scientist the lie-detector question...

Who disagrees with you who you respect?

Ask other scientists...

Talk to other experts, especially those you trust.

Who do I trust?

On climate change: Steve Schneider, Kevin Trenberth, Andrew Weaver, Tim Barnett, Jerry Mahlman, Ben Santer, Jeff Severinghaus

(I've got a 5,000 word climate change sourcelist)

On tornadoes: Greg Carbin, Harold Brooks, Howard Bluestein

Read the paper, other journals

Journals I monitor:

Nature, GRL, BAMS, Nature Geoscience and others

Science and PNAS: Randy Schmid and Laurant
Neergaard

Find the story...

Titles of papers pending in Geophysical Research Letters... I've got one, maybe two stories out of this batch, let's see if you can find them....

Just based on these titles (and I've eliminated about 60 to keep this moving), I asked for FIVE papers to read

Analysis of seafloor seismograms of the 2003 Tokachi-Oki earthquake sequence for earthquake early warning,.

Importance of a soil organic layer for Arctic climate - a sensitivity study with an Arctic RCM,

The long term context for recent drought in Northwestern Africa,

Dynamical complexity in Dst time series using non-extensive Tsallis entropy

When can we expect extremely high surface temperatures?,

Pacific bidecadal climate variability regulated by tidal mixing around the Kuril Islands

Deep low-frequency tremors as a proxy for slip monitoring at plate interface,

Light Absorbing Carbon Emissions from Commercial Shipping,

Increasing winter precipitation over the North Pacific from 1984-1994 to 1995-2005 inferred from the Global Precipitation Climatology Project

Accelerated Arctic land warming and permafrost degradation during rapid sea ice loss

Tomographic evidence for hydrated oceanic crust of the Pacific slab beneath northeastern Japan

The missing Kyoto gas NF3

What drove the dramatic retreat of arctic sea ice during summer 2007?

The northward movement of Martian dust localized in the region of the Hellas Basin

Influences of Typhoon Chanchu on the 2006 South China Sea summer monsoon onset

Amount of CO₂ emissions irreversibly leading to the total melting of Greenland

Association of Antarctic Polar Stratospheric Cloud Formation on Tropospheric Cloud Systems,

The Oceanic Origin of the Interannual and Interdecadal Variability of the Summertime Western Pacific Subtropical High,

Fracture propagation propensity in relation to snow slab avalanche release: Validating the Propagation Saw Test,

The ASTER Land Surface Emissivity Database of California and Nevada,

Seismic evidence for widespread serpentized forearc mantle along the Mariana convergence margin

Freeze probability of Florida in a regional climate model and climate indices

Melting behavior of (mg,Fe)O solid solutions at high pressure,

Local wind system in the Rongbuk Valley on the northern slope of Mt. Everest

The five papers I asked for:

- When can we expect extremely high surface temperatures?
 - What drove the dramatic retreat of arctic sea ice during summer 2007?
 - Amount of CO₂ emissions irreversibly leading to the total melting of Greenland,
 - Accelerated Arctic land warming and permafrost degradation during rapid sea ice loss
 - Freeze probability of Florida in a regional climate model and climate indices
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The two stories I pursued

- Melting sea ice triggering permafrost thawing
- The extreme temps, when and how big



Contact info.....

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