



# **Climate Change and Infrastructure, Urban Systems, and Vulnerabilities: Technical Report for the U.S. Department of Energy in Support of the National Climate Assessment (NCA Regional Input Reports)**

*Thomas J. Wilbanks, Steven Fernandez*

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Hurricane Irene ruptured a Baltimore sewer main, resulting in 100 million gallons of raw sewage flooding the local watershed. Levee failures during Hurricane Katrina resulted in massive flooding which did not recede for months. With temperatures becoming more extreme, and storms increasing in magnitude, American infrastructure and risk-management policies require close examination in order to decrease the damage wrought by natural disasters. *Climate Change and Infrastructure, Urban Systems, and Vulnerabilities* addresses these needs by examining how climate change affects urban buildings and communities, and determining which regions are the most vulnerable to environmental disaster. It looks at key elements of urban systems, including transportation, communication, drainage, and energy, in order to better understand the damages caused by climate change and extreme weather. How can urban systems become more resilient? How can citizens protect their cities from damage, and more easily rebound from destructive storms? This report not only breaks new ground as a component of climate change vulnerability and impact assessments but also highlights critical research gaps in the material. Implications of climate change are examined by assessing historical experience as well as simulating future conditions.

Developed to inform the 3rd National Climate Assessment, and a landmark study in terms of its breadth and depth of coverage and conducted under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Energy, *Climate Change and Infrastructure, Urban Systems, and Vulnerabilities* examines the known effects and relationships of climate change variables on American infrastructure and risk-management policies. Its rich science and case studies will enable policymakers, urban planners, and stakeholders to develop a long-term, self-sustained assessment capacity and more effective risk-management strategies.

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