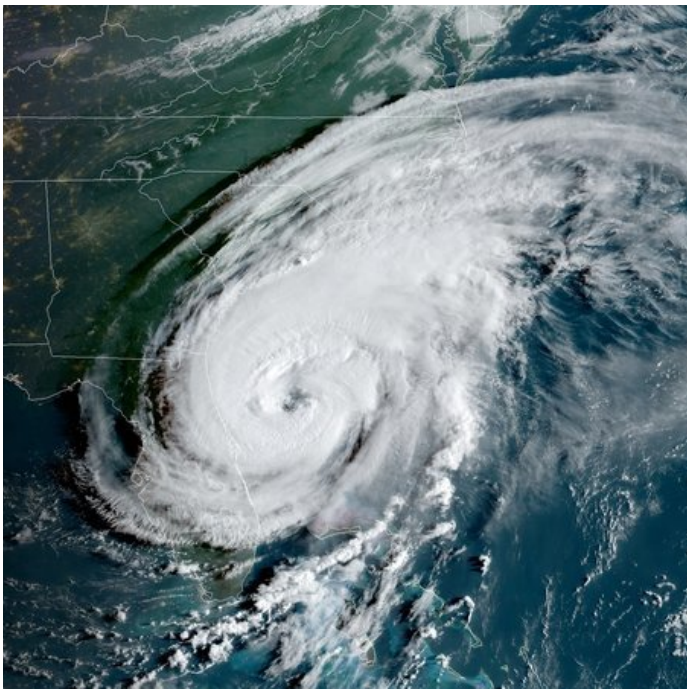
Global Warming and Hurricanes

By: Brianna Hammond, Grade 11

Since 1880, the Earth's average temperature has increased (aka global warming) by about 2 degrees Fahrenheit according to www.climate.nasa.gov. This might not seem like a big deal, but it causes big changes in the environment like the frequent and extreme temperatures. In fact, the last five years has been proven to be the five warmest years on record according to a bar graph of global surface temperature since 1880 from www.climate.gov.



As global temperatures continue to rise, it causes extreme weather events such as droughts, extreme temperatures, and recently it has been proven to affect hurricanes.

Over the years, hurricanes have become more and more destructive as a result of rising temperatures: "…there will likely be more intense hurricanes that carry higher wind speeds and more precipitation as a result of global warming. The impacts of this trend are likely to be exacerbated by sea level rise and a growing population along coastlines," says an article titled *Hurricanes and Climate Change* from www.ucsusa.org.

With ocean temperatures rising too, hurricanes are more likely to form. Global warming causes glaciers to melt which causes the sea level to rise: "Globally averaged, sea level is expected to rise by 1-4 feet during the next century, which will amplify coastal storm surge," says an article from www.c2es.org. Storm surge is when water from the ocean is pushed toward the shore by the winds swirling around the hurricane.

Global warming has not yet been proven to cause more frequent hurricanes, although they are getting closer in larger portions of time: "Because of climate change, such a storm [like Hurricane Harvey 2017] evolved from a once in every 100 years event to a once in every 16 years event over this time period" (www.ucsusa.org).