

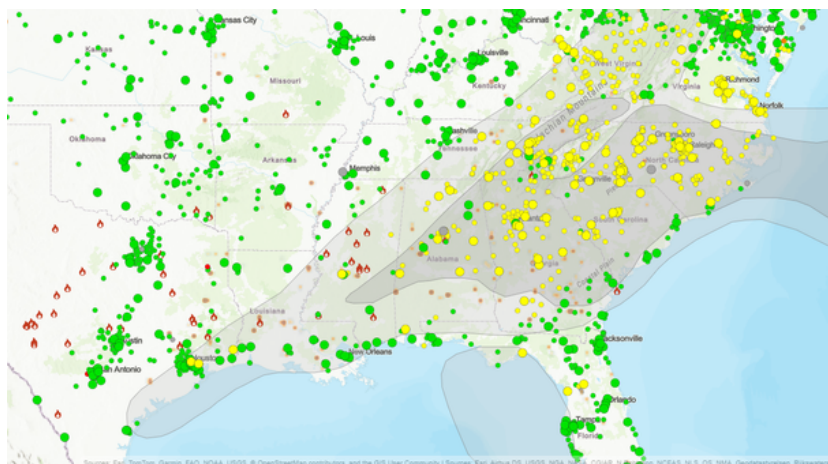
October 16, 2026

Key Takeaways

- Respiratory illness activity in Virginia is low and trending up.
- Hurricane Isaias became the first hurricane of the 2026 Atlantic hurricane season.
- Franklin County Pennsylvania reported a measles-associated death, the 6th in the state if confirmed.
- 2026 continues to break heat-related records, globally, nationally, and in Virginia.

Key Figures

US Fire and Smoke Map



Fire season has begun across the US South, including Virginia. Much of the region remains in drought and some areas have elevated wildfire risk. Image Source: [AirNow](#)

Respiratory Illness Activity



Respiratory disease activity is low in all Virginia regions.
Image Source: [VDH](#)

Measles

330

New measles cases reported nationally in the past week.

Drought

23%

The share of Virginia's land mass remaining in drought status as of Oct 13.

Seasonal Illness

Low

Overall respiratory illness activity in Virginia.

Key Dates

Oct 15

Virginia's fall fire season began.

Oct 17

Nationwide free speech events planned.

Nov 3

Nationwide general elections.

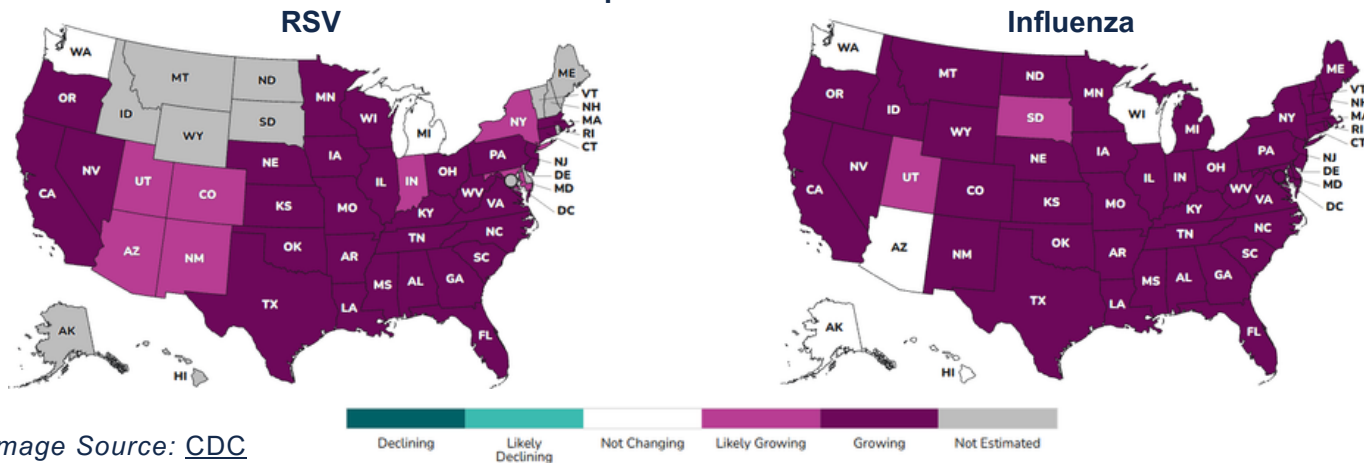
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Ongoing Monitored Situations

Seasonal Illness

- **Virginia's overall respiratory illness activity is low and trending up.** Respiratory illness accounted for 11.2% of ED visits for the week ending Oct 10, up from 10.7% the prior week.
- **Some Virginia physicians are reporting early flu activity.** State and local public health officials, along with hospital and health system leadership, are urging Virginians to prepare for the respiratory season. Vaccination is a safe and effective way to disrupt spread and prevent severe outcomes from respiratory illness.

Epidemic Trends



Measles

- **Nationally, the CDC reported 4,410 year-to-date cases across 47 jurisdictions.** Pennsylvania (132), Kentucky (71), Wisconsin (49), New York (25), Minnesota (18), Ohio (13) and Indiana (10) all added 10+ cases last week. Pennsylvania now has 1,237 cases and the CDC is deploying additional support for the outbreak there.
- **Franklin County Pennsylvania reported a measles-associated death.** The state Dept of Health is investigating the death. If confirmed, it would be the state's 6th. The patient was a 39-year-old unvaccinated woman with multiple underlying conditions, including a previous measles infection that was treated.
- **Pennsylvania physicians are noting a number of severe complications,** including in previously healthy children. Complications are occurring in the gut, liver and brain, including encephalitis. One of Pennsylvania's deaths occurred in an 18-year-old who developed disseminated encephalomyelitis.

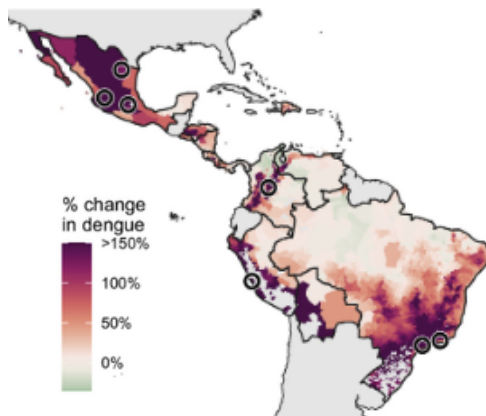
Ebola

- **The WHO reports 9,301 confirmed and probable cases across 4 countries.** 4,482 people have died, for a case fatality rate of 48%. As of Oct 6, cases were detected in 64 health zones in 7 of the DRC's 26 provinces. The WHO notes that transmission remains intense, with a 2.5% increase in new weekly cases over 3 weeks.
- **Kenya confirmed its second Ebola case,** in a relative of the first case. Kenya identified 128 contacts of the initial case, and placed 108 in quarantine. The new case was in quarantine and officials noted there is no evidence of community spread.
- **The DRC outbreak has reached the 150-day mark.** It is the largest outbreak at 150 days on record and continues to grow. Tracing rates among known contacts are below 80%, well below target, while many contacts are unknown. Aid reductions, conflict and distrust continue to hamper the response.

Other News

- Federal agencies sell or donate laboratory equipment without adequate controls, posing a biosecurity risk. A GAO investigation used fictitious identities to demonstrate how equipment could be acquired by bad actors.
- The PJM electric grid, which covers Virginia, issued rare October emergency operation alerts. Fall and spring usually provide a lull in power demand, allowing operators to perform maintenance. However, steady demand from data centers and changing climate patterns result in more consistent demand, creating 'significant system stress and reliability risk.'

Projected Change in Dengue Incidence 2040-59, High Emissions Scenario

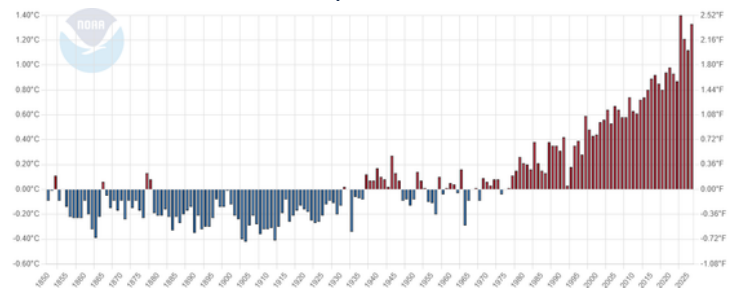


Climate change will increase the incidence of dengue in its current range according to a recent study, with the highest changes in more temperate regions.

Image Source: [PNAS](#)

- Candidates for federal office have spent over **\$25 million on security** as of Aug 1, compared to \$6 million in the entire 2017-2018 cycle. Threats against elected officials have been increasing, with at least 44 governors, 70 US senators, and 185 US House members reporting threats.
- Hurricane Isaias became the first hurricane in **2026**, forming nearly a month later than the record. The storm rapidly intensified before hitting the Gulf Coast, reaching Cat 3 strength over just two days. The cyclone and its remnants killed 9 people, spawned over 53 tornado warnings, and caused flooding in Western North Carolina.

Global Surface Temperature Anomalies September

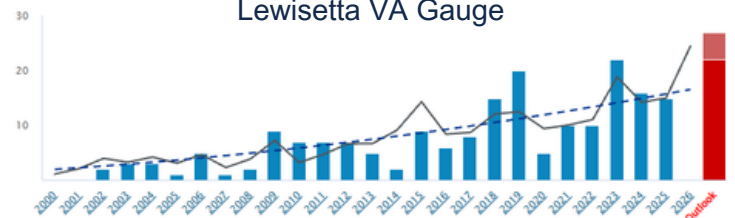


September was North America's hottest on record, and the 2nd hottest globally. Globally, the last 4 Septembers are the hottest on record, and all 10 of the hottest on record have occurred since 2015.

Image Source: [NOAA](#)

- Virginia recorded **4,193 Heat-Related Illness visits** from May to Sep 2026, the highest on record. Virginia has recorded 2,956 HRI visits on average since 2017, but the last three years have the highest counts in that period, with a 3-year average of 3,817.
- Washington state reported its **1st HPAI A(H5N1) detection in cattle**, affecting 3 herds. Kansas and Texas have also reported detections, for a total of 6 herds affected so far in October.
- Dengue cases topped **600 in Florida**. More than half were locally acquired. Florida averaged 38 locally acquired cases annually from 2010-25, with a previous high of 189 in 2023.

High-Tide Flood Days Lewisetta VA Gauge



El Niño tends to increase the number of high-tide flood days, from the Pacific Coast to the Mid-Atlantic. Though generally a nuisance, the number of high-tide flood days has increased 350% in the Mid-Atlantic since 2000. This year's El Niño provides a preview of what we can expect by 2030.

Image Source: [NOAA](#)