

**A man stays hydrated while sunning himself in Portland's Monument Square during a 2018 heat wave.  
Credit: Troy R. Bennett / BDN**

People in Portland suffered more than most Mainers when temperatures hit the mid-90s at the end of June as climate change brings more extreme heat days and health risks that hit urban areas hardest, a new national analysis found.

Maine's largest city could be nearly 6 degrees warmer this summer than areas surrounding it because of low tree cover and heat-absorbing infrastructure such as pavement, buildings and rooftops, according to data released Wednesday by Climate Central, a nonprofit science and journalism organization. This so-called urban heat island effect exacerbates rising temperatures, with Portland seeing four additional days of 90-degree-plus heat on average since 1979 as summer temperatures stretch into the shoulder seasons.

Even though Maine is generally considered a cooler state, it is experiencing the type of heat increases seen in larger cities like New York and Boston, which are about 2 degrees warmer than Maine. Portland residents may feel the effects more than people in a desert city like Las Vegas, Jen Brady, senior data analyst with Climate Central, said.

"If you drive out of Las Vegas, you're not going to cool off much," she said. "But if you drive 20 miles out of Portland, it might be a lot cooler."