

Dallas in need of urban heat island mapping volunteers

Dallas partners with NOAA for the first time in ground level heat mapping project

By [Ken Kalthoff](#) • Published July 12, 2023 • Updated on July 12, 2023 at 6:46 pm

The city of Dallas is partnering for the first time with a federal government program for urban heat island mapping to help reduce the impact of heat in the future.

[Here is a link to details on the program and how to volunteer.](#)

“Extreme heat kills more people in the U.S. than any other weather event. Part of the goal is to realize a more resilient and sustainable city,” Dallas Environmental Quality Director Carlos Evans said.

Extremely hot weather is even worse on hard pavement areas without trees for shade.

Experts call those extra hot areas ‘Heat Islands.’ The whole city is considered an urban heat island and some parts of the city are hotter than others.

“The city is experiencing more extreme heat events. We know these events are even more severe in certain areas,” Evans said.

This year the city of Dallas is working with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and 18 other communities to [collect data on the ground](#) to map where people are most at risk during extreme

heat.

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The city is seeking 100 volunteers to place a monitoring device on their cars. They will cover a 1/3 sample of the city three different times, morning, midday and evening. [An outside group](#) is helping the city map the data.

City officials said past heat island mapping in Dallas mostly used information from satellites.

"I think it's a good and valuable study. It's a really good opportunity for people who want to participate and do something about climate change," said Kevin Overton, a senior coordinator with the Dallas Environmental Quality Department.

The nonprofit [Texas Trees Foundation](#) is already working in Dallas [with existing information](#) to reduce the impact of heat by planting more trees.

One project added dozens of trees at Foster Elementary School in North Dallas.

Texas Trees Foundation Urban Forestry Manager Rachel McGregor said Dallas school campuses are among the city places most in need of trees.

"It's to help cool the campus so kids can play outside, and be able to have recess, a more shaded environment, but it also helps with air quality on school campuses," McGregor said.

Trees on school property can become a park for neighbors after school and help the community in other ways.

“The benefits we see for air quality and water quality are increased in those areas, health benefits for people with higher rates of asthma,” McGregor said

Another Dallas tree planting project was Sleepy Hollow Park in the traditionally African American Arlington Park neighborhood near Stemmons Freeway.

New trees and playground equipment there are an example of the equity priority Dallas officials have for this Urban Heat Island Mapping.

“Historically disadvantaged communities have more pavement than other areas and have fewer trees,” Evans said.

The mapping project contributes to the [Dallas Climate Action Plan](#).

Dallas also sponsors "Branch Out Dallas" each year to give away 2,500 hardwood trees for residents to plant.