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WHY SO WILD?

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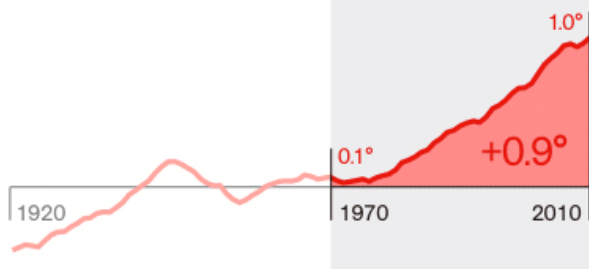
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The atmosphere is getting warmer and wetter. Those two trends, which are clear in data averaged globally and annually, are increasing the chances of heat waves, heavy rains, and perhaps other extreme weather.

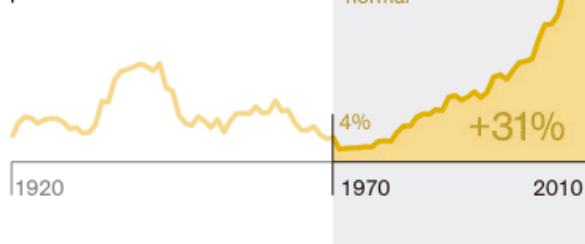
AIR TEMPERATURE
at Earth's surface has increased 0.9 degree Fahrenheit since 1970.

Global temperature* deviation from 20th-century average



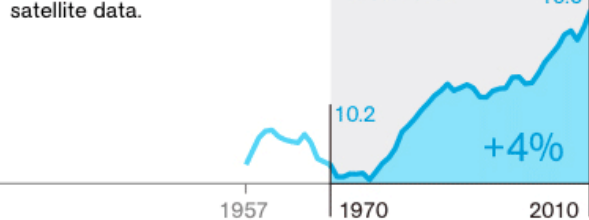
HEAT WAVES— of which nighttime lows are one indicator— are striking a growing portion of the U.S.

Percentage of U.S. experiencing summer minimum temperatures much above normal



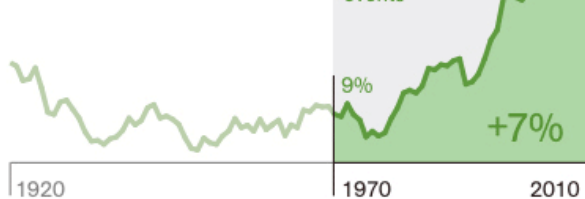
MOISTURE
has risen about 4 percent since 1970, according to satellite data.

Average global specific humidity at sea level



EXTREME RAINFALLS
are now affecting larger areas of the U.S. as well.

Percentage of U.S. getting an elevated portion of precipitation from extreme events



GRAPHS ARE SMOOTHED USING A TEN-YEAR MOVING AVERAGE.
*AVERAGE TEMPERATURE OVER LAND AND OCEAN

JOHN TOMANIO, NGM STAFF; ROBERT THOMASON. SOURCES: JEFF MASTERS, WEATHER UNDERGROUND; NATIONAL CLIMATIC DATA CENTER (TEMPERATURE, HEAT WAVES, AND RAINFALL); NOAA (HUMIDITY)

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