

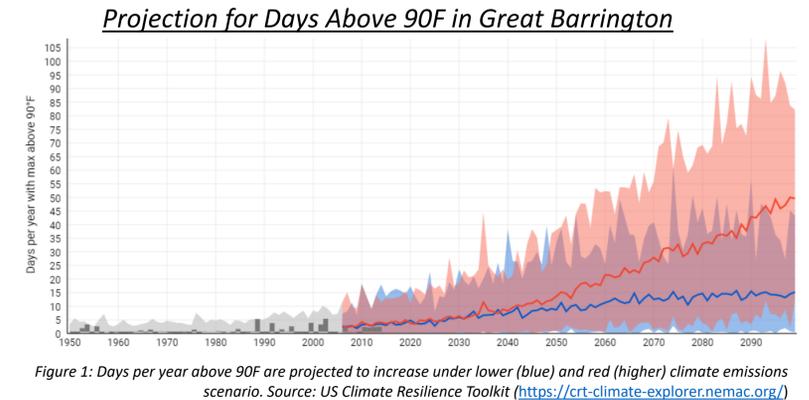


# Actions for a Resilient Great Barrington in the Face of a Changing Climate

## Background and Key Hazards:

By 2035, the Northeast is projected to be 3.6°F warmer than the preindustrial era, which represents the largest and soonest temperature increase in the country. Those that are most at risk to increased heat are older, sick, or socially isolated individuals, those working outdoors, and those in older homes and/or those without air conditioning. By 2050, in the Northeast we can expect at least 650 and up to 2,300 excess deaths (depending on progress on emissions mitigation) per year caused by extreme heat. Therefore, to support the health of residents it is important that we consider the community social networks, distributing services, and other community resources and actions we can take to support our most vulnerable who will be affected first and worst.<sup>1</sup>

Sources: 1: National Climate Assessment, Chapter 18 (Northeast), Chapter 14 (Human Health)



## Short-Term Actions (1-2 years)

*Ensure those at most risk have resources & create a foundation for medium & long term action:*

- Map existing community social networks/non-profit organizations and gaps in support for those most vulnerable
- Convene community resources and service providers
- Identify immediately vulnerable populations and determine what they need to have access to cooling on high heat days
- Identify community hubs/buildings that can be utilized during high heat days and during a major disruption (power outage, flooding, etc.) but also as a general community gathering space to foster a supportive and cohesive community to prepare for challenges ahead (a resilience hub).



Figure 2: An example resilience hub. Source: USDN's Resilience Hubs Resource Website (<http://resilience-hub.org>)

## Medium (3-5 years)

*Build a community network to support resilience to changing conditions and pursue synergistic adaptation and mitigation actions:*

- Implement a plan for community hubs for residents to go to during climate disruption and extreme heat days, as well as generally throughout the year to build community.
- Develop Policy and planning solutions to improve access to renewable heating and cooling technologies and weatherization to reduce residents' utility costs, improve resilience to high heat and extreme cold, AND reduce building emissions. These will require investment in community organizations and volunteers to work with community members on options for their homes. For new construction, focus on what can be done at permitting stages to ensure homes are efficient, powered by renewables, and will be resilient to high heat and extreme cold.
- Support town staff and boards and commissions in prioritizing environmental initiatives that also support resilience.
- Ensure access to sustainable transportation, which can reduce emissions from single-use vehicles as well as provide transportation to those most vulnerable when they need to change locations due to dangerous heat or other conditions.

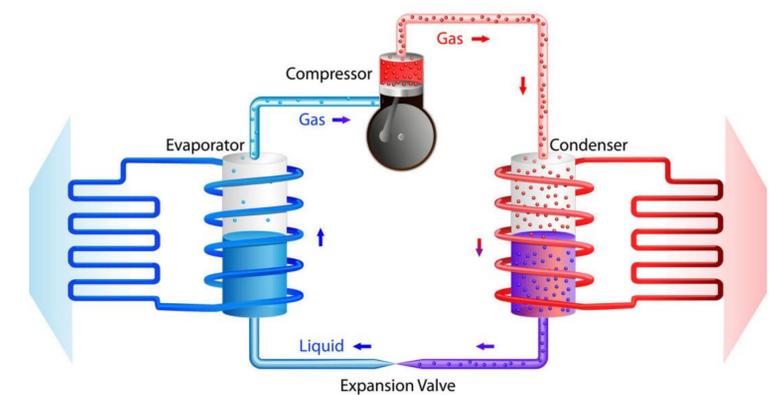


Figure 3: An air-source heat pump (mini split). (Source: [bass-air.com](http://bass-air.com))

## Long-Term (10+ years)

- Ensure we have a stable and reliable community network of volunteers and organizations ready to deploy when disruption, high heat, or severe cold strikes. By 2050 and sooner, we will see significantly warmer temperatures than ever before, regardless of mitigation progress.
- Implement policy and planning solutions to mitigate climate in a way that is resilient to the climactic changes ahead and ensures resources are in place to allow people to adapt.



Figure 4: Source ([aging.com](http://aging.com))