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AMERICAN METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY – JUNE SCIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Following are story ideas and tips about upcoming AMS meetings, papers in our nine peer-reviewed journals, and other happenings in the atmospheric and related sciences community.

Dry Thunderstorms. Did you know that dry thunderstorms (those that occur without significant rainfall at the ground) are common in the interior western United States? Moisture drawn into the area from the Gulfs of Mexico and California is sufficient to form high-based thunderstorms but the rain often evaporates before reaching the ground. One of the biggest dangers of these storms is cloud-to-ground lightning that strikes dry fuels. But predicting these types of storms is challenging. A study published in the May issue of the *AMS Journal of Applied Meteorology and Climatology* highlights a new algorithm developed to estimate the potential of dry lightning (lightning that strikes the ground with little or no rainfall at the surface) when convective storms are expected. In the current study, this algorithm has been applied throughout the western United States, with modeled meteorological variables rather than the observed soundings that have previously been used, to develop a predictive scheme for estimating the risk of dry thunderstorms. Predictions of the risk of dry thunderstorms were generated from real-time forecasts for the summers of 2004 and 2005. During that period, 240 large lightning-caused fires were ignited in the model domain. Of those fires, 40% occurred where the probability of dry lightning was predicted to be equal to or greater than 90% and 58% occurred where the probability was 75% or greater. For a copy of the paper, contact Stephanie Kenitzer.

Watch Kerry Emanuel Hurricane-Climate Lecture on Cable and Online. If you missed Kerry Emanuel's lecture on the hurricane-climate connection at last year's AMS Annual Meeting in San Antonio, don't fret. You can watch the lecture this month on the Research Channel, a cable and satellite distribution that goes to more than 24 million U.S. households. The program will air on Sunday, June 24th. For specific air times and

your local channel listing see

<http://www.researchchannel.org/prog/displayevent.aspx?rID=11660&fID=2474>

Are viewers misinterpreting the “cone of uncertainty?” Did viewers and readers misinterpret the National Hurricane Center’s “cone of uncertainty” during the 2004 Atlantic hurricane season? That is the topic of an article in the May issue of the *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*. The article focuses on the media and public interpretations of the hurricane forecast graphic and the overall use of such graphics from the perspective of risk communication. The authors found that the challenge of producing a graphic that minimizes misinterpretation raises the difficult question of what to include or exclude in a graphic. Unfortunately there is not one perfect this “one size fits all” image and such graphics must continue to evolve in response to societal needs. The authors also found that the science community knows relatively little about how audiences actually interpret, evaluate and use the cone graphic and recommends that social science methods and approaches be intergrated into the design, development and evaluation of hurricane risk communications. The paper is available online at <http://ams.allenpress.com/archive/1520-0477/88/5/pdf/i1520-0477-88-5-651.pdf>

“The Science of Global Warming: How do We Know We're Not Wrong?” is the tentative topic of the next AMS Environmental Science Seminar scheduled for Friday, June 22, 2007 at 12 p.m. in the Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room G-50. The speaker will be Dr. Naomi Oreskes, Professor of History and Science Studies at the University of California, San Diego, CA. More details will be online shortly at <http://www.ametsoc.org/atmospolicy/EnvironmentalScienceSeminarSeries.html>

Upcoming Scientific Meetings. The 16th Conference on Atmospheric and Oceanic Fluid Dynamics will be held in Santa Fe, New Mexico from June 2-29. The 22nd Conference on Weather Analysis and Forecasting and the 18th Conference on Numerical Weather Prediction is scheduled for June 25-29 in Park City, Utah. Lots of great scientific papers and scientists on hand. For specific details on papers and exhibits see <http://www.ametsoc.org/meet/meetinfo.html> Media are invited to attend these conferences and interview the experts. Contact Stephanie Kenitzer to register.

The AMS (<http://www.ametsoc.org>) is the nation's leading professional society for those in the atmospheric and related sciences.

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