

Still bananas

Letter to the editor, [Brunswick Beacon](#), 07.18.24

An earlier letter from Philip Krumm falsely claimed that the climate has cooled since 2015. In fact, the years since then have been the hottest on record.

Krumm's timing was poor: the Department of Agriculture's plant hardiness zone map was updated just three weeks earlier. Brunswick County went from zone 7b in 1990 (5–10 degree lows), to zone 8a in 2012 (10–15 degree lows), to zone 8b in 2023 (15–20 degree lows). We can now grow bananas in our yards!

Krumm peddled more climate change denial in his June 27 letter. Abandoning his discredited claim that the Earth is cooling, Krumm suggested we embrace global warming with his version of "Dr. Strangelove; or how I learned to stop worrying and love the bomb."

Krumm wrote, "In the last 80 years, as CO2 emissions have most rapidly escalated, the annual rate of climate-related deaths worldwide fell."

This is a misleading factoid pushed by climate change denier websites, debunked by USA Today and Reuters. Both concluded that climate-related disasters have increased in number, intensity, and cost and that climate-related deaths do not accurately measure the frequency, number or severity of extreme weather events. The obvious reason is that our homes, cars, schools and businesses are air-conditioned. Cranking up fossil fuel-powered A/C keeps more people from dying, but doesn't make global warming disappear. It only makes it worse.

Again, Krumm's timing was unfortunate. Since 1980, the annual average of climate-related disasters causing \$1 billion in damage (inflation-adjusted) is 8.5. We've had 11 already in 2024, and hurricane season just began! Beryl devastated the Caribbean after becoming the earliest Category 5 hurricane in history.

On May 29, the sixth Outer Banks home in four years collapsed into the Atlantic. Ocean Isle Beach has had homes and entire streets swallowed by the sea. The Calabash River bridge is closed while it's being raised seven feet. We are suffering climate change destruction right here, right now.

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Calabash