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Climate Change Will Cause More Grid Disruptions

The damage already done will take its toll

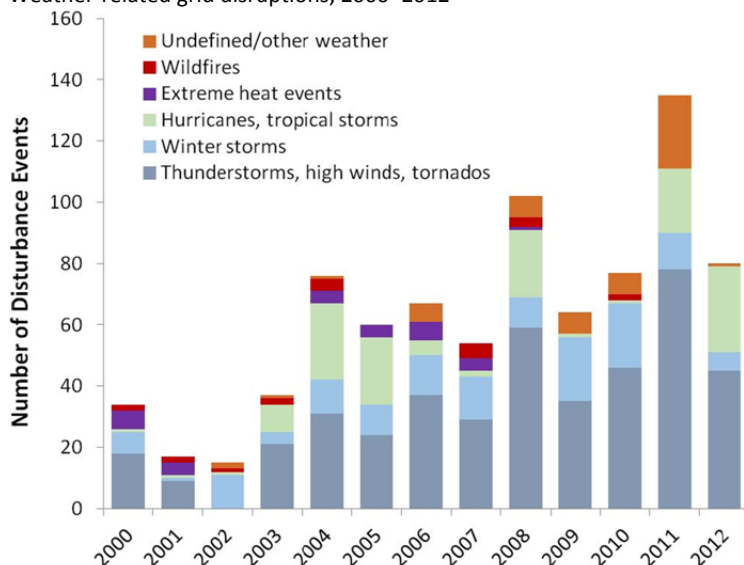
US Department of Energy (DOE), like energy bureaucracies elsewhere, prefers to avoid unpleasant subjects whenever possible. But occasionally, the bad news cannot be avoided.

A report released by the DOE in July 2013 warns that the nation's entire energy system is vulnerable to increasingly severe and costly weather events driven by climate change. It said that blackouts and other energy disruptions of **Superstorm Sandy** were just a *foretaste* of what can be expected. Moreover, the country's energy infrastructure – transmission lines, oil wells, hydroelectric dams, nuclear power plants, waterways, you name it – will be stressed in coming years by more intense storms, rising seas, higher temperatures and more frequent and prolonged droughts.

“We don't have a robust energy system, and the costs are significant,” according to **Jonathan Pershing**, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Energy for Climate Change Policy and Technology. “The cost today is measured in the billions. Over the coming decades, it will be in the trillions. You can't just

Expect more costly grid disruptions

Weather-related grid disruptions, 2000–2012



Source: US energy sector vulnerabilities to climate change & extreme weather, US DOE, July 2013