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Hurricane Laura is barreling down on Louisiana and Texas, bringing with it “unsurvivable storm surges” and “life-threatening hazards” to parts of the Gulf Coast. Louisiana Governor Jon Bel Edwards is [imploring](#) residents to evacuate: “This is a very serious storm — I don’t think I have ever held a press conference to take something as seriously as I am right now. Our state hasn’t seen a storm surge like this in many decades. Same with wind speeds.”

Northern California is in flames, experiencing unprecedentedly large and threatening wildfires, with 1.25 million acres already burned, 7 lives lost, choking air quality, and \$11 billion worth of housing under threat. As UCLA climate scientist [Daniel Swain explains](#), “The scope [of the damage] is absolutely astonishing,” It’s “hard to impress on people just how vast the acreage burned is.”

In the middle of a pandemic, it’s hard to believe that two major additional disasters are unfolding. Except that it shouldn’t be. More intense hurricanes and more frequent, larger, and hotter wildfires are exactly what scientists predict as a result of rising temperatures caused by climate change. In fact, scientists are [already attributing](#) the size and intensity of the current fires to climate change (not to our failure to “sweep” the forests, despite Trump’s [admonitions](#)): the combination of higher temperatures, drier vegetation, less moisture in the soil and drier air all make conditions perfect for giant fires. Swain and his colleagues just published a study showing that climate change has already doubled the number of extreme risk days in California and the problem will only get worse.

Hurricanes, too, are getting more intense because of climate change. They’re [producing](#) more rain — 2017’s Hurricane Harvey [dropped](#) an astonishing 60 inches of rain on Houston in just four days. Climate change is also increasing the [intensity](#) of wind speeds, leading to more Category 3 and 4 storms and fewer Category 1 and 2 storms, according to scientists. Hurricane Maria, a Category 5 storm, [devastated](#) Puerto Rico in 2017 with pounding winds peaking at 175 miles per hour, causing \$90 billion in damage and thousands of deaths. Warmer temperatures are a direct cause. Climate change appears not to be causing *more* hurricanes, just larger and more intense ones. Category 4 Hurricane Laura fits the pattern: more rain and fierce winds as it picks up moisture in the warm gulf.

In the midst of these major, climate-intensified disasters, the Republican Party is, of course, holding its convention. It also just issued its 2020 platform, which adds nothing new to the positions the party took in 2016 and simply embraces Donald Trump. As the [platform](#) reads, the RNC “enthusiastically supports President Trump” and “has and will continue to enthusiastically support the President’s America-first agenda.” Trump, of course, barely acknowledges the existence of climate change, has called it a “hoax,” has withdrawn the United States from the Paris Agreement, and has rolled back every single one of his predecessor’s climate policies. The [2016 platform](#), which apparently embodies the party’s current position on climate change, rejects the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement, and the Clean Power Plan, embraces coal and oil, and says that calling climate change a pressing national security issue “embraces extremism over common sense.”

What about the Republican Convention? Not a mention in its first two days of the gravest environmental threat we have ever faced. There are plenty of [comments](#) bashing “radical environmentalism” and the Green New Deal. But crickets about climate change. No acknowledgment let alone any solutions.

Many people have argued that our very future is on the line in the Presidential election in November. The wildfires and Hurricane Laura are here to make the case that the statement is true.