



Share or Snooze

Social Media Samples

Sample #1: FALSE

- Sensationalized false claim to grab attention

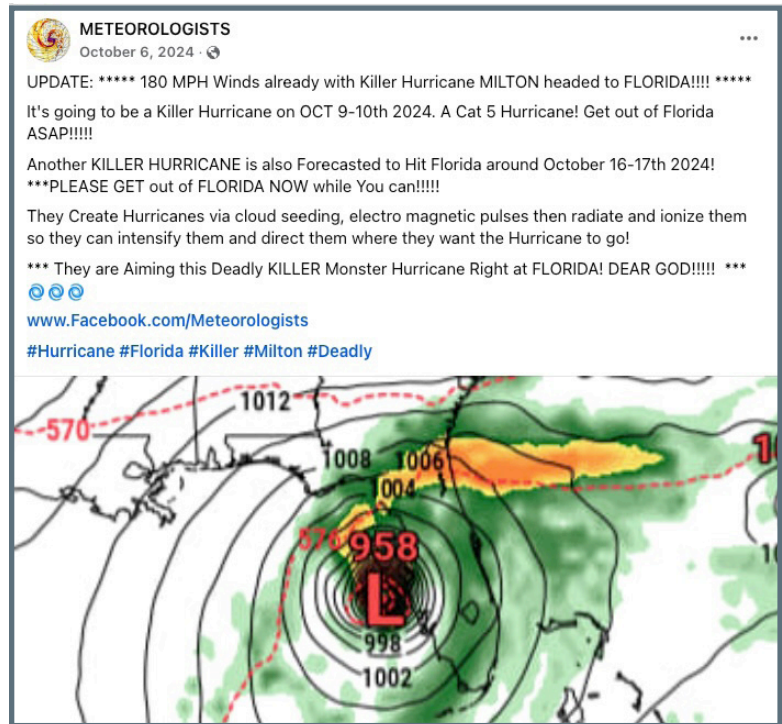
Topic: Hurricanes generated by cloud seeding

Author: Meteorologists

Date posted: October 6, 2024

Source: Facebook [Link](#)

- From the Politifact website: “Amid the deluge of misinformation about Hurricanes Helene and Milton is this persistent claim: Someone (perhaps the government!) is controlling the weather and intentionally steering storms to hit somewhere...Claims that unknown figures, often governments, can somehow create and control the weather are not new. We debunked such claims after a deadly [Turkey earthquake](#) in 2023, after [Hurricane Ian hit Florida](#) in 2022 and after a [Texas winter storm](#) in 2021.”
- [Cloud seeding research](#) actually does exist. It focuses on increasing snowfall or rainfall in a targeted area by injecting clouds with silver iodide. While cloud seeding can help to increase precipitation, it cannot generate or control hurricanes.



Related Information:

- Cercione, J. (2024, October 10). No, cloud seeding wasn't used to create Hurricane Milton. @politifact. <https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2024/oct/10/facebook-posts/no-cloud-seeding-wasnt-used-to-create-hurricane-mi/#sources>
- <https://library.noaa.gov/friendly.php?s=weather-climate/weather-modification-project-reports>

Citations:

- METEOROLOGISTS. [@METEOROLOGISTS]. (2024, October 6). UPDATE*****180 MPH Winds, Facebook. <https://shorturl.at/wPNye>
- Cercione, J. (2023, February 15). Turkey-Syria earthquakes were natural disasters, not geoengineered. PolitiFact. <https://shorturl.at/5Q4Fx>
- Settles, G. (2022, September 30). Hurricane Ian was a natural disaster, not a political conspiracy to devastate Floridians. PolitiFact. <https://shorturl.at/jAK3R>
- Funke, D. (2021, February 16). Biden did not plan winter storm as 'an attack on Texas'. PolitiFact. <https://shorturl.at/tv2w4>
- Hosansky, D. (2020, February 24). Scientists demonstrate that cloud seeding can generate snowfall. UCAR News. <https://news.ucar.edu/132716/scientists-demonstrate-cloud-seeding-can-generate-snowfall>



Sample #2: FALSE

- Sensationalized false claim to grab attention
- Misleading and irrelevant images

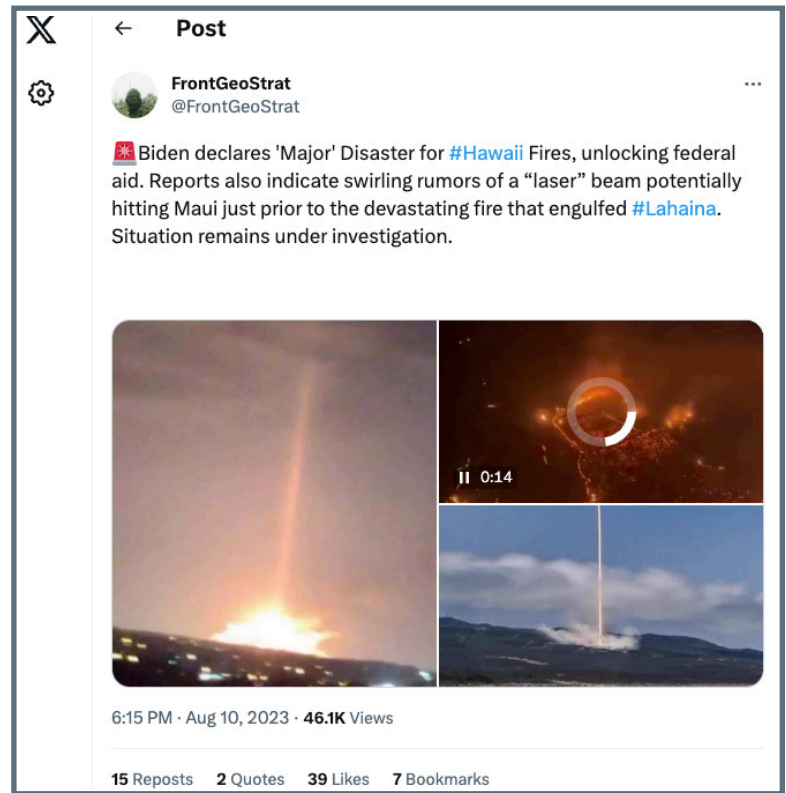
Topic: Laser beam hitting Maui causing the Lahaina fire

Author: FrontGeoStrat

Date posted: August 10, 2023

Source: X Post archive.is/POixd

- A Google Image search of the picture on the left will offer results that disprove the claim that it was from the Lahaina fire in Maui, HI. At the time of the fire, images on social media started turning up claiming that a laser beam hit the island right before the fires. It turns out this image and similar ones like it have been circulating around the Internet and social media for years with all kinds of outrageous claims.
- The video on the top right was taken from someone's phone on a plane flying over the Lahaina fire. The bottom right image is from a SpaceX rocket launch from March 17, 2023.
- Five years before the Lahaina fires, a series of events happened on January 16, 2018 along the Michigan/Ohio border.
- From [Snopes](https://snopes.com): "The night of Jan. 16, 2018, was an odd one in Michigan. Not only did a meteor flash across the sky, causing a small earthquake, but a garage went up in flames, and over the border in Ohio, an oil refinery conducted a controlled burn — all at the same time. As images of these three events started to make their way around the Internet, conspiracy theorists concocted a bizarre explanation that tied them all together: the government (or possibly aliens, or maybe both) had unleashed a direct energy weapon on the world."



Related information:

<https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2023/aug/11/instagram-posts/photo-used-to-claim-direct-energy-assault-started/>

Citations:

- FrontGeoStrat. [@FrontGeoStrat]. (2023, August 10). Biden declares, X. <https://x.com/FrontGeoStrat/status/1689701926865141761>
- <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/did-energy-weapon-strike-michigan/>





Sample #3: TRUE

Topic: Man Launches a Lawn Chair with Weather Balloons
16,000 feet in the air

Author: Best of Horror

Date posted: November 12, 2020

Source: Instagram [Link](#)

- On July 2, 1982, Larry Walters took flight in a lawn chair off a house rooftop in San Pedro, CA. There is a lot of information vetting the incident on the Internet. His aluminum lawn chair is on display at the [National Air and Space Museum](#). Walters used 42 helium-filled weather balloons that he got from an army surplus store and tied them to the chair. Attached to the chair were 13 gallon water-filled jugs, used as a ballast. Walters traveled across 21 miles and unexpectedly rose as high as 16,000 ft. (over 3 miles high). Federal air space starts at 18,000 ft. At 16,000 feet, Walters started getting dizzy and extremely cold so to descend he shot several of the balloons with a BB gun, dropping down sharply and getting entangled in power lines. He survived the flight and was promptly arrested.



Related Information:

- <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/up-up-and-away/>

Citations:

- bestofhorror. [@bestofhorror]. (2020, November 12). Larry only planned, Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CHf7siip4ix/?igsh=djQ4YzdqNnFoODA2>
- Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. (n.d.). Chair, lawn, Larry Walters. Smithsonian Institution. https://airandspace.si.edu/collection-objects/chair-lawn-larry-walters/nasm_A20181388000





Sample #4: FALSE

- **Misrepresenting information**

Topic: Manipulating weather forecasts

Author: Stacy

Date posted: July 21, 2022

Source: X Post [Link](#)

- Social media postings shared two images of temperature data from a news program in Germany called “Taggesschau”, one from a 2017 broadcast and the other from 2022. The postings claimed that the weather forecasters were using red-colored maps as a way of scaring people about climate change. In reality, the change was based on the graphic design of the forecasts themselves. The revised maps graphically make a distinction between night temperatures represented in green and day temperatures in red. The change was made to make the weather reports easier and more intuitive to read. Searching online, you can find a number of articles and references to the images that indicate that the social media claims were false.



Related Information:

- <https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2022/jul/27/facebook-posts/different-weather-maps-dont-prove-climate-change-i/>
- <https://www.snopes.com/news/2022/07/29/weather-maps-climate-change/>

Citations:

- Stacy (fire emoji). [@stacy_jetson]. 2022, July 21). The weather people, X. https://x.com/stacy_jetson/status/1550255228095795205

