



Written by [James Murphy](#) on March 16, 2024

Paris Won't Air-condition Athlete Housing at Summer Olympics Because of Climate Change

Athletes at the 2024 Summer Olympic Games in Paris might have to face more than just the world-class competition the games are certain to feature. Because of the French capital's desire to host the "greenest ever" Olympic games, athletes could have to bed down in stifling hot rooms because Paris has decided to do without air conditioning in the athlete rooms.

Instead of those carbon-spewing air conditioners, hot athletes will need to rely on a system utilizing cool water from underground to hopefully cool the rooms. In addition, the buildings housing athletes will be oriented in a way that avoids direct sunlight, which hopefully will keep the rooms cooler.



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"We designed these buildings so that they would be comfortable places to live in in the summer, in 2024 and later on, and we don't need air conditioning in these buildings because we oriented the facades so that they wouldn't get too much sun during the summer, and the facades, the insulation is really efficient," said Yann Krysinski, senior VP of Project Management at SOLIDEO, which is managing the buildings and infrastructure for the Paris Games. "We also are providing naturally cool water that we're getting from underground to cool the air of these apartments. So you will not need air conditioning in the summer here."

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo assures Olympians that all will be well, despite last summer's four heat waves that led to the fourth hottest summer on record in France. Mayor Hidalgo urged those worried about the heat to "trust the science."

Hidalgo, a socialist, wants the Olympics in her city to have only half the carbon footprint of the 2012 London games and the 2016 Rio games.

"This village was designed to avoid the need for air conditioning, even in very, very high temperatures, in order to maintain comfortable temperatures," [Hidalgo told Reuters](#).

"I think we have to trust science on two counts," the mayor said. "The first is what scientists are telling us about the fact that we are on the brink of a precipice. Everyone, including the athletes, must be aware of this."

"And secondly, we have to trust the scientists when they help us to construct buildings in a sober way that allows us to make do without air conditioning," she concluded.

The Olympic delegations from some countries aren't willing to go without air conditioning, even if it is for the climate's sake. For instance, the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) isn't willing to bet on



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unproven climate-friendly engineering to keep their athletes cool. Instead they're bringing \$100,000 worth of air conditioners to France.

"We appreciate the concept of not having air conditioning due to the carbon footprint," [said AOC CEO Matt Carroll](#). "But it is a high-performance Games. We're not going for a picnic."

"As we've explained to the Paris Organizing Committee, athletes have got to sleep during the day, because their events are at night," Carroll continued. "Daytime will be when it's hottest. That's been informing our decision in putting temporary air conditioners in the athletes' rooms and also fans."

Olympic teams from Canada, Greece, and Ireland will also be bringing their own portable units to Paris. Even the Paris Organizing Committee appears to understand the concerns as they will be offering portable units "through a list of rental equipment offered by Paris 2024."

Instead of inconveniencing athletes with the silly, insignificant, and ultimately empty gesture of providing no air conditioning, why don't Mayor Hidalgo and the organizers of the Paris Olympics do something truly worthwhile for the climate, and call off the games?

After all, athletes from over 200 nations from all over the globe come to compete in the Olympics. Isn't that a lot of unnecessary jet travel? Remember that France has already [banned](#) short-haul flights for its own citizens for the climate's sake. The Olympics are not a necessity, after all — why not make a grand gesture in the name of the climate and cancel them altogether?



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