



Addressing Climate Change

U.S. EPA | CLIMATE CHANGE OUTREACH AT EPA NEW ENGLAND

THE ENERGY & CLIMATE CHANGE efforts at EPA New England include working with businesses, federal, state, and local organizations and New England citizens to reduce energy use by providing tools, guidance and technical assistance for energy efficiency, cleaner fuels and renewable sources of energy. The goal of these efforts is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and impacts of climate change.



INTRO:

Since the mid-1800s, the concentration of carbon dioxide, one of the gases that causes climate change, has increased in the atmosphere by nearly 40 percent and it continues to increase each year. Climate change in New England brings higher temperatures, a longer growing season, more extreme precipitation, rising sea levels, less snow cover and more drought. These changes have created health and economic problems, left the infrastructure vulnerable, and changed the habitat for the wildlife in the region. We can reduce the harm of greenhouse gas emissions if we use less energy, cleaner, renewable energy sources and low-carbon fuels; drive vehicles that use less gas per mile and reduce our overall energy use.

WHAT'S BEING DONE:

In 2009, EPA found that greenhouse gases pose a threat to the public's health and welfare. As a result of this finding, EPA is regulating greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act and using a common sense approach to achieve reductions to protect public health and the environment.

Other EPA activities also aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. EPA is promoting voluntary energy efficiency, as well as the voluntary use of renewable and clean energy to reduce the emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. EPA's ENERGY STAR program helps businesses, governments and individuals reduce their energy use by providing information on energy-efficient appliances and how to assess a building's energy use. In New England, more than 180 towns representing more than a third of the region's population, have signed up for EPA New England's Community Energy Challenge program. Each community has pledged to reduce its energy use by at least 10 percent.

The federal government is investing more than \$2.6 billion each year to study climate change. In New England, federal and state agencies as well as regional organizations are collaborating to study how climate changes will affect the specific natural resources and economies of this area and how to adapt to those changes.

The New England states have developed aggressive greenhouse gas reduction targets, and programs and policies to reduce emissions. All six states have prepared climate action plans, and are part of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, which caps carbon dioxide emissions from fossil-fuel fired electric power plants. Each state has also developed standards that require more electricity each year to come from renewable sources. These initiatives, as well as others in the state climate action plans, will create green jobs and an economic future based on clean energy.

We can all take action to limit the impacts of climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Visit EPA New England's website at www.epa.gov/region1/eco/energy/what-u-can-do.html, and EPA's national climate website at www.epa.gov/climatechange to learn what you can do to reduce your own carbon footprint - at work, at home, at school and on the road.

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