

Our Carbon Footprint

Why we care

In going about our lives—driving, flying, heating our homes, purchasing goods, and eating—each of us contributes to the greenhouse gas emissions that are causing climate change. Each household emits greenhouse gases equivalent to 23,000 pounds of carbon dioxide. These include CO₂ from burning fossil fuels; methane from landfills, natural gas systems, and cattle; and nitrous oxide from fertilizers.

Simple, positive change

- Carbon calculators show how different behaviors contribute to your household emissions. Visit the [CoolClimate calculator](#) and pledge to reduce your footprint.
- After you've done all you can to shrink your personal carbon footprint, consider buying offsets or renewable energy certificates.
 - A *carbon offset* funds projects that reduce carbon emissions elsewhere. Offset projects include installing high-efficiency equipment, capturing methane, or planting trees. However, while trees do absorb CO₂, you may be waiting many years for the reduction to take place. Purchase high quality offsets from an entity such as Native Energy or TerraPass or through a utility program like [NW Natural's Smart Energy program](#).
 - A *renewable energy certificate (RIC)* doesn't actually reduce emissions, but it supports the long term success of the renewable energy market by providing an extra incentive to a developer of wind, solar, or biomass. [Bonneville Environmental Foundation](#) (503-248-1905) is a local source of RICs that are certified by a third party. [PGE](#) and [Pacific Power](#) customers can choose to contribute to renewable energy projects in the Western region by adding a specific amount to their bills.

Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at jeanne@earthleaders.org.