

MAPPING GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS WHERE YOU LIVE

VOCABULARY

Carbon dioxide (CO₂): Carbon dioxide is the greenhouse gas people talk about the most. That's because people produce more carbon dioxide than any other greenhouse gas, and it's responsible for most of the warming. Whenever we burn fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and natural gas—whether it's to drive our cars, use electricity, or make products—we are producing carbon dioxide. This extra carbon dioxide is the main cause of climate change.

Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e): A unit of measurement that can be used to compare the emissions of various greenhouse gases based on how long they stay in the atmosphere and how much heat they can trap. For example, over a period of 100 years, 1 pound of methane will trap as much heat as 25 pounds of carbon dioxide. Thus, 1 pound of methane is equal to 25 pounds of carbon dioxide equivalents.

Emission: The release of a gas (such as carbon dioxide) or other substance into the air.

Fluorinated gas: A group of powerful greenhouse gases that can stay in the atmosphere for hundreds to thousands of years. Fluorinated gases are artificially produced; they do not occur naturally. They are used in refrigeration and air-conditioning systems, fire extinguishers, foam products, and other products.

Greenhouse gas: Also sometimes known as “heat-trapping gases,” greenhouse gases are natural or human-produced gases that trap heat in the atmosphere and contribute to the greenhouse effect. Greenhouse gases include water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorinated gases.

Greenhouse Gas Data Publication Tool (Pub Tool): A publicly accessible repository of emissions data submitted by large facilities that emit or supply greenhouse gases or fossil fuels. The Pub Tool consists of total facility emissions by major greenhouse gases, total facility emissions by source category, name of each reporting facility, and address or geographic coordinates of each reporting facility.

Methane: A colorless, odorless greenhouse gas. It occurs both naturally and as a result of people's activities. Methane is produced by the decay of plants, animals, and waste, as well as other processes. It is also the main ingredient in natural gas.

Nitrous oxide: A colorless, odorless greenhouse gas. It occurs both naturally and as a result of people's activities. Major sources include farming practices (such as using fertilizers) that add extra nitrogen to the soil, burning fossil fuels, and certain industrial processes.

Parts per million (ppm): a concentration of 1 ppm for a given gas means there is one part of that gas in 1 million parts of a given amount of air.