

I. Complete the Reading with the vocabulary

Reducing - Changing - Carbon Dioxide - Heat - Hurricanes - Electricity
 Global Warming - Glaciers - Levels - Pollution - Efficient - Temperatures

Global Warming



Climate Change

Climate change is _____ our economy, health and communities in many ways. Scientists warn that if we do not aggressively curb climate change now, the results will likely be disastrous.

Carbon dioxide and other air _____ that is collecting in the atmosphere like a thickening blanket, trapping the sun's heat and causing the planet to warm up. Coal-burning power plants are the largest U.S. source of _____ pollution -- they produce 2.5 billion tons every year. Automobiles, the second largest source, create nearly 1.5 billion tons of CO₂ annually.

Although local _____ fluctuate naturally, over the past 50 years the average global temperature has increased at the fastest rate in recorded history. And experts think the trend is accelerating: the 10 hottest years on record have all occurred since 1990. Scientists say that unless we curb global warming emissions, average U.S. temperatures could be 3 to 9 degrees higher by the end of the century.

_____ is already causing damage in many parts of the United States. In 2002, Colorado, Arizona and Oregon endured their worst wildfire seasons ever. The same year, drought created severe dust storms in Montana, Colorado and Kansas, and floods caused hundreds of millions of dollars in damage in Texas, Montana and North Dakota. Since the early 1950s, snow accumulation has declined 60 percent and winter seasons have shortened in some areas of the Cascade Range in Oregon and Washington.

Of course, the impacts of global warming are not limited to the United States. In 2003, extreme _____ waves caused more than 20,000 deaths in Europe and more than 1,500 deaths in India. And in what scientists regard as an alarming sign of events to come, the area of the Arctic's perennial polar ice cap is declining at the rate of 9 percent per decade.

Global warming doesn't create _____, but it does make them stronger and more dangerous. Because the ocean is getting warmer, tropical storms can pick up more energy and become more powerful. So global warming could turn, say, a category 3 storm into a much more dangerous category 4 storm. In fact, scientists have found that the destructive potential of hurricanes has greatly increased along with ocean temperature over the past 35 years.

Global warming is affecting the planet, and many agree that certain consequences are:

- Melting _____, early snowmelt and severe droughts will cause more dramatic water shortages in the American West.
- Rising sea _____ will lead to coastal flooding on the Eastern seaboard, in Florida, and in other areas, such as the Gulf of Mexico.
- Warmer sea surface temperatures will fuel more intense hurricanes in the southeastern Atlantic and Gulf coasts.
- Forests, farms and cities will face troublesome new pests and more mosquito-borne diseases.
- Disruption of habitats such as coral reefs and alpine meadows could drive many plant and animal species to extinction.

Solutions

Here's the good news: technologies exist today to make cars that run cleaner and burn less gas, modernize power plants and generate _____ from nonpolluting sources, and cut our electricity use through energy efficiency. The challenge is to be sure these solutions are put to use.

Cost-effective technologies to reduce global warming pollution from cars and light trucks of all sizes are available now. There is no reason to wait and hope that hydrogen fuel cell vehicles will solve the problem in the future. Hybrid gas-electric engines can cut global warming pollution by one-third or more today; hybrid sedans, SUVs and trucks from several automakers are already on the market.

Take Action Now

It's simple: By _____ pollution from vehicles and power plants. Right away, we should put existing technologies for building cleaner cars and more modern electricity generators into widespread use. We can increase our reliance on renewable energy sources such as wind, sun and geothermal. And we can manufacture more efficient appliances and conserve energy.

We must use more _____ appliances and equipment in our homes and offices to reduce our electricity needs. We can also phase out the decades-old, coal-burning power plants that generate most of our electricity and replace them with cleaner plants. And we can increase our use of renewable energy sources such as wind and sun. Some states are moving in this direction: California has required its largest utilities to get 20 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2017, and New York has pledged to compel power companies to provide 25 percent of the state's electricity from renewable sources by 2013.

III. Answer the following questions with complete answers using : will probably, will definitely, might/may, probably won't, definitely won't.

1. How will Global Warming affect the climate?
2. What will happen to our world if the temperatures continue rising?
3. How can Global Warming make a hurricane worse?
4. What will be the consequences of Global Warming in our planet?
5. How can we cut Global Warming pollution?
6. How can we cut car pollution?
7. What will you do from now on to help fight Global Warming?

IV. Answer True / False and Correct the false ones.

1. Global Warming is not a big problema _____
2. The earth ir really getting hotter _____
3. Warmer temperatures aren't causing bad things to happen _____
4. Global warming doesn't make hurricanes worse _____
5. There really isn't a cause for serious concern _____