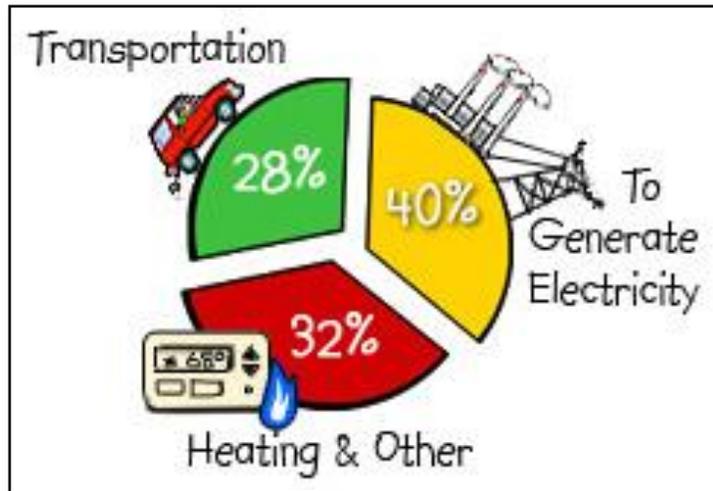




CALCULATING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

A **Carbon Footprint** is an estimate of how much carbon dioxide an individual, a family or even a business produces. Since carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas, a carbon footprint can give you an idea of how much you contribute to global warming. Think of your carbon footprint as a measure of your impact on the environment. For example, when driving a car, the engine burns fuel, which creates a certain amount of CO_2 , depending on its fuel consumption and the driving distance. (CO_2 is



the chemical symbol for carbon dioxide). Heating a house with oil, gas or coal, also generates CO_2 . Even if a house is heated with electricity, the generation of the electrical power may also have a certain amount of CO_2 since almost half of the electricity generated in this country comes from coal. The production of the food, clothing and other things people purchase also emits large quantities of CO_2 .

Having a small carbon footprint is obviously better than having a large one, and a good goal is becoming what is known as "**carbon neutral**." That's when the combination of all your activities releases the same amount of CO_2 as they absorb. When you are "carbon neutral," your carbon footprint is zero.

FAMILY SURVEY

Answer each question for a yearly total (multiply a monthly total by 12).

1. Number of miles driven per year _____ X (multiplied by) the vehicle's average gas mileage _____ = _____ gallons of gasoline used.
(Do this for each vehicle your family owns)

_____ X _____ = _____
_____ X _____ = _____
_____ X _____ = _____

Total _____

2. Number of miles of air travel for your family _____ .
3. Average number of miles your family travels by bus/other mass transit _____ .
4. Kilowatt-hours of electricity used _____ .
(Look at your utility bill to find out a monthly amount and multiply by 12.)
5. **Therms** of natural gas used _____ .
(Look at your utility bill to find out a monthly amount and multiply by 12.)
6. Gallons of propane or bottled gas used _____ .
7. Other sources of energy your family uses?

8. Total number of people living in your household _____ .



Your "Footprint" on the Global Environment - Use the information you gathered in your Family Survey to calculate how much CO_2 you generate per year. Carbon dioxide is one of the main greenhouse gases responsible for global warming.

1. Gallons of gasoline used _____ \times 22 pounds CO_2 /gallon = _____.

2. Miles of air travel _____ \times 0.9 pounds/mile = _____.

3. Miles on mass transit _____ \times 0.5 pounds/mile = _____.

4. Kilowatt hours _____ \times 1.5 pounds/ kWh = _____.

5. Therms natural gas _____ \times 11 pounds/therm = _____.

6. Gallons of propane _____ \times 13 pounds/gallon = _____.

8. Total pounds of CO_2 generated (add up the numbers on the right) _____.

9. Total pounds generated \times number of people in your household = _____
(Total You and your family Generated)



How can you reduce you and your family's impact?

In the space below, write down some actions that you and your family could do to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide you are emitting.
