

Climate Alert: Massachusetts

Massachusetts Climate Action Project (MCAP)

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www.cleanwateraction.org/ma



THE PROBLEMS:

Climate Change Threatens Massachusetts

- ▶ Burning fossil fuels like oil, coal and gas for energy and transportation pollutes the air with the carbon dioxide that causes climate change.
- ▶ Over three quarters of the electricity in New England comes from traditional fuels like coal, gas oil, and nuclear power.
- ▶ This reliance causes many health, environmental and national security problems.

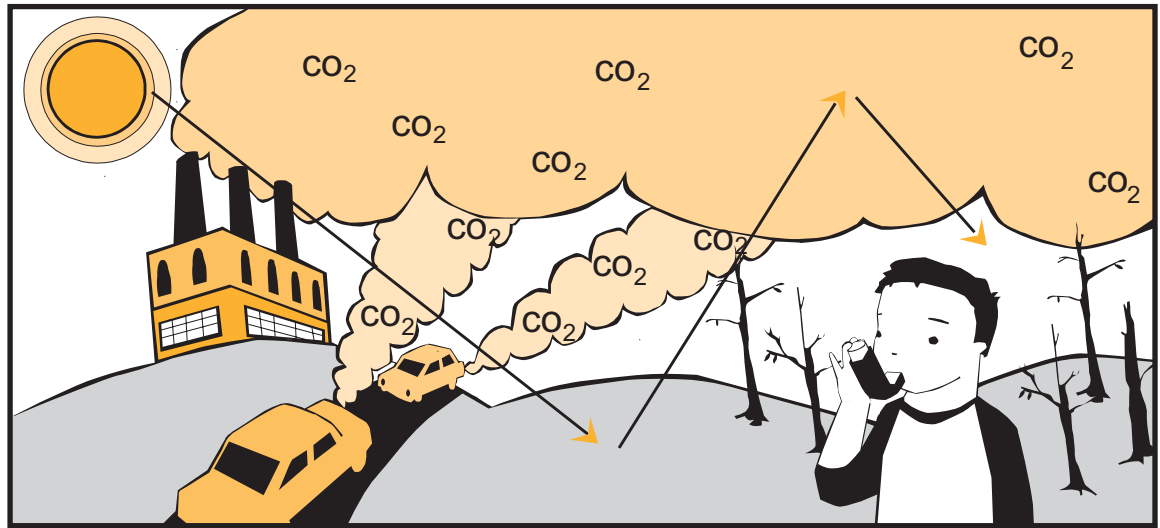


Illustration By: Jen Corace | www.jencorace.com

Power plants along with cars and other vehicles are the biggest sources of carbon dioxide pollution. Climate change happens when greenhouse gas pollution (like carbon dioxide) traps the sun's heat. Some of the health effects of climate change and worsening air pollution include difficulty breathing, increased illness and premature death.

Climate Change Endangers Our Health, Economy and Environment

Bad Air Quality and Increasing Disease

Higher temperatures will lead to an increase in heat-related deaths, worsening air quality due to higher concentrations of smog (ground level ozone), and an increase in disease. Scientists estimate that heat related deaths could increase 50% as average temperatures and frequency of 'high-heat days' increase. From April to October 1999 alone, MA experienced 4,500 emergency room admissions and 17,000 asthma attacks from high smog levels. As temperatures continue to rise so does the risk of insect-borne diseases such as West Nile Virus and Lyme disease.

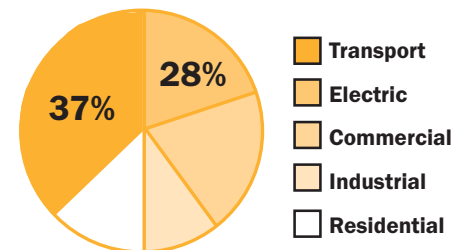
Dangers to Tourism, Agriculture and Real Estate

Climate change will increasingly harm tourism by spoiling fall foliage, fishing habitats and winter sports. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), global warming could have many devastating impacts on lobsters, fish, and other aquatic species as some bodies of water become too warm for the fish and shellfish they currently support. The EPA also projects a potential loss in crop yields of 45%, threatening the \$500 million in average annual revenue from Massachusetts' agricultural sectors.

Sea Level Rise and Coastal Erosion

According to the EPA, sea levels are estimated to rise 6-38 inches over the next several decades flooding vulnerable coastal areas. Already, an average of 65 acres of land is submerged in Massachusetts every year by a combination of rising seas and subsiding land. Most of this loss is occurring along the south-facing coast between Rhode Island and the outer shore of Cape Cod, including the islands of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard.

Carbon Dioxide Emission Sources in New England



Electric power and transportation account for 65% of New England's green house gas emissions.

-From "New England Global Warming Solutions" (p.41) August, 2000, p.9 - WWF/Tellus Institute

This MCAP campaign is part of the New England Climate Action Project which works with over 150 groups regionally to coordinate support for real greenhouse gas emission reductions and timelines in each of the climate plans for the New England states.

The Solutions Are Available Now

You Can Make A Difference

The Solutions: Governor Romney Must Protect Massachusetts



Clean Electricity

Require that electricity suppliers in the state will supply 20% of their electricity from clean, renewable sources of power like solar and wind by the year 2020. This will require strong enforcement of the minimum renewable energy standard passes by the Legislature, and an aggressive commitment to solar power and clean micro power.

Require the 'Filthy Five', the state's oldest and dirtiest power plants, to meet a strict CO2 emissions standard. Urge Governor Romney to block any subsidies for nuclear reactors as part of this program.



Clean Transportation

Massachusetts has already required all vehicles sold in the state to meet the strict California emissions standards.

Governor Romney needs to stand firmly behind this requirement and ensure that we have cars that are better for our lungs and our climate, on the road by 2007.



Government Leading by Example

Purchase 20% of state facility electricity from new clean, renewable sources by 2010.

Green the state fleet by requiring that each vehicle is the most efficient available for the intended purpose.

Reduce state government's energy use by 25% overall by 2010.

Climate Change Action Plan

In August 2001, the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers agreed to the Climate Change Action Plan. The Plan commits the region to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 10% below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 75-85% in the long term.

This Plan is a crucial first step toward protecting our, economy, health and environment from the effects of climate change.

However, special interests threaten to undermine the Climate Change Action Plan. We need your support to make this plan a reality.

Action Steps

Together we can we can make the Climate Change Action Plan work to protect our health, economy and environment. Please take these steps today!

What You Can Do

1. Write a Letter to Governor Romney

Use the sample letter to the right. Add a sentence about why stopping climate change is important to you. Please be sure to ask for a reply, and include your name and address.

2. Write a letter to the editor

Send a short letter to your local newspaper encouraging Governor Romney to be a leader by promoting a strong climate action plan for the state.

3. Get involved with the Campaign

Contact the MA Climate Action Project to get more involved.

- ▶ Clean Water Action (617) 338-8131
- ▶ Massachusetts Climate Action Network (781) 643-5911
- ▶ MASSPIRG (617) 292-4800

Dear Governor Romney,

Massachusetts can't afford the costs of continued climate change.

Please fully implement a climate action plan for Massachusetts by requiring that 20% of our energy come from renewable sources, such as wind and solar power by 2020, increase energy efficiency in the state 20% by 2010, and require all state agencies use 20% renewable energy and increase their energy efficiency 25% by 2010.

Sincerely,

Address your letters to:
Governor Romney
State House, Boston, MA, 02133.