

Global Warming Threatens Rhode Island

Burning fossil fuels like oil, gas and coal puts the carbon dioxide into our air that is the leading cause of global warming. The burning of these fossil fuels for both energy and transportation use are the primary cause of pollution from carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

Currently, Rhode Island gets about 64% of our power from oil, coal and gas. Our other energy comes mainly from nuclear power and large hydroelectric plants, and in small part from small dams and wood burning plants.

Rhode Island is already experiencing changes in our climate from global warming. Throughout the region, temperatures have been rising over the past decade. Rhode Island's temperature has risen 3.3 degrees.

Climate Change Endangers Our Health And Environment

Bad Air Quality

Rhode Island already does not meet federal air quality standards, and according to the Environmental Protection Agency, climate change will make matters worse.

More severely hot days in Rhode Island will cause more ozone days when the air is unhealthy to breathe. Rhode Island had 15 ozone days in 2001. That means the 17,000 children and 34,000 adults in Rhode Island who suffer from asthma were told to stay inside because of bad air quality.

Coastal Erosion

Sea level rise is another risk associated with climate change. Rhode Island has 400 miles of densely populated shoreline and our \$3 billion tourism industry depends heavily on the beaches of South Country.

Global warming experts expect the seas to rise by as much as 20 inches by 2100 and cost Rhode Island millions of dollars.

Increasing Disease

Warmer temperatures could also increase the incidence of Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases in Rhode Island.

West Nile virus is moving north and putting vulnerable populations at risk to this deadly disease.

Rhode Island Needs To Protect Our Precious Coastline And Quality Of Life

Rhode Island Climate Action Project

A RIPIRG Education Fund and Clean Water Fund campaign

For more information: RIPIRG Ed Fund • 11 S. Angell St. #337 Providence RI 02903 • (401) 421-6578 • www.ripirg.org
Clean Water Fund • 372 Broadway Providence RI 02909 • (401) 331-6972 • www.cleanwateraction.org

The Solutions Are Available Now

Renewable Energy And Energy Efficiency

In order to reverse the impacts of global warming on Rhode Island, we need to increase our use of renewable energy and energy efficiency. We can significantly reduce the impact of global climate change in Rhode Island by taking three actions:

1. Require that 20% of our energy come from renewable sources, such as wind and solar power by 2020.
2. Increase energy efficiency in the state 20% by 2010.
3. All state agencies must lead by example and use 20% renewable energy and increase their energy efficiency 25% by 2010.

A Key Role For Our New Governor

In August 2001, the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers adopted a Climate Change Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gases by 75-85% below current levels. The scientific community believes these cuts are necessary to avoid more harmful impact on the climate.

The New England Climate Action Project was created to hold the Governors accountable and help them reach this goal. The New England Climate Action Project developed a ten-point plan to reduce climate change. We need to make sure our next Governor implements our priorities. We must start now to increase energy efficiency and renewable energy in order to meet the plan laid out by Governors and Premiers.

What You Can Do

Write a letter to Gov. Carcieri urging him to take these steps to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions in Rhode Island and across the region.

Sample Letter

Dear Governor Carcieri,

Rhode Island can't afford the costs of continued global warming.

Please support policies that:

- Require 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,

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.

**Address your letter to:
Governor Carcieri
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence RI 02903**

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