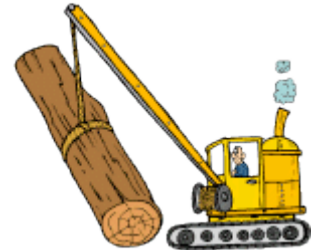


## Global warming - the enhanced greenhouse effect

Some of the activities of man also produce greenhouse gases. These gases keep increasing in the atmosphere. The balance of the greenhouse gases changes and this has effects on the whole of the planet.

Burning fossil fuels - coal, oil and natural gas - releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Cutting down and burning trees also produces a lot of carbon dioxide.



A group of greenhouse gases called the chlorofluorocarbons, - which are usually called CFCs, because the other word is much too long! - have been used in aerosols, such as hairspray cans, fridges and in making foam plastics. They are found in small amounts in the atmosphere. They are dangerous greenhouse gases because small amounts can trap large amounts of heat.

Because there are more and more greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, more heat is trapped which makes the Earth warmer. This is known as **GLOBAL WARMING**.



A lot of scientists agree that man's activities are making the natural greenhouse effect stronger. If we carry on polluting the atmosphere with greenhouse gases, it will have very dangerous effects on the Earth.



(Source: <http://www.clean-air-kids.org.uk/globalwarming.html>)

It may seem hard to believe that people can actually change the Earth's climate. But scientists think that the things people do that send greenhouse gases into the air are making our planet warmer.

Once, all climate changes occurred naturally. However, during the Industrial Revolution, we began altering our climate and environment through agricultural and industrial practices. The Industrial Revolution was a time when people began using machines to make life easier. It started more than 200 years ago and changed the way humans live. Before the Industrial Revolution, human activity released very few gases into the atmosphere, but now through population growth, fossil fuel burning, and deforestation, we are affecting the mixture of gases in the atmosphere.



We need energy to do things like drive a car, fly a plane, or make things in factories. But we need to use energy wisely if we want to help slow global warming.

Since the Industrial Revolution, the need for energy to run machines has steadily increased. Some energy, like the energy you need to do your homework, comes from the food you eat. But other energy, like the energy that makes cars run and much of the energy used to light and heat our homes, comes from fuels like coal and oil - fossil fuels. Burning these fuels releases greenhouse gases.

### **When Do You Send Greenhouse Gases into the Air?**

When you:

- Watch TV
- Use the Air Conditioner
- Turn on a Light
- Use a Hair Dryer
- Ride in a Car

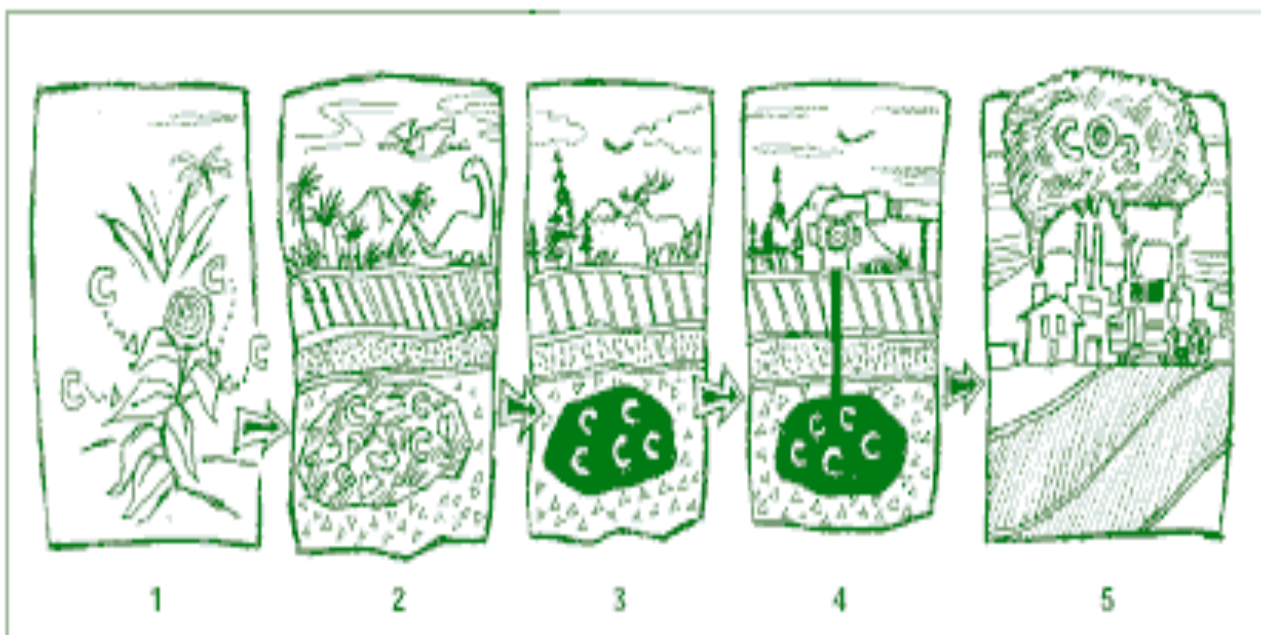
you are helping to send greenhouse gas into the air.

To perform many of these functions, you need to use electricity. Electricity comes from power plants. Most power plants use coal and oil to make electricity. Burning coal and oil produces greenhouse gases.



Other things we do send greenhouse gases into the air too;

The trash that we send to landfills produces a greenhouse gas called methane. Methane is also produced by the animals we raise for dairy and meat products and when we take coal out of the ground. Whenever we drive or ride in a car, we are adding greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. And, when factories make the things that we buy and use everyday, they too are sending greenhouse gases into the air.



- (1) Plants remove carbon dioxide from the air.
- (2) When the plants died, they were buried in the earth.
- (3) After millions of years, their remains turned into coal and oil.
- (4) People mine the earth for coal and oil, which are called "fossil fuels."
- (5) When people burn fossil fuels, they send carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the air.

(Source: <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/change.html>)