

Carbon Footprints

Adding it up



Tim Stewart
CEO / General Manager

Carbon dioxide exists everywhere. It's in every breath we take; it keeps trees and plants around us lush and green; it even gives our soft drinks fizz.

But because the ever-present gas also help to hold the sun's heat in our atmosphere, it has taken on an edge of notoriety in recent years. Increasing amounts of carbon dioxide emitted from sources

like factories, cars, and power plants have been blamed for contributing to climate change (along with a list of other "greenhouse gases," including methane).

Carbon dioxide molecules can last in the atmosphere for a century or more, and many experts see too much of it as a bad thing. The idea of a "carbon footprint" has been developed to tally the amount of carbon dioxide anything emits, directly or indirectly.

Technically, each of us expands our own carbon footprint every time we exhale, although the amount really adds up when it comes to burning fossil fuels like coal, gasoline, and natural gas. Burning these fuels releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, and everyone connected to those emissions (such as a family driving a car or using electricity) boosts their own carbon footprint.

The sources making up carbon footprints are often broad in scope, spanning state and sometimes national boundaries. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) breaks sources of carbon dioxide emissions into three categories: direct emissions, such as from the family minivan; indirect emissions from generation of the electricity people use; and all other indirect emissions, from trash to the manufacture of every item bought. (For example, how much electricity went into making your television, and how many miles did a tractor-trailer drive to get it to the store?)

All things considered, the average U.S. household is responsible for 21 tons of carbon dioxide a year, according to the EPA, an amount that would take more than four acres of pine trees to soak up.

Many companies are using the idea of carbon footprints to show consumers just how much carbon dioxide was released in getting one particular item to them. PepsiCo, for example, recently determined that 3.75 pounds of carbon dioxide are emitted for every half-gallon carton of Tropicana Pure Premium Orange Juice it produces. With this information, steps can be made to reduce emissions.

This applies to companies and individuals alike. A family can trim its carbon footprint by trading in the minivan for a more fuel-efficient vehicle, and by making the home more energy efficient to cut back on electricity use. Best of all, these measures not only cut carbon emissions but gasoline and electric bills as well.

As Congress considers legislation to limit carbon dioxide emissions, associated costs will impact everyone. Consumers paying electric bills, and every company making products with electricity generated from fossil fuels, will pay more. The cost will be passed on to the end consumer. ■

To learn more, please view some of these web sites:

- NRECA's Our Energy Our Future at www.ourenergy.coop.
- To calculate your household carbon footprint, visit: http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/ind_calculator2.html.
- To calculate your business's carbon footprint, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/partnerships/wastewise/carboncalc.htm>.

CLARK ELECTRIC
MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY

FREE PANCAKE BREAKFAST ...
ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS OF ALL AGES...
COMMUNITY INFORMATION AVAILABLE...

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2009
7 AM TO 11 AM AT THE CECO BUILDING, WEST OF GREENWOOD

HOT LINE DEMONSTRATION
HEALTH SCREENING
PLAY AREA FOR KIDS
AND MUCH, MUCH MORE

Resource Information

Energy Assistance

October starts the winter heating season. It's important for you to make every attempt to keep current on your electric bill. We understand that things do happen that put financial burdens on people. Certain government organizations can offer heating assistance or point you in the direction of a group that can help.

Emergency energy assistance is sometimes available in addition to energy assistance because some winters are worse than others, and emergencies in certain regions may require additional funds in meeting needs beyond the levels established under the program authorization.

During the past years, funds have provided heating assistance to offset extreme cold; offset price spikes in heating oil, propane, and natural gas; and cover the additional cooling costs in the Midwest during a prolonged summer heat wave. To find out if emergency energy assistance is available, contact your county social services department.

The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) administers the federally funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Public Benefits Energy Assistance Program. LIHEAP and its related services help more than 100,000 Wisconsin households annually.

Clark County **715-743-5233**
Department of Social Services

Chippewa County **715-726-7862**
Department of Human Services/Economic Support

Marathon County **715-842-3111**
Energy Services, Inc.

Taylor County **715-748-6123**
Human Services Department

Wood County
Department of Social Services
Wisconsin Rapids Office **715-421-8600**
Marshfield Office **715-387-6374**

Jackson County **715-284-4301**
Department of Health & Human Services

In addition to regular heating and electric assistance, specialized services include:

- Emergency fuel assistance
- Counseling for energy conservation and energy budgets
- Proactive co-payment plans
- Targeted outreach services
- Emergency furnace repair and replacement

Services are provided locally through:

- County social services offices
- Tribal governments
- Private non-profit or other government agencies

Estimated Guidelines 2009 - 2010

Persons in Family	Monthly Income	Annual Income
1	\$1,953	\$23,435
2	\$2,554	\$30,646
3	\$3,155	\$37,856
4	\$3,756	\$45,067
5	\$4,356	\$52,278
6	\$4,957	\$59,488
7	\$5,070	\$60,840
8	\$5,183	\$62,192

Our Offices will be closed on Monday, September 7, 2009 in observance of Labor Day.

Water Heating Tips

Where Your Money Goes

By Chris Dorsi

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, water heating accounts for up to 20 percent of the total utility expense for many U.S. households. Save energy and money by learning how this energy is used.

Your energy consumption for water heating is divided among three types of use: heating efficiency, standby loss, and hot water consumption. You should apply different conservation measures to reduce each use.

Heating efficiency describes how well your water heater converts electricity or gas into hot water. When you next buy a water heater, study the yellow Energy Guide label that is required on all appliances, and compare the listed Energy Factor (EF) that is used to rate water heaters. Find the highest EF available to identify the most efficient appliances.

Standby losses include the heat that goes through the walls of your water heater tank even when no one is using hot water. The best defense against standby loss is a heavily-insulated tank. If you buy a tank with a high

Energy Factor (*below*), you're getting the best built-in tank insulation available. If you have an existing water heater that is more than a few years old, the best way to reduce standby loss is by installing an external water heater blanket. If you install a blanket, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid safety hazards.

Hot water consumption is the water you use at appliances and faucets. Every gallon of hot water you use is replaced by a gallon of cold water in your water heater that must be heated. If you reduce your hot water consumption, you'll reduce the amount of electricity or gas your water heaters consumes. You can reduce your hot water consumption by installing low-flow showerheads, for a savings of 5 to 10 gallons per shower. You'll also use less hot water by using the cold-water wash-cycle on your washing machine. Modern soaps do a great job of cleaning clothes without hot water, and you'll save up to 10 gallons of hot water per cycle. ■

Chris Dorsi is co-author of Residential Energy - Cost Savings and Comfort for Existing Buildings. www.srmi.biz

Marathon Water Heaters

The Best in the Business



Now that you have read about how to save on water heating costs, purchasing a Marathon Water Heater from Clark Electric Appliance & Satellite will help in two of the three areas discussed in the above article.

The article first mentions Energy Factor (EF). Marathon water heaters have an EF of .91 to .94 depending on the size of the tank. These are some of the highest EF numbers in the industry. The 40- and 50-gallon models qualify for Focus on Energy rebates because of their high EF.

The second item to look at is standby heat loss. Marathon Water Heaters have 2.5 inches of Enviro-foam insulation. This high-density insulation reduces heat loss more than most other types of the insulation.

Tank construction is another reason Marathon is

one of the best brands on the market. The tank is made of molded polybutene: no rust, no corrosion — ever — and there are no anode rods to give your water that “rotten egg” smell.

Here are more advantages of purchasing a Marathon water heater from Clark Electric Appliance & Satellite:

- Clark Electric Cooperative offers rebates on Marathon water heaters and other models.
- Monthly \$4 credit on electric bill is available for accounts using more than 300 kWh/month.
- Offer requires that you sign up for Clark Electric's water heater load management program. Ask for details or go to www.ccecoop.com to learn more.



Truck Out For Bid

Clark Electric is currently taking bids on a 2001 Chevy Extended Cab, 3/4 ton 4X4 pick-up with a 6 liter V-8 engine, air conditioning, cruise control, tilt steering wheel, 189,000 miles. This truck is being sold as is with no warranty implied. All bids must be in the office no later than Wednesday, September 23, 2009, by 5 p.m. Bids must be in a sealed envelope marked 2001 Chevy Pick-up Bid, Attention Mike Ruff. ■



QUESTLINE



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