

Your Carbon Footprint

Your carbon footprint is the total amount of carbon that is emitted as a result of your daily actions and choices. It is based on your fossil fuel consumption, food consumption, the goods you purchase, the services you use, and where you live.

PART A: Homework

Work with your family to answer the following questions.

Home Heating and Cooling

Use your home's utility bills to complete the following. If possible, calculate the average monthly cost over 6 months or a year. If you do not have the bills, estimate the amounts using a sample bill.

Natural Gas How much does your household spend on natural gas per month? \$ _____
How many therms per month do you use? _____

Fuel Oil How much does your household spend on fuel oil per month? \$ _____
How many gallons of fuel oil per month do you use? _____

Electricity How much does your household spend on electricity per month? \$ _____
How many kilowatt hours (kWh) per month do you use? _____

Propane How much does your household spend on propane per month? \$ _____
How many gallons of propane per month do you use? _____

Wood How much does your household spend on wood per month? \$ _____
How many cords of wood per month do you use? _____



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Transportation



On average, how many miles does your family drive household vehicles per week? Vehicle #1 should be the vehicle driven the most.

Vehicle #1: _____miles

Vehicle #2: _____miles

Vehicle #3: _____miles

Estimate the average gas mileage for each vehicle.

Vehicle #1: _____miles per gallon

Vehicle #2: _____miles per gallon

Vehicle #3: _____miles per gallon

Recycling



Which of the following items does your household recycle?

Cans

Plastic

Glass

Newspaper

Magazine/Catalogs

PART B: Calculating Your Carbon Footprint



Choose a website for calculating carbon footprints from the list your teacher provides. These websites allow you to see how much carbon dioxide you emit per year measured as pounds of CO₂. Follow the directions on the website to calculate your footprint.

1 The website I chose is sponsored by: _____

2 What are three types of data the website asked for?

3 Record your results: _____ tons of CO₂ per year

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4 Convert your result to pounds. Remember that 1 ton = 2,000 lbs.

_____ tons of CO₂ per year X 2,000 lbs = _____ pounds of CO₂ per year

5 Are the results surprising to you? Why or why not?

6 What do you think was the variable that affected this result the most?

7 Did the website ask for your household consumption? If so, what result did you calculate for your entire household? If not, predict your household result on the basis of your individual consumption.

8 Do you think an adult would have a different carbon footprint from a child? Explain.
