



Implementing a School Carbon Challenge

Our Climate Is Changing

Pick up a newspaper, scan the Internet, or turn on TV and you're bound to find something on climate change. Indicators that our climate is changing are all around us: in reports of Arctic glaciers melting, rising sea levels, record heat waves and droughts, endangered species and more extreme and frequent storms. Faced with such a global problem, it's easy for your students to feel overwhelmed and powerless to do anything.

What can your students do about climate change?

Roughly half of all US greenhouse gas emissions come from households through their energy consumption for motor vehicles, home heating, and electricity. Moderate reductions in energy consumption by all of us can have a significant impact on reducing the risk of climate change and can save us money! By taking the Carbon Challenge, your students will gain valuable insight into how their families use energy and will learn how simple actions they can take in their homes can reduce their energy consumption and their environmental impact.

How can the New England Carbon Challenge help?

Our New England Carbon Estimator™ (<http://carbonchallenge.sr.unh.edu/calculator.jsp>) will help your students understand how their families use energy, assess their current household emissions (their "carbon footprint") and map out a strategy to reduce their energy consumption, costs, and environmental impact.

Plus, we can "link" your students together to show the impact of your students taking action as a class. Having one student's family take the Challenge is terrific, but having 30 students take the Challenge together can reduce annual emissions by 250,000 pounds or more! Imagine if your students knew that they were responsible for keeping a quarter million pounds of CO₂ out of the atmosphere every year... that's like taking 20 cars off the road every day of the year!

We can also put your class "on the map" as taking action to address climate change and give them the recognition they deserve. They might even want to challenge another class to a little friendly competition!

Households that have taken the Carbon Challenge have reduced their energy consumption by an average of 17% and are saving over \$800 a year.

Why not join them?



The New England Carbon Challenge™

Helping New England Households Meet the Challenge of Our Changing Climate

How can your class take the Carbon Challenge?

There are **8** easy steps:

(estimated time: 15-25 min)

1. Contact us (603-422-6464, ext. 115 or info@necarbonchallenge.org) to have your school or class listed in our online Carbon Estimator™. We charge a nominal yearly fee of \$50 per town for School Carbon Challenges. We'll give you all the details on the phone.
2. Take the Carbon Challenge yourself: <http://necarbonchallenge.org/calculator.jsp>. It will give you the best overview of our system and will likely answer any questions that you have.
3. Have your students **collect the data** they will need to take the Challenge. They will need to know:
 - a. How much electricity their family uses each year and how much heating and hot water fuel(s) they consume annually. (Most utilities and fuel providers can give that information over the phone).
 - b. They will also need to know the fuel economy of their vehicles (in miles per gallon or MPG) and how many miles per year each car is driven. We do provide state averages, (http://necarbonchallenge.org/fuel_averages.jsp) but the best results are achieved by using data specific to a household.
4. Have your students **go online** with their parents and take the Challenge: <http://necarbonchallenge.org/calculator.jsp>. Together, your students and their parents can select actions most appropriate for their families. Every household is different and the Carbon Challenge is flexible enough to accommodate different family interests and needs.
5. As your students **select actions** from the Estimator, they will see the impact of these actions in reduced carbon dioxide emissions and energy dollars saved. Once they have chosen the actions they want to take, select the “**Take Challenge**” button at the bottom of the Carbon Estimator screen.
6. Have your students **select your school or class** from the pulldown list of Community Challenges. That way, their actions can be linked to your class.
7. **Save your challenge!** We will e-mail each student a customized report summarizing their challenge. Saving their challenge enables students to update their record in the future.
8. Watch your numbers grow! Locate your school on our online map: http://necarbonchallenge.org/maps/challenge_takers.jsp and chart your progress in reducing your emissions and energy costs. Congratulations!

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