

# Prevention

On June 25, 2013, President Obama announced a series of executive actions to reduce carbon pollution, prepare the U.S. for the impacts of climate change and lead international efforts to address global climate change.

As part of the Climate Action Plan, President Obama issued a Presidential Memorandum directing the EPA to work expeditiously to complete carbon pollution standards for the power sector. You can learn more about the President's Climate Action plan on the White House web site.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/share/climate-action-plan>



## To reduce the health impact of environmental pollution:

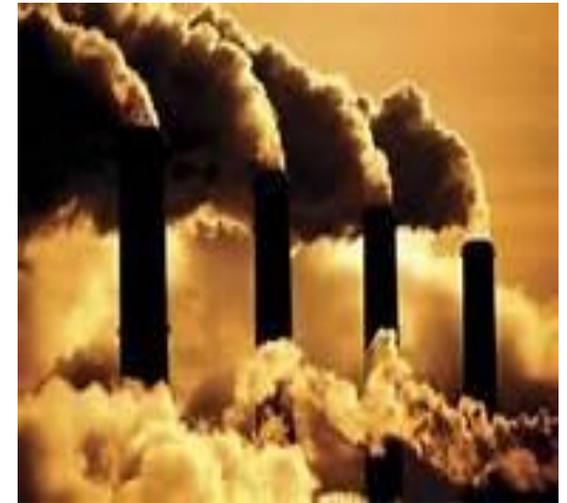
- Limit diesel soot pollution from construction, equipment, buses, trucks & trains.
- Reduce air pollution from dirty coal-fired power plants.
- Support efforts to bring cleaner cars to Illinois.
- Reduce the threat of deadly radon exposure.
- Reduce motor vehicle idling



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# Carbon Pollution & Climate Change

## INFORMATION SHEET



PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# Carbon Pollution

**Carbon Pollution** refers to air pollution caused by the production of Co2 (carbon dioxide) from industrial activity and is the biggest driver of Climate Change.

In 2009, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) determined that greenhouse gas pollution threatens Americans' health and welfare by leading to long lasting changes in our climate that can have a range of negative effects on human health and the environment. Carbon dioxide (CO2) is the primary greenhouse gas pollutant, accounting for nearly three-quarters of global greenhouse gas emissions and 84% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.



## CARBON POLLUTION & POWER PLANTS

The electric power sector accounted for 33% of U.S. total greenhouse gas emissions and 60% of U.S. stationary source greenhouse gas emissions in 2011.

Fossil fuel-fired power plants are the largest source of U.S. CO2 emissions. Fossil fuel-fired power plants use natural gas, petroleum, coal or any form of solid, liquid, or gaseous fuel derived from such material for the purpose of generating electricity.

## HEALTH EFFECTS OF CARBON POLLUTION

Unchecked carbon pollution leads to long-lasting changes in our climate, such as:

- Rising global temperatures
- Rising sea level

- Changes in weather & precipitation
- Changes in ecosystems, habitats & species diversity

These changes threaten America's health & welfare for current & future generations. Health risks include:

- More heat waves & drought
- Worsening smog (also called ground-level ozone pollution)
- Increasing the intensity of extreme events, like hurricanes, extreme precipitation and flooding
- Increasing the rang of ticks & mosquitos, which can spread diseases such as Lyme Disease & West Nile Virus.

Our most vulnerable citizens including children, older adults, people with heart or lung disease & people living in poverty, may be most at risk from the health impacts of climate change.

Air pollution can endanger your lung health in outdoor & indoor environments. Breathing air pollutants can cause numerous health problems, including lung cancer, asthma attacks, heart attacks, strokes & premature death. Doctor's visits, emergency room treatments & hospitalizations all increase when air quality worsens.

Despite progress in recent years, air pollution continues to be a serious problem. Today, more than 100 million Americans live in areas with unhealthy levels of air pollution. The Chicago metropolitan region still violates federal air quality standards for harmful ozone and particulate matter pollution. Poor air quality as not only an outdoor problem, but an indoor problem as well. In fact, the U.S. EPA ranks poor indoor air quality among the top five environmental risks to public health.