



A-Z SEED - G



GREENHOUSE GASES

Many chemical compounds found in the Earth's atmosphere act as "greenhouse gases." These gases allow sunlight to enter the atmosphere freely. When sunlight strikes the Earth's surface, some of it is reflected back towards space as infrared radiation (heat). Greenhouse gases absorb this infrared radiation and trap the heat in the atmosphere. Over time, the amount of energy sent from the sun to the Earth's surface should be about the same as the amount of energy radiated back into space, leaving the temperature of the Earth's surface roughly constant.

Many gases exhibit these "greenhouse" properties. Some of them occur in nature (water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide), while others are exclusively human-made (like gases used for aerosols).

The Greenhouse Effect

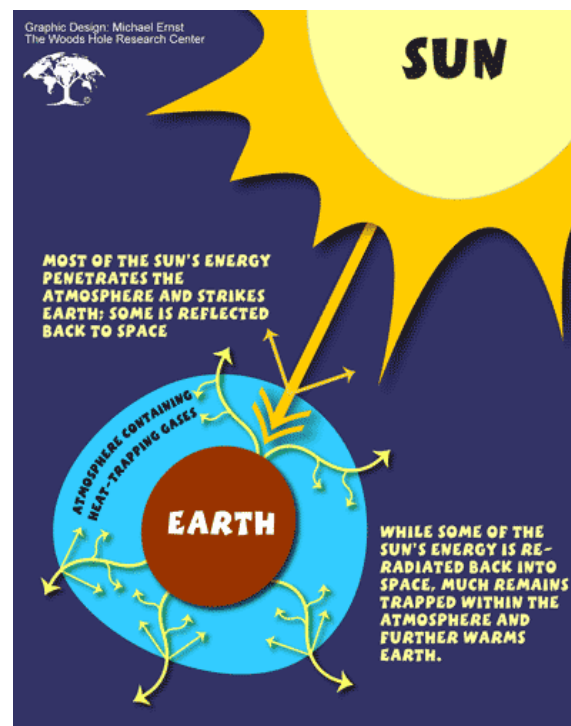
The "greenhouse effect" is the heating of the Earth due to the presence of greenhouse gases. It is named this way because of a similar effect produced by the glass panes of a greenhouse.

How to Reduce Your Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Plant a Tree. The tree will store carbon dioxide that would otherwise be in the atmosphere.

Conserve lots of water. Educate yourself, you family, your friends, your co-workers and everyone you meet. Our culture is just waking up to issues that have always existed. The more people are aware of the issues the more likely they are to make decisions that will be constructive!

Before turning on any electrical, oil or gas-powered machine, think: "Is there another way to do this task?" Be creative!



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