



Environmental protection 370 kWh

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EPA tracks total U.S. emissions by publishing the Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks. This annual report estimates the total national greenhouse gas emissions and removals associated with human activities across the United States.

In 2018, the electricity sector was the second largest source of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 26.9 percent of the U.S. total. Greenhouse gas emissions from electricity have decreased by about 4.1 percent since 1990 due to a shift in generation to lower- and non-emitting sources of electricity generation and an increase in end-use energy efficiency.

Percentages may not add up to 100% due to independent rounding. All emission estimates from the Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990–2018. [Larger image to save or print](#) Electricity is used by other sectors—in homes, businesses, and factories. Therefore, it is possible to attribute the greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generation to the sectors that use the electricity. Looking at greenhouse gas emissions by end-use sector can help us understand energy demand across sectors and changes in energy use over time.

There are a variety of opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with electricity generation, transmission, and distribution. The table below categorizes these opportunities and provides examples. For a more comprehensive list, see Chapter 7 (PDF) (88 pp, 3.6MB) [Exit of the Contribution of Working Group III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Exit.2](#)

Relatively small amounts of methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) are emitted during fuel combustion. In addition, a small amount of hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) emissions are included in the Transportation sector. These emissions result from the use of mobile air conditioners and refrigerated transport.

Emissions involved in the consumption of electricity for transportation activities are included above, but not shown separately (as was done for other sectors). These indirect emissions are negligible, accounting for less than 1 percent of the total emissions shown in the graph. All emission estimates from the Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990–2018. [Larger image to save or print](#)

There are a variety of opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with transportation. The table shown below categorizes these opportunities and provides examples. For a more comprehensive list, see Chapter 8 of the [Contribution of Working Group III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental](#)

Panel on Climate Change Exit.1

Direct emissions are produced by burning fuel for power or heat, through chemical reactions, and from leaks from industrial processes or equipment. Most direct emissions come from the consumption of fossil fuels for energy. A smaller amount of direct emissions, roughly one third, come from leaks from natural gas and petroleum systems, the use of fuels in production (e.g., petroleum products used to make plastics), and chemical reactions during the production of chemicals, iron and steel, and cement.

More information about facility-level emissions from large industrial sources is available through EPA's Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program's data publication tool. National-level information about emissions from industry as a whole can be found in the sections on Fossil Fuel Combustion and the Industrial Processes chapter in the Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks.

There are a wide variety of industrial activities that cause greenhouse gas emissions, and many opportunities to reduce them. The table shown below provides some examples of opportunities for industry to reduce emissions. For a more comprehensive list, see Chapter 10 of the Contribution of Working Group III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Exit. 1

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