

Cause and effect essay: global warming

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Many people moan throughout the winter season. I know I do. I hate shoveling snow and worrying about whether my pipes will freeze. But I understand that snow and cold temperatures are a part of life.

But will they be forever? The news about global warming has dire predictions about the future. Global warming is not a scary myth that scientists have made up, but a very real natural condition that is affecting the world more and more each day. Global warming is, in essence, the gradual warming of the earth's surface. The Earth's average temperature is slowly rising, causing shorter and milder winter seasons in various countries around the world. But understanding global warming is nearly impossible without also having a base knowledge of another phenomenon: the Greenhouse Effect.

Greenhouse gases are building up in our planet's atmosphere and are acting like a blanket – trapping in heat that would otherwise be released back out into space. This is why global temperatures are rising. There are many gases in the Earth's atmosphere, but many are natural and harmless. CO₂, however, is not healthy for the atmosphere. CO₂ remains in the atmosphere longer than other gases and traps in heat extremely well. Even a slight increase in CO₂ in the atmosphere can cause significant increases in global temperatures.

Most CO₂ emissions come from the burning of fossil fuels. Cars and other vehicles can produce up to 1.5 billion tons of CO₂ annually, and coal-burning power plants can produce 2.5 billion tons. Sadly, the United States is responsible for a great deal of these emissions. And though the U.

Some countries are doing their best to rectify this problem by lowering their emission rates, other countries are doing the opposite. So what affect does global warming actually have on the environment and human civilization? Does an annual (average) increase in temperature of less than a degree actually transfer to a change in daily life? The answer is: yes. Global warming has been linked to the increase in wildfires and floods. It has been seen as the cause of rising sea levels and stronger hurricanes.

Heat waves in Europe in 2003 led to the death of 20, 000 people and over a thousand people in India. Also, the Arctic's polar ice caps are melting at a rate of 9% every decade. Animals, such as polar bears, are losing their habitats and may end up extinct. There are solutions to global warming, thankfully. Scientists and governments are working together to create 'greener' alternatives to daily life.

People don't have to give up their vehicles, but they may decide to choose hybrid cars instead of ones that rely solely on fossil fuels. Wind turbines and other sources of renewable energy can prevent the burning of coal, which is a major contributor to CO₂. Global warming is not a problem that cannot be solved, but it is an issue that governments and average people need to be aware of in order to protect the people, animals, and habitats of planet Earth.