

GLOBAL WARMING

By Uriah Lendsey

The earth's atmosphere was once a thin layer. Human activity has drastically damaged our atmosphere and over loaded it with greenhouse gases. Our atmosphere is now thickening causing an imbalance on planet earth.

Global warming is the earth's surface heating up above its usual temperature. The earth has a natural cycle of change called the greenhouse effect. Like the glass window panels of a greenhouse that let the light in from the sun and traps in the heat, the sun gives the earth light and creates heat. The heat warms the earth. Other natural causes of climate change would be variations in the earth's orbit and carbon dioxide content levels in the atmosphere. Humans breathe oxygen from the plants and the plants breathe carbon dioxide from humans. These natural activities cause climate changes on planet earth. However, human activity also causes climate change. Humans use fossil fuels for gasoline to drive our cars, heat to warm our homes and electricity to light up our cities. Fossil fuels are made from dead plants and animals from millions of years ago. The fossil fuels have to be burned to create the energy that we need for our community. Fossil fuels when burned create greenhouse gases. Greenhouse gases like methane, carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide help to pollute our environment. The gases act like a blanket around the earth. The earth surface absorbs the sun's energy. The sun sends the

earth short wave radiation light. The sun's shortwave radiation is converted into long wave radiation. A portion is absorbed by the earth and a portion escapes back into the terrestrial atmosphere. The greenhouse gases trap the long wave radiation heat causing the earth to warm unnaturally. This is global warming.

This activity is increasing and the earth is getting too hot. The levels of these greenhouse gases in our atmosphere are dangerous. The impact is excessive floods and hurricanes, crop failures, melting ice glaciers, rising sea levels, droughts, and dying forests and wildlife. If we do not reduce the level of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere the world will continually change for the worse. It is very possible that the whole earth could become water. Disasters like Tsunamis and hurricane Katrina are happening more frequently. Millions of homes were destroyed and people died. Sir Winston Churchill on November 12, 1936 said, "We are entering a period of consequence". And the consequence for our human activity could very well mean the end of the world.

The good news is that if we change we can make a difference. We can reduce the greenhouse gases if we change the way that we think about our environment and change our way of creating energy. No more burning fossil fuels. We can start using energy more efficiently and start using alternative sources of energy. For example, low carbon usage and carbon-free fuel technology are ways of managing our demand for energy. Renewable energy like solar energy, wind power and bio fuels can offset the greenhouse gases in the earth's atmosphere. Nuclear energy produces large amounts of energy from small amounts of fuel at a reduced amount of pollution. The requirement for clean air is

efficient fuel that does not contribute to global warming. Bio fuel is a liquid byproduct of bio mass. It is created from sources like cow manure and growing plants like sugar cane, corn and switch grass. The bio fuel liquid turns a rotary engine that generates electricity. Solar power is low maintenance sun energy. It generates heat and electricity. It operates silently and requires no fuel. Wind power converts wind energy into power. These are alternatives to burning fossil fuels and alternatives to producing dangerous greenhouse gases.