

**GLOBAL WARMING**  
**By: Louise McGill – Fall 2007**

Over the past hundred years we as a nation have seen changes in our natural climate. In recent years, environment issues have increasingly been in the public eye. In response, the government has taken initiative to present global warming in a way the public can understand. They believe the three major sources are transportation, industry and energy production, and deforestation. All have contributed to the release of Greenhouse gases, primarily Carbon Dioxide, into the atmosphere. As a result of decisions made both by the government and the citizens of Canada, we are experiencing higher temperatures and subsequent negative environment effects, which we as a country have the power to change by altering our behavior in our day to day lives.

The government also believes change is both possible and necessary, and has launched several solution-based campaigns to correct the problem. One of their primary solutions is the Kyoto Protocol which aims to reduce greenhouse emissions by setting agendas to reduce emissions within a certain time frame. Another goal is energy conservation which includes creating power with solar panels, windmills, and water falls (Niagara, Newfoundland and Labrador). The government is also pushing for stricter regulations to protect our natural resources, forest, green lands and farmlands. Other regulations include their plan to reduce industry emissions, which includes working with business and industries to implement lower emitting technologies. Additionally, they plan to invest further in research in order to develop new technologies for cleaner air. Finally, they are working towards greater public education and awareness by launching public campaigns on how we can make a difference. This includes having thermostats on timers, and setting

the temperatures a degree or two higher or lower depending on the season, as well as taking public transit or car pooling. They are also promoting the use of energy efficient light bulbs, using water saving devices on taps, buying energy efficient appliances, as well as requiring mandatory car emissions test every two years and offering rebates from the government for making your house more energy efficient.

It is sad to see that we are only now responding to these pressing environmental issues as scientists from as early as 1900 have had concerns about Global Warming. Roger Revelle, the professor of Al Gore's, was one of the leading scientist to study the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the atmosphere. If we had implemented tighter restrictions on fuel emissions in the industry, more regulations on deforestation, and more emphasis on using natural sources for energy (sun and wind) we could have prevented the excess of greenhouse gases which we are witnessing today.

Today's environmental problems connect in many ways with the book "Empty Harvest". For example, the increase in temperature from global warming, allows a longer growing season, however there is an increased risk of soil mineral depletion. Additionally, the decrease in water brings more droughts, which in turn dehydrates the soil, and interrupts the plants cycle of life. The increase in industry, a main cause of global warming, has meant more clearing of the land and the loss of good farmland, as well as more mass farming and in turn means more chemical fertilizer and pesticides to the crops, hence depleting the soil quality over time.

Overall, I feel the government is on the right track with their campaigns to reduce greenhouse gases. The public has received a lot of literature on how they as individuals can reduce greenhouse gases. Many magazines such as Canadian Living and Chatelaine have addressed these issues as well, and I feel the government would be well-advised to help media sources to further promote these environmental concerns. They could reach a larger population if they did more of their campaigns on television as can be seen by the success of David Suzuki and Al Gore in their environmental quests. The government would be smart to develop this trend further and find more Canadian spokespeople to promote environmental well-being. Success in environmental protection lies in making citizens passionate about the environment and the legacy they leave for future generations. I'm optimistic that we as Canadians are intelligent people and will pull together to make Earth a healthier place to live.

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