



National Survey on Energy and the Environment Key Findings Report Fall 2025

The following report summarizes key findings from the 2025 wave of the National Survey on Energy and the Environment (NSEE). This survey wave marks the 28th in the series, dating back to the project's origin in 2008, under a partnership between Muhlenberg College and the University of Michigan. Since 2020 the NSEE has been produced exclusively by the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion.

KEY FINDINGS

1. In 2025 a record number of Americans indicated that there is solid evidence of increasing temperatures on Earth, with 77% of individuals maintaining this opinion in the most recent wave of the National Survey on Energy and the Environment (NSEE). The 77% level is the highest mark recorded since the NSEE was initiated in 2008.
2. The long-term partisan divides on the existence of evidence of climate change were once again present in 2025 with 94% of Democrats indicating that there is solid evidence of rising temperatures on the planet compared to 52% of Republicans and 80% of Americans unaffiliated with a political party.
3. Among the majority of Americans that believe there is solid evidence of rising temperatures on Earth, most attribute the change to human activity (56%) or a combination of human activity and natural patterns (22%).
4. Over 6 in 10 Americans agree that they have personally experienced the effects of climate change, with partisan affiliation playing a major role in this perception. While 8 out of 10 Democrats report experiencing the effects of climate change, only one third of Republicans stated that they had felt such effects.
5. As the federal government reversed many of its previous efforts to reduce climate change in 2025, a solid majority (59%) of Americans indicated that the federal government has a great deal of responsibility to reduce global warming.
6. About 2 out of 3 Americans agree that if the federal government fails to address climate change it is their state's responsibility to address the problem.

7. A strong majority of Americans (60%) agree that state governments should support increased use of nuclear power to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
8. Only about a third (35%) of Americans believe governments will be able to stop the most damaging effects of climate change from occurring.
9. About three quarters (74%) of individuals surveyed in 2025 believe Americans will not make major changes in their lifestyles, so the best way to reduce greenhouse gases will be through technological advancements.
10. Americans are divided on the most important actions that the United States should take to address climate change with 37% prioritizing greenhouse gas reductions, 26% prioritizing geoengineering and scientific fixes to counter climate change and 16% prioritizing learning how to adapt to a warmer world.

METHODOLOGY

This report contains the results of a telephone survey of 700 adult residents of the United States between November 11 and December 20, 2025. Respondents were interviewed in English on both landlines (120) and cell phones (560). The sample of adult residents of the United States was randomly selected from a stratified dual frame of cell and landline telephone numbers provided by Communications Concepts of Easton Pennsylvania. In order to reach a representative sample of adult residents of the United States, landlines and cell phones were called up to 3 times. Interviews were conducted by live interviewers from Communication Concepts. When calling landlines interviewers ask to speak with the adult member of the household having the next birthday. When calling cell phones interviewers completed interviews with the individual who answered the call. With a randomly selected sample of respondents the margin of error for the survey is +/- 5% at a 95% level of confidence. Margins of error for questions with smaller sample size will be larger. In addition to sampling error, one should consider that question wording and other fielding issues can introduce error or bias into survey results.

The data has been weighted to gender, age, race, and educational attainment to 2025 population parameters for the United States provided by the United States Census Bureau. The calculation of sampling error takes into account design effects due to the weighting of the sample to the population parameters identified above. The AAPOR Response Rate 2 for the survey was 2.5%. Due to rounding, the totals provided in the frequency report may not total 100 percent. Data analysis and weighting were conducted through the use of the SPSS statistical software package Version 29.0. Coding of open-ended responses in the instrument was completed by two human coders on the staff of the Institute of Public Opinion. As part of the effort to ensure data quality a random sample of 12 respondents to the survey were recontacted by staff from the Institute of Public Opinion to confirm that they had completed the survey on the date provided by Communication Concepts.

The survey instrument was designed by Dr. Christopher P. Borick, MCIPO Executive Director and Dr. Lindsay Burt, MCIPO Managing Director in conjunction with Dr. Erick Lachapelle of the University of Montreal and is presented in its entirety in the following section of the report. The survey was funded exclusively by Muhlenberg College. For more detailed information on the methods employed please contact the MCIPO at 484-664-3444 or email Dr. Borick at cborick@muhlenberg.edu.

FALL 2025 NSEE

WEIGHTED FREQUENCIES

Q1. Thank you. Can you please tell me in which year you were born?

CODED INTO CATEGORIES:

18-29	21%
30-49	26%
50-64	27%
65 and Older	26%

Q2. What state do you currently reside in?

CODED INTO CATEGORIES:

Northeast	21%
South	36%
Midwest	24%
West	20%

Q3. Next, I would like to ask you a few questions on the issue of global warming. From what you've read and heard, is there solid evidence that the average temperature on earth has been getting warmer over the past four decades?

Yes	77%
No	13% (SKIP TO Q7)
Not sure (Volunteered)	10% (SKIP TO Q9)

Q4. How confident are you that the average temperature on earth is increasing? Are you very confident, fairly confident, not too confident or not confident at all that the average temperature on earth is increasing?

Very confident	63%
Fairly confident	29%
Not too confident	6%
Not confident at all	2%
Not sure (Volunteered)	<1%

Q5. Is the earth getting warmer mostly because of human activity such as burning fossil fuels, or mostly because of natural patterns in the earth's environment?

Human activity	56%
Natural patterns	17%
A combination (Volunteered)	22%
Not sure (Volunteered)	6%

Q6. Would you say that you are very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, somewhat pessimistic or very pessimistic that humans will be able to prevent the most damaging effects of global warming from occurring?

Very optimistic	17%
Somewhat optimistic	32%
Somewhat pessimistic	22%
Very pessimistic	22%
Not sure (Volunteered)	8%

ONLY THOSE WHO ANSWERED “NO” IN Q3 (i.e., do not believe temperatures are increasing)

Q7. How confident are you that the average temperatures on earth are NOT increasing? Are you very confident, fairly confident, not too confident or not confident at all that the average temperature on earth is NOT increasing?

Very confident	49%
Fairly confident	25%
Not too confident	10%
Not confident at all	12%
Not sure (Volunteered)	3%

Q8. What is the primary factor that makes you believe that temperatures on earth are not increasing?

(OPEN) _____

Personal Observations	35%
Natural patterns/cycles	26%
Lack of evidence	10%
Evidence disproves	9%
Media has misled	6%
Religious factors	2%
Political factors	1%
No particular reason	3%
Not sure/other	8%

****ALL RESPONDENTS****

Q9. In your view is global warming a very serious problem, somewhat serious, not too serious, or not a problem?

Very serious	50%
Somewhat serious	21%
Not too serious	12%
Not a problem	15%
Not sure (Volunteered)	2%

Q10. Over the past year have you personally seen any significant changes in weather patterns where you live?

Yes	58%
No	39% (SKIP TO Q13)
Not sure (Volunteered)	4% (SKIP TO Q3)

Q11. What changes have you seen personally?

(OPEN) _____

Increased temperatures	23%
Change in seasons	11%
Temperature fluctuation and changes	8%
Colder/more snow	8%
Less snow	7%
Extreme weather and storms	7%
Milder winters	7%
Hurricane/tornado activity	6%
Drought and decreased rainfall	5%
Weather differences	4%
Increased rain/flooding	4%
Miscellaneous changes	4%
Wildfires	2%
Generally different/not sure	2%
Ocean related changes	<1%

Q12. In general, how would you describe the overall weather in your area this past YEAR? Would you say it was:

A LOT warmer than usual	17%
SLIGHTLY warmer than usual	32%
SLIGHTLY cooler than usual	7%
A LOT cooler than usual	5%
About the same as usual	35%
Not sure (Volunteered)	4%

(QUESTIONS Q13 to Q23 ROTATED)

Please identify your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please indicate if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree. First,

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure (Vol)
Q13. Americans will not make major changes in their lifestyles, so the best way to reduce greenhouse gases will be through technological advancements.	29%	45%	11%	10%	4%
Q14. Governments will be able to stop the most damaging effects of climate change from occurring.	13%	22%	24%	38%	4%
Q15. I have personally felt the effects of climate change.	35%	27%	12%	24%	2%
Q16. If global warming does take place, I have confidence that scientists would be able to find ways to alter the climate in a way that limits problems.	19%	34%	18%	26%	3%
Q17. Attempts to reduce global warming by adding materials to the atmosphere will cause more harm than good for the environment.	41%	28%	11%	6%	15%
Q18. If human activity leads to global warming, then humans will also be able to find ways to reduce temperatures on the planet through atmospheric engineering methods.	15%	38%	17%	21%	9%
Q19. Instead of trying to stop global warming from occurring we should focus on adapting to a warmer climate.	14%	21%	25%	35%	5%
Q20. Humans will be able to adapt to a hotter climate without making significant changes to their lifestyles.	17%	23%	18%	39%	3%
Q21. If the federal government fails to address the issue of global warming it is my state's responsibility to address the problem.	34%	30%	12%	21%	3%
Q22. State governments should support increased use of nuclear power to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	33%	26%	12%	18%	12%
Q23A. As a rich country, the United States has a responsibility to accept more climate refugees or people displaced by climate change.	24%	26%	14%	29%	7%

Q23B. The United States should do more to help climate refugees or people displaced by climate change by providing opportunities for resettlement.	30%	29%	15%	21%	5%
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Q24. Next, I'm going to read you a list of actions that the United States may take to address climate change. Which of the actions to you believe is the MOST important action the United States should take?
[READ LIST]

Promote greenhouse gas reductions to try and limit climate change	37%
Learn to adapt to a warmer world that is the result of climate change	16%
Promote geoengineering and scientific fixes to counter climate change	26%
All equally important (Volunteered)	12%
None are important (Volunteered)	5%
Not sure (Volunteered)	4%

Q25. If it required you to pay extra money each year in order for more renewable energy to be produced, how much would you be willing to pay? Would you be willing to pay... **[READ LIST]**

Nothing each year.....37%
1 to 50 dollars per year.....16%
50 to 100 dollars a year.....16%
100 to 250 dollars a year.....11%
250 to 500 dollars a year..... 6%
Over 500 dollars a year.....7%
Not Sure (Volunteered)..... 7%

For each level of government that I mention please tell me if it has a great deal of responsibility, some responsibility or no responsibility for taking actions to reduce global warming. First:

	A Great Deal of Responsibility	Some Responsibility	No Responsibility	Not Sure (Volunteered)
Q26. The Federal Government	59%	27%	13%	2%
Q27. State Governments	42%	41%	17%	<1%
Q28. Local Governments	31%	45%	23%	1%

Q29. As you may have heard, there are a few pipeline proposals now being considered in Canada and the U.S. One is the Keystone XL energy pipeline that would transport oil from Canada's oil sands region through the mid-western United States to refineries in Texas.

On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means strongly oppose and 10 means strongly support, how strongly do you support or oppose the building of the Keystone XL energy pipeline?

0 – strongly oppose	21%
1	2%
2	2%
3	6%
4	1%
5	16%
6	5%
7	7%
8	8%
9	2%
10 – strongly support	23%
Not sure (Volunteered)	7%

Please identify your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement I read please indicate if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree. First, **(ROTATE OPTIONS)**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure (Vol)
Q30. It is important that the United States follow international trade agreements.	57%	27%	6%	5%	6%
Q31. The United States should place a tariff on goods manufactured in other countries that are produced with more greenhouse gas emissions than in the United States, even if it raises the cost of buying those goods in the United States.	21%	32%	17%	19%	11%
Q32. When negotiating a trade agreement with other countries, the United States should prioritize the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.	43%	33%	10%	10%	4%

Q33. Finally, a few questions about yourself. Which of the following categories best describes your racial identity? Are you... **[READ LIST]**

White/Caucasian	61%
African-American	12%
Hispanic/Latino	16%
Asian	5%
Native American	2%
Mixed Race	4%
Other	1%
Not sure (Volunteered)	<1%

Q34. Which of the following categories best describes your religious affiliation? Are you... **[READ LIST]**

Protestant	27%
Catholic	23%
Jewish	2%
Muslim	3%
Hindu	<1%
Other religion (including Agnostic)	33%
Atheist	7%
Not sure (Vol)	6%

Q35. Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about the Bible? **[READ LIST]**

The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word	26%
The Bible is the inspired word of God but not everything in it should be taken literally, word for word	42%
The Bible is an ancient book of fables, legends, history, and moral precepts recorded by men	27%
Not sure (Vol)	5%

Q36. What is your highest level of education? **[READ LIST]**

Less than High School graduate	4%
High School graduate	25%
Some college or technical school	29%
College graduate	26%
Graduate or Professional degree	16%

Q37. Which of the following best describes your political party affiliation? **[READ LIST]**

Democrat	28%
Republican	23%
Other party	5%
Independent	38%
Not sure (Vol)	6%

Q38. Which of the following best describes your political beliefs? **[READ LIST]**

Very Conservative	14%
Somewhat Conservative	22%
Moderate	31%
Somewhat Liberal	15%
Very Liberal	14%
Not sure (Vol)	6%

Q39. Which of the following categories best describes your family income? Is it... **[READ LIST]**

Less than \$20,000	11%
\$20,000-\$40,000	18%
\$40,000-\$60,000	18%
\$60,000-\$80,000	16%
\$80,000-\$100,000	12%
Over \$100,000	23%
Not sure (Vol)	3%

Q40. What is the zip code of your current residence?

Q41. Finally, to which gender identity do you most identify? (READ LIST)

Male	49%
Female	50%
Other (Vol)	1%
Not sure (Vol)	<1%

SELECTED CROSSTABS

Q3. Next, I would like to ask you a few questions on the issue of global warming. From what you've read and heard, is there solid evidence that the average temperature on earth has been getting warmer over the past four decades? (n = 700)

	Yes	No	Not Sure (vol)
OVERALL	77%	13%	10%
Female	75%	15%	10%
Male	79%	12%	9%
No College Degree	73%	14%	13%
College Degree	84%	11%	5%
White	75%	17%	8%
Person of Color	81%	6%	12%
Catholic	80%	8%	12%
Protestant	64%	28%	9%
Non-Christian/No Religion	84%	8%	9%
Democrat	94%	3%	4%
Republican	52%	37%	11%
Independent	80%	10%	10%
18-29	82%	1%	17%
30-49	86%	10%	5%
50-65	72%	17%	12%
Over 65	71%	22%	7%
Under 60K Income	79%	13%	8%
Over 60K Income	77%	13%	10%
Northeast	88%	8%	5%
South	77%	14%	9%
Midwest	67%	22%	12%
West	81%	7%	12%

Q5. Is the earth getting warmer mostly because of human activity such as burning fossil fuels, or mostly because of natural patterns in the earth's environment? (Note: asked only of respondents that indicated there is solid evidence of warming on the planet)

	Human Activity	Natural Patterns	Combination (vol)	Unsure (vol)
OVERALL	56%	17%	22%	6%
Female	57%	17%	20%	6%
Male	54%	17%	23%	6%
No College Degree	50%	19%	25%	6%
College Degree	63%	15%	17%	5%
White	56%	19%	18%	7%
Person of Color	55%	15%	27%	3%
Catholic	56%	12%	30%	2%
Protestant	50%	24%	17%	9%
Non-Christian/No Religion	57%	17%	19%	7%
Democrat	71%	6%	17%	7%
Republican	36%	38%	18%	9%
Independent	54%	16%	25%	5%
18-29	64%	7%	25%	4%
30-49	55%	17%	19%	8%
50-65	49%	27%	19%	5%
Over 65	58%	16%	22%	5%
Under 60K Income	54%	14%	27%	5%
Over 60K Income	57%	21%	15%	7%
Northeast	57%	15%	23%	5%
South	53%	21%	20%	6%
Midwest	57%	16%	23%	5%
West	58%	14%	22%	6%

Q6. Would you say that you are very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, somewhat pessimistic or very pessimistic that humans will be able to prevent the most damaging effects of global warming from occurring? (Note: asked only of respondents that indicated there is solid evidence of warming on the planet)

	Very Optimistic	Somewhat Optimistic	Somewhat Pessimistic	Very Pessimistic	Not Sure (vol)
OVERALL	17%	32%	22%	22%	8%
Female	13%	36%	19%	27%	5%
Male	21%	27%	26%	18%	10%
No College Degree	22%	35%	17%	17%	10%
College Degree	11%	28%	28%	29%	5%
White	12%	29%	25%	28%	6%
Person of Color	23%	35%	18%	14%	9%
Catholic	29%	32%	20%	15%	5%
Protestant	15%	34%	20%	24%	7%
Non-Christian/No Religion	13%	30%	26%	24%	8%
Democrat	11%	34%	26%	24%	4%
Republican	23%	44%	17%	14%	3%
Independent	16%	29%	24%	24%	7%
18-29	20%	50%	17%	7%	6%
30-49	19%	19%	23%	28%	10%
50-65	14%	30%	22%	28%	6%
Over 65	12%	31%	25%	25%	7%
Under 60K Income	18%	27%	24%	22%	10%
Over 60K Income	15%	38%	21%	20%	5%
Northeast	10%	26%	24%	23%	17%
South	22%	35%	20%	18%	6%
Midwest	11%	32%	28%	24%	5%
West	21%	32%	19%	27%	2%

Q10. Over the past year have you personally seen any significant changes in weather patterns where you live?

	Yes	No	Not Sure (vol)
OVERALL	58%	39%	4%
Female	63%	34%	3%
Male	53%	41%	6%
No College Degree	54%	40%	5%
College Degree	62%	36%	2%
White	55%	41%	4%
Person of Color	60%	35%	5%
Catholic	66%	30%	4%
Protestant	47%	52%	1%
Non-Christian/No Religion	56%	37%	7%
Democrat	75%	21%	4%
Republican	31%	66%	3%
Independent	60%	38%	2%
18-29	49%	43%	8%
30-49	62%	32%	6%
50-65	57%	40%	3%
Over 65	61%	39%	1%
Under 60K Income	59%	35%	6%
Over 60K Income	54%	43%	3%
Northeast	66%	30%	4%
South	53%	43%	4%
Midwest	52%	43%	5%
West	63%	34%	3%

Q15. I have personally felt the effects of climate change.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure (vol)
OVERALL	35%	27%	12%	24%	2%
Female	39%	27%	8%	23%	2%
Male	31%	27%	17%	24%	2%
No College Degree	34%	27%	11%	26%	2%
College Degree	36%	28%	14%	21%	1%
White	32%	25%	13%	28%	1%
Person of Color	39%	30%	12%	16%	3%
Catholic	44%	29%	12%	16%	0%
Protestant	20%	20%	15%	42%	3%
Non-Christian/No Religion	37%	32%	13%	17%	2%
Democrat	46%	32%	12%	8%	2%
Republican	11%	22%	15%	51%	1%
Independent	35%	29%	11%	23%	2%
18-29	33%	31%	20%	15%	2%
30-49	44%	24%	11%	18%	3%
50-65	27%	30%	11%	31%	1%
Over 65	37%	22%	9%	29%	2%
Under 60K Income	38%	27%	9%	24%	2%
Over 60K Income	33%	24%	17%	25%	2%
Northeast	39%	36%	11%	13%	1%
South	38%	20%	13%	26%	3%
Midwest	26%	27%	12%	34%	1%
West	37%	30%	12%	19%	1%

SELECTED TIME SERIES

Level of agreement with the statement: “Instead of trying to stop global warming from occurring we should focus on adapting to a warmer climate.” (2011-2025)

	2011 (n=887)	2019 (n=601)	2020 (n=607)	2021 (n=614)	2022 (n=614)	2023 (n=711)	2024 (n=715)	2025 (n=700)
Strongly Agree	6%	8%	9%	8%	12%	10%	8%	14%
Somewhat Agree	23%	22%	25%	23%	22%	27%	39%	21%
Somewhat Disagree	30%	24%	21%	20%	21%	26%	26%	25%
Strongly Disagree	36%	37%	34%	38%	40%	35%	22%	35%
Not Sure	5%	10%	11%	11%	4%	2%	5%	5%

Level of agreement with the statement: “Humans will be able to adapt to a hotter climate without making significant changes to their lifestyles.” (2011-2025)

	2011 (n=887)	2019 (n=601)	2020 (n=607)	2021 (n=614)	2022 (n=614)	2023 (n=711)	2024 (n=715)	2025 (n=700)
Strongly Agree	6%	7%	11%	9%	10%	9%	11%	17%
Somewhat Agree	24%	21%	24%	23%	24%	26%	27%	23%
Somewhat Disagree	25%	22%	20%	25%	20%	26%	26%	18%
Strongly Disagree	40%	44%	38%	37%	40%	39%	27%	39%
Not Sure	4%	6%	7%	7%	5%	1%	9%	3%