



# Minnesota House Climate Action Plan

*Unchecked climate change poses irreversible and potentially catastrophic changes to the Minnesota we cherish. By taking ambitious, collaborative action across the state today, we can protect and even improve our environment, economy, public health, social fabric and infrastructure now and for future generations.*



## Purpose

Unchecked climate change poses irreversible and potentially catastrophic changes to the Minnesota we cherish. By taking ambitious, collaborative action across the state today, we can protect and even improve our environment, economy, public health, social fabric and infrastructure now and for future generations. The Minnesota Climate Action Plan is a science-based framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions across sectors, adapting to climate change already underway, and building community resilience across the state.

## Principles

The Minnesota Climate Action Plan emphasizes four key principles:

- **Protect the environment.** Minnesotans value our state's signature natural heritage and want it protected for future generations. Even more, investing in a healthy environment offers a strong defense against the worst climate impacts.
- **Address social inequities.** Without targeted action, climate change will make existing inequalities worse. Actions must focus on mitigating the increased vulnerability disadvantaged communities face from a changing climate, and ensure all communities benefit equitably in the transition to a clean economy.
- **Ensure the public's health.** Changing weather caused by climate change leads to more injuries and deaths, makes infectious and chronic diseases worse, and negatively impacts food and water safety. Greater investment in healthy communities and a strong public health system is needed to safeguard the public.
- **Strengthen the economy.** Addressing climate change now will protect both key economic sectors (such as agriculture) and create new good-paying, clean energy jobs across our state, while facilitating a just transition for communities and workers to a carbon-free economy.



## Goal

The scientific evidence for climate change is indisputable, and impacts are already happening. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), there is consensus among leading scientists around the world that we must achieve 100% carbon neutrality by 2050 in order to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change.<sup>1</sup> Since greenhouse gases (GHGs) being released today will continue to impact warming well into the future, it is also agreed that GHGs must be reduced 45% by 2030 if we are to achieve the 2050 goal.

Minnesota has a long tradition of leading the fight against climate change. In 2007, bipartisan legislation called the Next Generation Energy Act was passed into law requiring an 80% reduction in GHG emissions by 2050, with benchmarks to track progress along the way.<sup>2</sup> While progress has been made toward this goal, we are behind. According to the latest state-level data, Minnesota has only reduced overall carbon emissions by 12% since 2005.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, the latest science shows that Minnesota's GHG reduction efforts must be accelerated in order to avoid the worst impacts of climate change across the state.

Therefore, **the Minnesota Climate Action Plan sets a Goal of a 45% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030** to achieve a carbon-free future by 2050. Recognizing that Minnesotans are already experiencing the impacts of ongoing climate changes, the Plan also includes an **additional goal of supporting communities statewide with resources to adapt to climate change and build local resilience**. While our goals are bold, we already have the tools in our toolbox to meet the challenges and leave our children and grandchildren the same promising future our parents and grandparents gave us.

### THE GOAL

***45% reduction  
in greenhouse  
gas emissions by  
2030 to achieve  
a carbon-free  
future by 2050***



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air/state-and-regional-initiatives>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air/greenhouse-gas-emissions-data>

## Strategies

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has tracked greenhouse gas emissions since 2005.<sup>4</sup> These emissions can be attributed to four general sectors, each producing approximately 25% of Minnesota's total GHG emissions. The Plan defines these four sectors as: **Energy, Transportation, Lands** and the **Built Environment**. To ultimately achieve a carbon-neutral economy, each sector will need to contribute its fair share of reductions toward the overall goal. In addition, the Plan includes strategies to guide ongoing **Adaptation and Resilience**.

Strategies within each sector will inform future policy and funding initiatives. Initiatives should also include the following considerations:

- **Reduce emissions as quickly**, efficiently and affordably as possible, in order to achieve the Goal of a 45% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.
- **Address the four key Principles** of protecting the environment, addressing social inequities, ensuring the public's health, and strengthening the economy.
- **Incorporate the best science** with regular ongoing reviews of the latest climate research and Minnesota's GHG reduction progress.

### Energy

- **Ensure Minnesota achieves 100% clean electricity emphasizing solar and wind** on an accelerated timeline, reflecting emerging technology and economic opportunities.
- **Invest in energy efficiency and solar for public buildings**, prioritizing under-resourced communities for investments.
- **Ensure Minnesota workers and families benefit from a clean energy economy** by prioritizing local hiring, diversifying the workforce, growing Minnesota businesses and manufacturing, and ensuring workers see the family-supporting wages, benefits, and worker safety promoted by organized labor.

### Transportation

- **Move boldly on vehicle and transit electrification** across the state to provide all citizens with electric transportation choices.
- **Build out bus-rapid transit and passenger rail systems** in both the metro area and greater Minnesota to connect more people with mass transit options.
- **Change transportation and land use planning** to reduce the need to drive.

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<sup>4</sup><https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air/greenhouse-gas-emissions-data>

### ***Lands (including agriculture, forestry and land use)***

- **Improve soil health using agriculture practices** like cover crops, conservation tillage, diversified crop rotations, and managed rotational grazing systems.
- **Enhance local food systems** including expanding state and regional agriculture markets, building local food processing infrastructure, protecting wild game and fish habitats, and improving access to farmland for new and more diverse farmers.
- **Increase natural carbon sequestration** by enhancing native prairie and forest ecosystems (including urban forests) and including carbon sequestration as a management goal for public lands.



### ***Built Environment (including commercial, industrial, residential and waste)***

- **Move boldly on conservation, electrification and weatherization** while prioritizing households that are eligible for energy assistance.
- **Improve building codes** to align with carbon reduction goals.
- **Advance comprehensive waste reduction measures** such as solid waste, organics composting, and recycling.



### ***Adaptation and Resilience***

- **Create state and local climate adaptation plans** that support tribal, county and municipal governments while prioritizing the needs of communities burdened by pollution and cumulative climate impacts.
- **Invest in climate resilient infrastructure** statewide to withstand extreme weather events, targeting under-resourced communities.
- **Support Minnesota's fossil fuel workers and host communities** so everyone thrives in a clean energy economy.



