

IMPACTS OF METHANE

Methane (CH₄):



is an odorless, colorless, and flammable gas.



is emitted from agricultural processes and energy production processes.



contributes to the formation of ground-level ozone.



Ozone, found in smog, is an air pollutant harmful to health and is monitored as a part of the Clean Air Act.

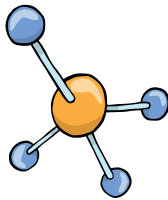
It comes from naturally occurring, industrial, and human-made sources, including burning fossil fuels for energy, agricultural land use, and waste management activities.

The agricultural sector and landfills are the largest sources of CH₄ emissions in the U.S. due to the decomposition of organic waste, such as food and yard waste.

methane is a potent greenhouse gas with

20 – 30X THE WARMING POWER OF CARBON DIOXIDE

although methane makes up only a fraction of the atmosphere compared to CO₂, its concentration is increasing.



Health Effects of Exposure:



Methane is non-toxic at low levels. It can be dangerous when inhaled in large amounts, however.

Elevated methane concentrations also produce ground-level ozone, which exacerbates respiratory illnesses.



Methane also chemically decomposes into water vapor and carbon dioxide, which are major greenhouse gases.

IMPACTS OF METHANE

HOW CAN I BE EXPOSED TO METHANE?

- the most common route is through **inhalation**.
- leaks through sewer traps or foundation cracks.
- exposure can happen by inhaling chemicals at work, cooking on a gas stove, or entering confined spaces such as manholes, silos, animal waste pits, septic tanks, and sewers.
- methane is rarely found in food or drinking water as it quickly evaporates and doesn't readily absorb in skin.

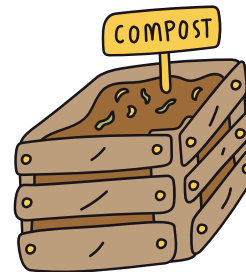
You can help contribute to the reduction of methane emissions by:

Minimizing food waste:

When grocery shopping, buy only what is necessary and practice proper food storage methods.



Composting organic waste at home, which creates nutrient-rich soil to help grow your food.

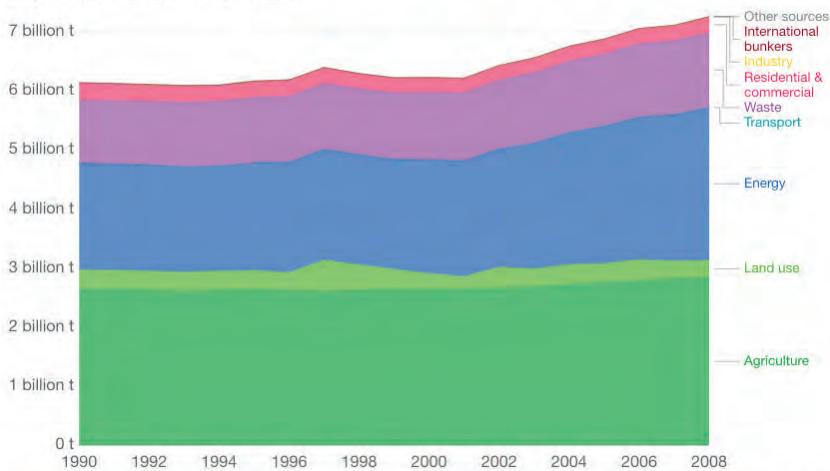


Advocating for renewable electricity: Solar and wind have no greenhouse gas emissions, while burning fossil fuels emits more greenhouse gases than any other source.



Methane emissions by sector

Breakdown of total global methane (CH₄) emissions by sector, measured in tonnes of carbon-dioxide equivalents (CO₂e). Carbon dioxide equivalents measures the total greenhouse gas potential of the full combination of gases, weighted by their relative warming impacts.



Source: UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) [OurWorldInData.org/co2-and-other-greenhouse-gas-emissions/](https://ourworldindata.org/co2-and-other-greenhouse-gas-emissions/) · CC BY

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Methane_emissions_by_sector_OWID.svg