

Volume 2, Number 1

January 2009

The most important number you need to know!

A New Year . . . a new format



We are pleased to announce that we are commencing our second year of **350PPM**, the newsletter devoted to turning around the rise of CO₂ in our atmosphere. We are instituting the email version of the newsletter. Your comments and suggestions are welcome.

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1. The Day Coal Died . . .

“Clean **coal**” proponents seem to have successfully framed the topic only in terms of **carbon dioxide** emissions and climate change, deflecting attention from mountain-top removal, New Source Performance Standards, worker health and ... your front porch or running off into nearby streams is not dangerously toxic, though part of **EPA’s** hand-wringing since 1993 about regulating disposal of **coal** combustion wastes is whether or not to list them as hazardous wastes. ...

One of the worst environmental disasters in recent memory has unfolded over the last week in Kingston, Tennessee, where a massive coal waste spill has unleashed over a billion gallons of potentially toxic sludge into the Clinch River and surrounding land. Worst yet, the Tennessee Valley Authority – the nation’s largest government-owned utility, which owns the plant where the spill occurred



– failed to properly warn residents in the area of the toxins the sludge contains.

The spill is nearly 50 times as big as the famous 1989 Exxon-Valdez spill in Alaska.

It occurred around 1am on December 22nd when a wall holding back 80 acres of sludge from the TVA's Fossil Plant gave way. Eight days later, the TVA has yet to release sampling data from the ash pile, and they're actually trying to claim that the fly ash is not toxic.

The TVA's initial estimate for the spill tripled from 1.8 million cubic yards, or more than 360 million gallons of sludge, to 5.4 million cubic yards, or more than 1 billion gallons.



This disaster in December of 2008 in Tennessee shows that the term 'clean coal' is an oxymoron. It's akin to saying 'safe cigarette.' Clean coal doesn't exist.



2. A Global Warming Primer

We felt that it would be beneficial to provide a review on the topic of global warming at the beginning of the year. Because over the next year the public is going to be bombarded by more and more bizarre claims and disinformation from the deniers. Think the campaign about cigarettes and cancer and you have the same situation with this issue. Below is a good tale about the reality of global

A deer in the headlights... or the boy that cried wolf..

How do you begin to make sense of the rhetoric surrounding the issue of global warming? There are no simple answers. It's natural for non-scientists to become overwhelmed by the shouting and contradictions. It's easy to bury your head in the sand with thoughts of, "I like warm weather anyway".

Being a non-scientist does not necessarily mean being uninformed – or misinformed. Between these simplistic opposing views is a more realistic and constructive outlook toward global climate change.

Controversy does exist; this is natural for such a complex science. Science evolves; it is, and should be, open to debate. The debate in climatology is leading to a consensus that tells a tale of a world already experiencing the first signals of global warming.

This is *a primer for fellow lay people*. Presented here is a picture of our climate. How it was, how it is, and how it may be in the near future. This picture is grounded in the basics of climatology. Now is the time to abandon the paralyzing rhetoric based in misinformation and incrimination - on both sides of the issue. Wouldn't it be grand if we could leave to future generations a thriving economy, and a healthy and stable environment? The two do not need to be mutually exclusive.

The Greenhouse Effect

The greenhouse effect is a naturally occurring phenomenon of Earth's environment, and is essential to the climate on Earth as we know it. With the natural greenhouse effect the average temperature on Earth is 15 degrees Celsius (59 degrees Fahrenheit). Without it, the average temperature would be about minus 18 degrees Celsius (or 0 degrees Fahrenheit).

The world would be a very cold place, indeed!

The greenhouse effect happens in nature by the presence of "greenhouse gases", principally carbon dioxide (CO₂), that trap heat from the sun in the atmosphere and provide a relatively mild and stable climate. Carbon dioxide from animal respiration is cycled into the atmosphere, then taken up by plants in the process of photosynthesis. Animals take in the oxygen emitted from the plants, and the cycle continues.

The balance of nature is a wonderful thing...

The Magic of a Good Thing

Too Much of a Good Thing

Along comes humanity and our penchant to burn fossil fuels. This began in earnest with the start of the industrial revolution, around 1750. Burning these fuels - coal, oil, and natural gas - substantially

[More Details](#)



3. 2009 Arkansas General Assembly



On Monday January 12th the Arkansas General Assembly will convene. This session could be a turning point for the state as it considers the Report of the Governor's Commission on Global Warming. Two things you can do NOW!

1. Get ready to notify your Representative and Senator. Find out who they are at:

[House of Representatives](#)

[Senate](#)

2. Help RepowerArkansas build a network of citizens to ask their representatives to support legislation to implement the recommendations of the Global Warming Commission.

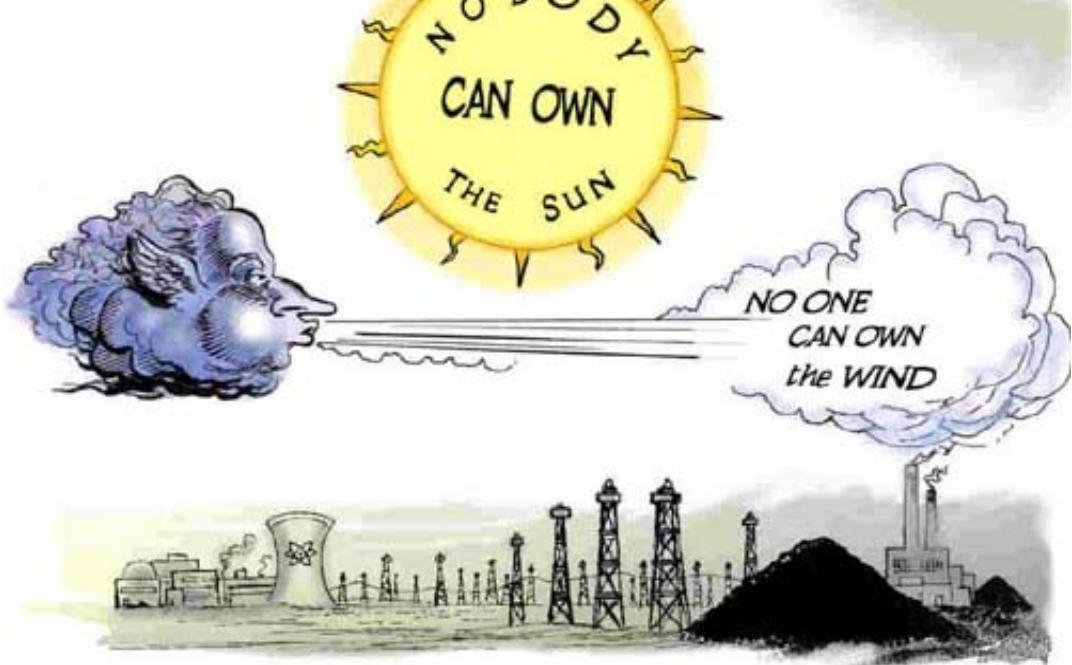
Join the [Action Network](#).

[More Details](#)



4. Renewable Energy = Unfeasible?





Why Solar & Wind Power Aren't deemed 'Feasible'



RepowerArkansas

5. GCGW Final Report -- Making it Happen

Numerous organizations and hundreds of individuals are coming together throughout Arkansas

Arkansas Governor's

Commission on Global Warming

**Final Report
October 2008**



[View the Report](#)

to support the recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Global Warming. With the convening of the 2009 General Assembly's Legislative Session a number of the policy options from the Final Report will be under consideration. The global warming deniers and status quo seekers are already spreading lies and distortions about the Commission's work. The only ally we have is TRUTH and the power of the people of Arkansas.

It is because of this that *Repower Arkansas* was created just a few months back. We are urging that the Governor and General Assembly enact the following key provisions from the Commission's Report.

[Join the Repower Arkansas Action Network](#)

**Do we want to be remembered as the generation that saved the banks
and let the biosphere collapse? George Monbiot**

350 PPM seeks to educate the public about the impending crisis of global warming and climate change. It is our belief that the world must reduce greenhouse gas emissions and return the levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere to no more than 350 parts per million. It is only at these levels or below that the climate and environmental systems of the earth as we know them can be maintained. As a point of reference it was 1988 when the earth's atmosphere contained 350 PPM of CO₂.

www.go350.org

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Questions or comments? E-mail us at Robert@go350ppm.org