Yale University committed to reducing its primary greenhouse gas emissions 43% below 2005 levels. Beginning in 2013, emissions from the University fleet are included in the reduction target.

Yale’s greenhouse gas reduction strategy has focused on specific and effective programs that are technologically feasible, fiscally sound, and consistent with the university’s mission. Effective strategies have included: reducing the energy intensity of buildings through conservation and efficiency, deploying new technologies, utilizing cleaner fuels, adhering to sustainable construction and renovation standards, promoting behavioral shifts and culture change, and investing in renewable energy technologies both on and off Yale’s campus.

While these strategies are an essential component of our mitigation efforts, they will not impede the development of new initiatives and future plans. It is important to recognize that our greenhouse gas reduction strategy is continually evolving. Plans and strategies will be revisited and modified to reflect progress, improved technologies, economic conditions, and advances in the understanding of climate change. There is no single solution to carbon mitigation. Achievement of the university’s goal to reduce campus emissions is being realized through the combined efforts of our students, faculty, and staff.
Yale’s 2005 greenhouse gas baseline included energy consumed by all buildings connected to the University’s two on-campus co-generation power plants and purchased electricity. It did not include energy consumed by buildings not connected to the campus energy grid or the university fleet. Beginning in 2013, the 2005 baseline has been adjusted to include emissions from the university fleet. Though it represents only a small percentage of Yale’s total greenhouse gas emissions, the fleet was added to more accurately reflect the university’s scope 1 emissions sources. As a separate effort, Yale is currently focusing on emission reductions at West Campus which was purchased in 2007.

An inventory of scope 3 emissions from commuting, air travel, and paper purchases are analyzed on an annual basis, but are not currently included in the reduction target. As more accurate methodologies for accounting for scope 3 emissions are developed, Yale may consider expanding its emission reduction target to include this wider scope.

Additional information regarding Yale’s progress can be found at sustainability.yale.edu.

1 Yale owns and operates two co-generation power plants; Central Power Plant and Sterling Power Plant.
2 Based on guidance from the World Resource Institute and the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, the Greenhouse Gas Protocol defines three scopes of emissions sources. Scope 1 is a direct emission and scope 2 and 3 are indirect emissions.
3 West Campus, the former Bayer Pharmaceutical facility, is a 136-acre campus made up of 1.6 MM square feet of laboratories, offices and warehouse space.
4 Carbon equivalencies are sourced from the book “How Bad Are Bananas” by Mike Berners-Lee.

Where do our emissions come from?

Based on guidance from the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, Yale’s emissions are divided into three categories called “scopes.”

**Scope 1** encompasses direct emissions from sources owned or controlled by Yale and includes emissions from Yale’s fleet of vehicles and its two power plants.

**Scope 2** includes indirect emissions from purchased electricity.

**Scope 3** includes indirect emissions from all other sources that occur as a result of Yale operations but occur from sources not owned or controlled by the University, such as employee commuting (48%), air travel (50%), and paper consumption (2%).

A monthly view of our carbon emissions shows January and August as the peak months due to highest demand for heating and cooling respectively.