

Fun Facts: Earth Day - April 22



What in the world is Earth Day?

- Earth Day is recognized every year to raise awareness of environmental issues and inspire an appreciation for the environment.
- Environmental activists coined Earth Day in response to a massive oil spill in waters near Santa Barbara, CA, in 1969.
- Some ways to celebrate Earth Day: Biking or walking – instead of driving – more, planting trees, and recycling. Remember: Earth Day can be observed every day, not just April 22!

Feelin' Hot, Hot, Hot

Across the **122,802,852** occupied housing units in the United States in 2019, it is estimated that...



**Almost half
(59 million)**
were heated by utility gas.



**Less than 2 percent
(2 million)**
were heated by wood.



**Less than 1 percent
(248,893)**
were heated by solar energy.

Getting to Work

Why does this matter? Earth Day is a great time to learn more about reducing our carbon footprint. By making choices such as driving less or using alternative commute options, we are making a positive change!

Commute Times

- Average one-way commute to work in the United States in 2019: **28 minutes**.
- States with the longest average one-way commutes to work: **New York (34 minutes)** and **Maryland (34 minutes)**.
- States with some of the shortest average one-way commutes to work: **North Dakota (18 minutes)** and **South Dakota (18 minutes)**.



How They Commute

- **Less than 1 percent (805,722)** of people in the United States rode a bike to work in 2019.
- **Almost 3 percent (4,153,050)** of people in the United States walked to work in 2019.

Power Up!

\$15 billion: The total revenue in 2017 for all electric power generation industries in the United States that used renewable energy resources, such as:

- Hydroelectric – energy extracted from flowing water, often in a river, that spins the blades of a turbine connected to a generator.
- Wind – energy extracted from moving air that turns the blades of a turbine connected to a generator.
- Geothermal – energy generated from heat in the ground, for example, from the hot rock found a few miles beneath the Earth's surface.
- Biomass – energy generated from animals and plants, such as wood and dried vegetation. When biomass is burned, the energy is released as heat.
- Solar – energy generated from the sun, often through solar panels.
- Other electric power – fossil fuel, nuclear, solid waste combustors.

1,532: The number of hydroelectric, wind, geothermal, biomass, solar, and other electric power generation establishments in the United States in 2018.

***16,121:** The number of employees working in hydroelectric, wind, geothermal, biomass, solar, and other electric power generation establishments in the United States in 2018.

*Paid employment consists of full- and part-time employees who are on the payroll in the pay period including March 12. Not included are sole proprietors and partners of unincorporated businesses.
Sources: Data on this page come from the U.S. Census Bureau's Economic Census, County Business Patterns, American Community Survey, and North American Industry Classification System.