

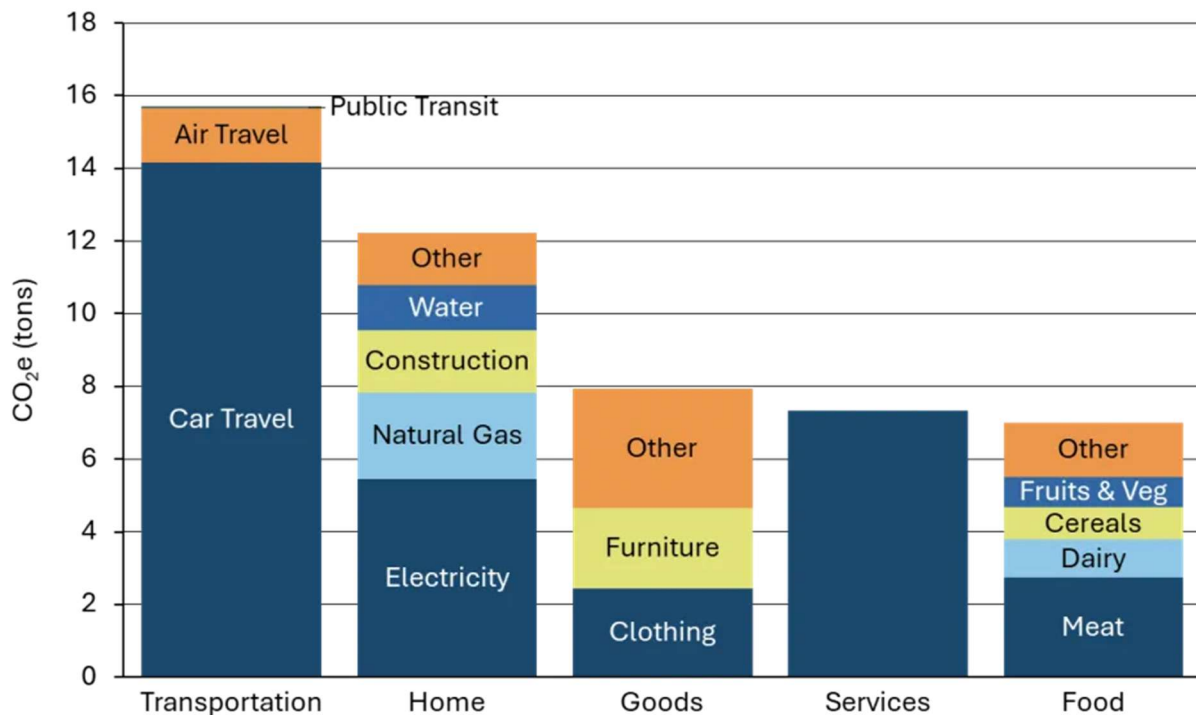
# What's in Your Carbon Footprint—And Why It Matters to You!

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If you're concerned about the impacts of the climate crisis and want to take personal action, the good news is, you can start today! Greenhouse gases, comprising our "carbon footprint", warm the planet, causing issues including more intense storms, flooding, drought, and disease. When you understand what makes up your carbon footprint and how to reduce those parts, you can:

- Save money and time
- Create a healthier life for you and loved ones
- Contribute to a healthier city, state, country, planet

To reduce your carbon footprint, it helps to understand how your lifestyle choices affect the parts of that footprint, per graph below for a typical U.S. home. For Boise, 60 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e/year is typical.



You can see what comprises your personal carbon footprint by using a personal carbon calculator, such as the [Berkeley Cool Climate Calculator](#). By answering questions about your living space and lifestyle, you can get a baseline chart like the one above, showing your carbon use (CO<sub>2</sub>e) in each area. This tool will also suggest your best opportunities, and which are cheapest, easiest, or have the quickest payback. Then, you can choose your first steps. These don't need to be expensive, and some can SAVE you time and money. For example, you can carpool or combine trips to save time and money while lowering your CO<sub>2</sub>e (carbon dioxide equivalent).

**So, the first step is to get a baseline to understand your options.**

My first baseline CO<sub>2</sub>e was about 60 tons/year, but after I installed solar panels, bought an EV, replaced gas appliances with high-efficiency electric ones at end of life, and bought an Energy Star Most Efficient refrigerator, I lowered it to 12-15 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e. This happened over six years.

**In future issues, we'll dive into each of these five areas—  
Transportation, Home Energy, Goods, Services and Food,** and show you easy, practical ways to take those next steps—and save money, time, and the planet, while creating a healthier life for YOU!

Also: **Find a Carbon Buddy or a group to support you** in this journey and celebrate your accomplishments! Tell your story!

Questions or Ideas? Contact Lisa Hecht at 208.841.0058