



POPULATION FACT SHEET

Introduction to Students: Why Population Matters to You!

From the moment children are born they become a key participant in shaping the population dynamics of our country. Throughout their lives they will hopefully share in America's rich rewards and contribute to making our country a better place to live. They will also compete for their individual share of our nation's limited natural resources.

Each step of the way they will be acting together with hundreds of millions of fellow citizens who will each inflict their own personal imprint on our nation and who also have the same goal – to enjoy a good life and share in the American Dream.

Today, the dreams of all Americans, especially our nation's young people, are threatened with the growing crisis of population growth. This problem must be brought under control very soon before it strangles our nation's future prosperity and completely destroys our future quality of life.

Right now, America's population stands at nearly 310 million people and it is already far too crowded. In just 40 years, it is projected to rise to 450 million people.

Such massive numbers of individuals crowding our cities and communities, competing for limited fresh water, increasing demand for energy, polluting our air and destroying our fragile environment will create a far different quality of life than we presently enjoy.

It is vitally important that our government leaders – on the federal, state and local level – take steps today to halt and reverse today's soaring population growth through policies and actions that can restore our population to a manageable size.

The information below is provided to stimulate discussion about population growth as our government conducts our decennial U.S. Census and as we once again celebrate Earth Day.

Remember, as you project these facts into the future where there will be tens of millions more people in America, you are part of the generation that has so much to gain by demanding responsible and sound population policies today.

World Population:

- The United Nations estimated world population reached 6 billion in 1999. It is currently estimated to be 6.8 billion and is expected to reach 7 billion in 2012.

U.S. Population Info:

- With nearly 310 million people, the United States ranks as the third most populated country in the world behind China and India.
- America's population increased by 2.6 million people in 2009. That is similar to adding a city the size of Chicago to our population every year. Every day, we add more than 7,000 new people to the United States.
- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, one birth is expected to occur every eight seconds in the U.S. this year and one death every 12 seconds. Net international migration – including immigration – will increase the population by one person every 37 seconds. The end result is that in 2010 our population will grow by one person every 14 seconds.

Environment and Habitat:

- Despite making huge strides in protecting our nation's fragile environment in recent years, strong evidence exists all around us that the impact of population growth and over-exploitation of the earth's natural resources is negating many positive environmental victories.
- U.S. coastal areas have the highest population density in the country and continued development puts coastal habitats at even greater risk.
- Numerous fish and wildlife species and their habitats within areas such as the Great Lakes Basin, the Everglades, and the Chesapeake Bay, face serious threats.
- Increased population will greatly contribute to global warming.

Farmland:

- One acre of natural habitat or farmland is converted to built-up space or highway for each person added to the U.S. population.
- Every minute of every day, America loses two acres of farmland.
- We are losing our most fertile and most productive land the fastest as urban sprawl brings new houses, roads, malls, and office buildings.

Energy:

- The United States consumes more energy than any other nation in terms of total use. We now consume three times more energy than we did in 1950 when our population was only 150 million.
- The majority of America's energy is derived from: Petroleum (40%), Coal (23%), Natural Gas (23%), Nuclear Power (8.4%), and Hydroelectric Dams (7.3%).

Water:

Water is essential for all life – human, animal and plant. It is also necessary to run the nation's businesses, farms and factories.

- Much of America's water supplies are contained in large underground aquifers.
- Groundwater provides 31% of the water used in U.S. agriculture and it is presently being used faster than it can be replaced.
- Agriculture consumes about 85% of all fresh water consumed by Americans.
- Future water supplies are among the most worrisome issues as the population grows. Droughts are unpredictable and population growth in the western U.S. could potentially trigger "water wars" as cities and states compete for dwindling water supplies.

Other facts:

- 35.5 million people – including 12.6 million children – live in households that presently experience hunger or the risk of hunger. This represents more than 10% of U.S. households.
- Number of motor vehicles in U.S. (2007) – 254,403,082.

Negative Population Growth – NPG – is a national membership organization founded in 1972 to educate the American public and political leaders about the detrimental effects of overpopulation on our environment, resources and quality of life. NPG advocates a smaller and truly sustainable United States population accomplished through voluntary incentives for smaller families and reduced immigration levels. For additional information about population issues, please visit our website at www.npg.org.