

Wisconsin Department of Health Services
HIA Training Case Study #2
Global Warming Policy Recommendation: “Fix-it-First”

In 2007, Governor Doyle created the Global Warming Task Force to develop and present viable, actionable policy recommendations to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Wisconsin and make the state a leader in implementation of global warming solutions. The Task Force consists of a diverse membership representing a cross-section of Wisconsin’s economy and its communities, and received public input, as well as feedback from state agencies including the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin.

Task Force GHG Targets Include:

- That WI return to 2005 GHG levels not later than 2014
- A 22% reduction from 2005 levels (roughly equivalent to 1990 levels) by 2022
- A 75% reduction from 2005 levels by 2050 (roughly equivalent to 70% below 1990 levels)

Over 57 million VMT were logged in Wisconsin in 2001 and both aggregate and per capita VMT have risen dramatically in recent years in Wisconsin. Currently, most residents in Wisconsin have little choice in travel mode and nearly 80% of Wisconsin’s workforce drives to work alone.

Among the numerous policy recommendations made by the task force to reduce GHG’s were a number of initiatives that would encourage regulatory action and state funding to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by individuals. The policies are intended to encourage development patterns that reduce dependency on automobiles. *One of these specific recommendations is to:*

- **Prioritize funding for rehabilitation of existing infrastructure over adding new lane-miles (fix-it-first)**

The recommendation that Wisconsin should strengthen its “fix-it-first” policy on roadways to place a higher priority on rehabilitation of existing infrastructure over adding new lane-miles, was highlighted by the Task Force as a policy that should be pursued to the greatest extent feasible.

The “Fix-it-First” Policy has the potential to impact:

- Vehicle Miles Traveled
 - adding freeway lane miles increases VMT over time
- Traffic Congestion and Air Quality
- Safety and Accessibility
 - Improvement of existing infrastructure could lead to improvements in safety and accessibility
 - **Adding new lane miles** could lead to vehicles traveling at higher speeds and thus increase motor vehicle accidents
- Creation and maintenance of local jobs
- Location of retail and other land uses
- Use of public transportation

Decision Making Process

Policy recommendations from the Task Force are intended to be adopted/implemented by the DNR and Department of Transportation, and incorporated into the existing state decision-making process for infrastructure repair – which entails an EIS (environmental impact statement, required under NEPA) and consultation with regional, state and federal transportation and environmental agencies.

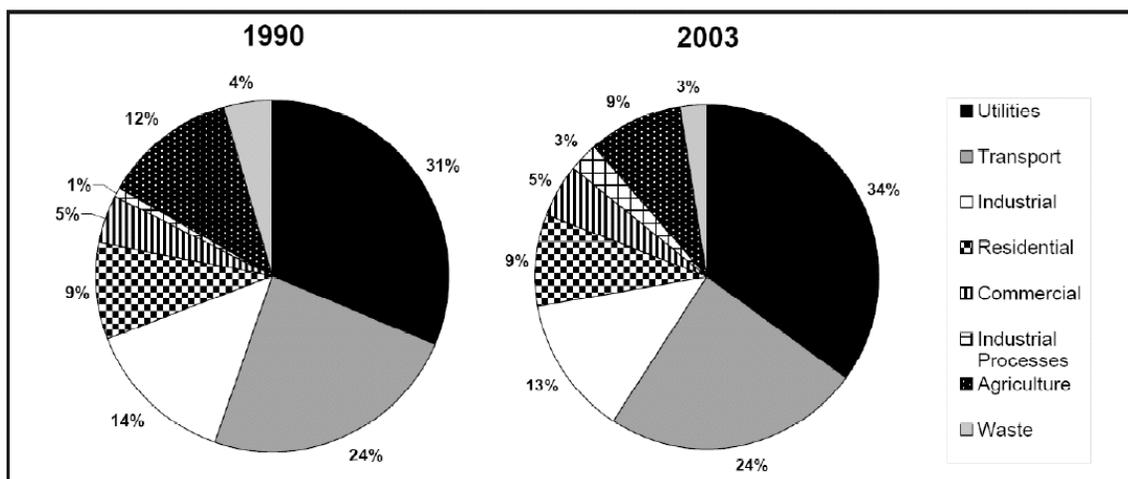
Other Background Information:

Infrastructure

Wisconsin has over 112,000 miles of public roads statewide, 743 of which are highway miles. According to 2007 data, the Federal Highway Administration rated 47% of Wisconsin's roads in fair condition. More recent FHWA data indicate that in Wisconsin, 15% of state bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.

GHG Emissions

Wisconsin GHG Emissions by Sector, 1990 and 2003

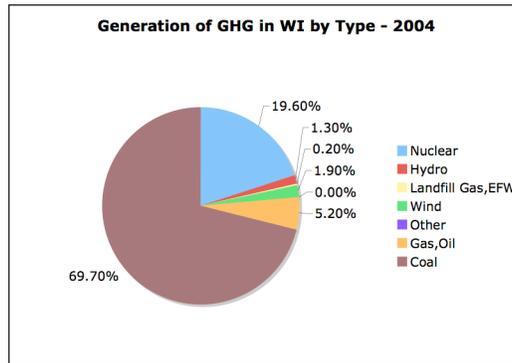


Source: WI DNR Inventory as compiled by WRI, 2007

- Wisconsin generated just less than 2% of total U.S. emissions in 2003, making the state the 21st largest GHG emitter, slightly behind Oklahoma and ahead of Minnesota.
- Globally, if Wisconsin were a country, it would rank as the 42nd largest GHG emitter in the world, just behind Romania.
- Per capita GHG emissions in Wisconsin in 2003 are approximately equal to 23 metric tons of CO₂ per person, roughly equivalent to the national average.

A comprehensive assessment of Wisconsin's GHG emissions from 1990 through 2003 shows a 1.2 % increase in annual average rate (from 105.9 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent to 123). GHG emissions increased in nearly all sectors, led by electric power generation (2% per year), the commercial sector (1.8% per year), and transportation (1.3% per year). In contrast, industrial emissions peaked in 2000 and have declined substantially in recent years.

Projections of how Wisconsin's economy, energy use and GHG emissions may develop in the future absent any new GHG reduction policies estimate statewide emissions from 2004 to 2024 to increase at an annual average rate of just under 1%, from 131.3 million metric tons of CO₂ to 156. GHG emissions are projected to increase in all sectors, except in the passenger transport sector, which are projected to decline over the period from 21.6 million metric tons of CO₂ to 20.1, due to increased choices for transportation modes, increased vehicle efficiency and increased use of bio-fuels as mandated under the federal Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Energy Act).



Additional resources:

- Governor’s Task Force on Global Warming. Final Report to Governor Jim Doyle. “Wisconsin’s Strategy for Reducing Global Warming”. July 2008.

- **Federal Highway Administration: Bureau of Transportation Statistics**

This site reports State Transportation Statistics highlighting major federal databases and other national sources related to each state's infrastructure, safety, freight movement and passenger travel, vehicles, economy and finance, and energy and the environment. Along with tables generated for each state, the reports describe databases and give information on access, formats, and contact points.

http://www.bts.gov/publications/state_transportation_statistics/