

Fairbanks over US average for greenhouse gases

64 PERCENT: Most emissions come from burning heating oil.

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FAIRBANKS -- Fairbanks released 64 percent more greenhouse gases per resident last year than the national average, according to a new report.

The report ordered by the Fairbanks North Star Borough looks at the main reasons for the greenhouse gas releases in Fairbanks, including the amount of heating fuel burned, electricity used and car trips taken.

The borough hopes to use the report to address the problem of skyrocketing energy costs, and to find ways to help homeowners curb use, if possible.

The report says three-fifths of the greenhouse gas emissions from homes in Fairbanks last year came from the roughly 49 million gallons of heating fuel burned by renters and homeowners.

Businesses and industrial firms emitted more greenhouse gases from the use of electricity than from heating fuel.

The figures are included in the "Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory" released recently by the Fairbanks-based Alaska Center for Energy and Power. The center worked with other agencies this summer to estimate and catalog the level of emissions coming from different sources.

The report says the sources combined last year to emit the equivalent of 3.8 million metric tons of carbon dioxide in greenhouse gases from within the borough's boundaries.

Amy Shatzkin, a Seattle-based program manager for the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, said that the report is a first step toward addressing the level of emissions coming from Fairbanks.

"It basically tells you in a very broad sense, where you go when looking (at) saving money and saving energy and, thus, saving emissions," she said.