



**For immediate release**  
**October 9, 2007**

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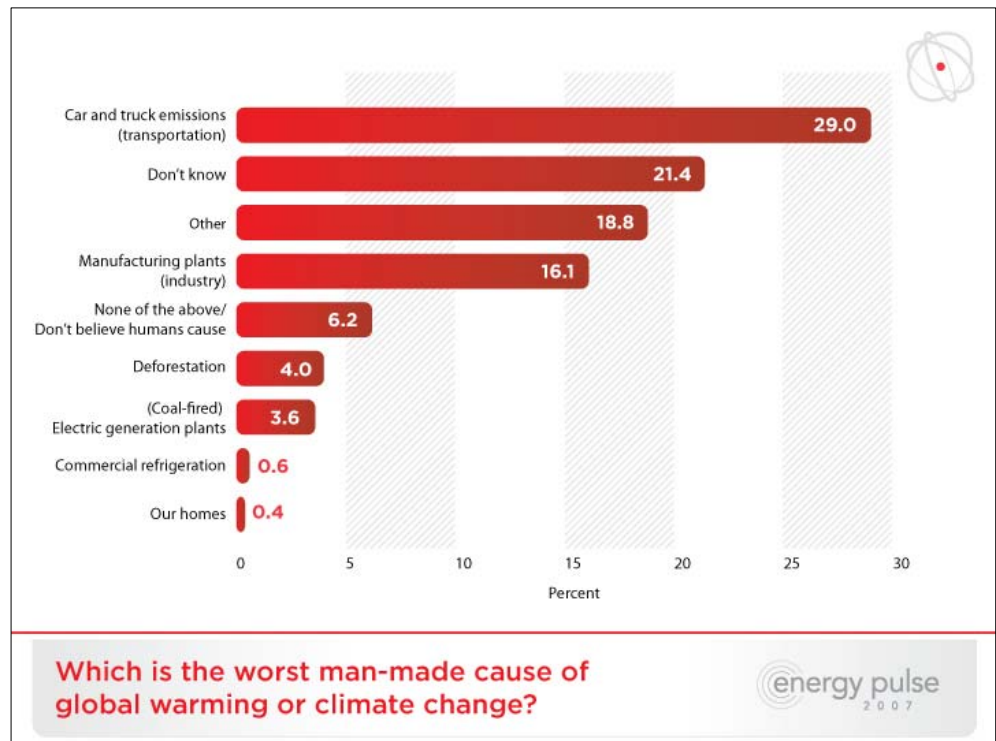
## **National Survey: In Age of Global Warming Politics, Consumers Dogged by ‘Clueless’ Factor**

*Role of Coal-Fired Plants in Greenhouse Gas Emissions Largely Eludes Consumer Awareness;  
Auto Emissions Erroneously Blamed as the Top Culprit;  
More Consumers Say They Want Renewable Power – But Just What Is It?*

Knoxville, Tenn. – While 63 percent of U.S. consumers agree they are “very concerned” about the effects of climate change or global warming, there exists a wide disparity between the realities of how greenhouse gas emissions are generated and which culprits Americans think are to blame, according to a third-annual national study that evaluates the consumer mindset on energy use and conservation.

The Shelton Group **Energy Pulse 2007** study ([www.energypulse.org](http://www.energypulse.org)) – just released today – documents the following:

- Two-thirds of consumers do not know that most electricity is produced by burning coal, and nineteen percent of consumers think that hydroelectric generation is the number one source of electricity (the U.S. Energy Information Administration cites that hydro is the source of only three percent of U.S. electricity).



- Less than four percent of consumers name coal-fired electricity production as the biggest man-made contributor to climate issues.
- Nearly 30 percent of consumers think car and truck emissions present the worst man-made cause of global warming / climate change.

According to the Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks 1990-2005 report

(<http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/usinventoryreport.html>), fossil fuel combustion accounts for 79

percent of greenhouse gas emissions – and of that, **electricity generation accounts for 41 percent of CO<sub>2</sub>, or nearly one-third (32.8 percent) of all greenhouse gases**, while transportation (personal cars, diesel trucks, heavy duty vehicles and jet fuel) accounts for 26 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. Personal vehicles account for only 15.7 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions.

“The disconnect American consumers have between climate change issues and their own electricity usage is sobering,” said Shelton Group CEO

Suzanne Shelton. “Over the years, consumers have been conditioned to think that changing their driving habits is the best way to help the environment . . . not that they're actually *changing* their driving habits, but that's one of the main things they think they ‘should’ do. Because of this overwhelming awareness void, consumers have never realized that the biggest thing they can do is to use less electricity.”

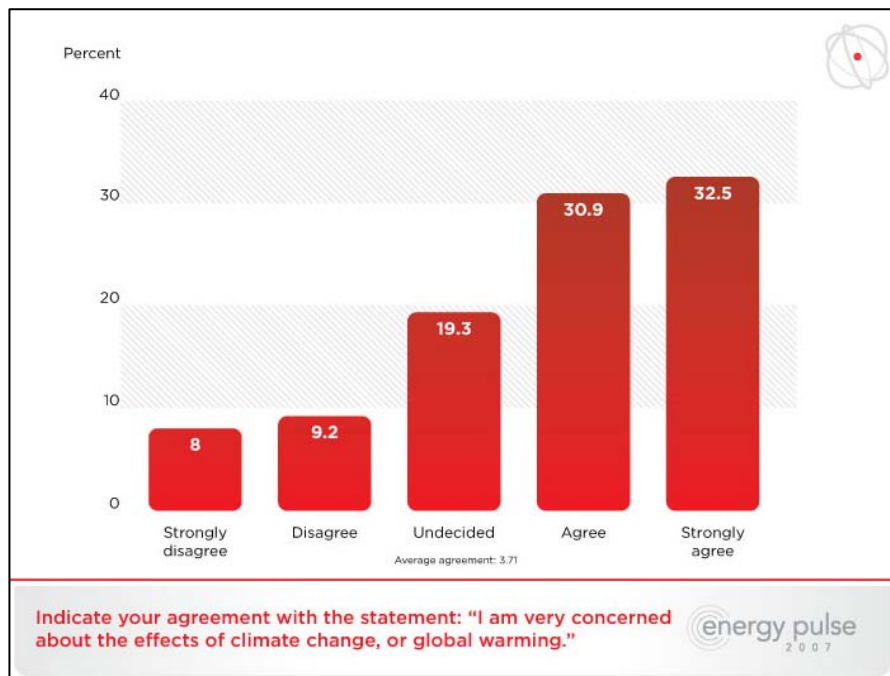
Energy Pulse 2007 also documents, however, that the likelihood for consumers to participate in utility green power programs continues to grow. The challenge: the percentage of consumers who said they've actually signed up for green power remains flat. This is likely due to a finding from previous Energy Pulse studies that most consumers are unaware if their utility offers green power.

“It goes back to what everyone in renewable power has long known and Energy Pulse has well documented – that consumers’ behaviors belie their stated intentions and motivations,” Shelton said. “Yes – they say they want to make environmentally responsible choices, but where the rubber meets the road, consumers always hit the same speed bumps: ‘how much extra is it going to cost me?’ and ‘how much is it going to inconvenience me to change what is familiar and comfortable?’”

Lack of understanding about renewable energy continues to be a factor as well. Energy Pulse 2007 found only 48 percent of consumers could name (unaided) at least one form of renewable energy, although this statistic is actually quite better than in 2005, when only 20 percent of consumers could do so.

**“The disconnect American consumers have between climate change issues and their own electricity usage is sobering.”**

**-CEO Suzanne Shelton,  
Shelton Group**



**ABOUT SHELTON GROUP:**

Established in 1991 and based in Knoxville, Tenn., Shelton Group is a full-service marketing and advertising agency providing award-winning research, market strategy, advertising and creative services to clients across the United States. Shelton Group specializes in successfully taking energy-efficient and green products and services to market. Energy Pulse methodology and other details are available upon request. [www.energypulse.org](http://www.energypulse.org)