

## **Reduce Your Contribution to Global Warming: Reduce or Offset Your Carbon Footprint**

### **What is a Carbon Footprint?**

A carbon footprint is a representation of the effect you have on the climate based on the greenhouse gases you produce, in terms of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) units.

### **Do you know your impact?**

A family of 4, driving an average of 1000 miles per month (using a car that gets 30 miles per gallon), using 500-kilowatt hours of electricity per month, and an average of 75 gallons of heating oil per month has a carbon footprint of about 2,637 CO<sub>2</sub> units per month.

### **Does it matter?**

Carbon emissions contribute to global warming and climate change.

### **What can I do locally?**

Reduce your carbon footprint is a good first step. This can be done by reducing your driving, getting maximum gas mileage from your car, using less electricity, or heating oil in your home. There is lots of guidance on each of those subjects throughout the media.

A second step is to get involved in local carbon footprint offset projects. The Howard Soil Conservation District is a leader in conservation work in the agricultural community in Howard County. Farmers and landowners have lots of opportunities to work with the community on projects that sequester carbon through improved agricultural activities and land use changes. Planting trees along stream banks offers a multitude of benefits such as converting pastureland or cropland to forests, filtering nutrients for improved water quality, and slowing storm water so erosion is reduced. This is just one example of how a project can benefit the community as a whole while reducing carbon emissions from other sources.

### **Keep your money working locally!**

Funds are needed locally to plant trees, improve pastures, minimize soil disturbance. The Howard Soil Conservation District has numerous projects that sequester carbon and need funds. We can also partner with any of the

other 23 Soil Conservation Districts across the state to invest in the most cost effective projects available.