

## Climate Attitudes Differ in Rural, Suburban, and Urban Living

Climate change impacts all Americans, but presents itself differently in every corner of the U.S., ranging from hurricanes to droughts, superstorms and Nor'easters. To inspire more Americans to engage on the issue, we need to meet them *where they live – and relate the issue to the things they care about in their Urban, Suburban, or Rural living.*

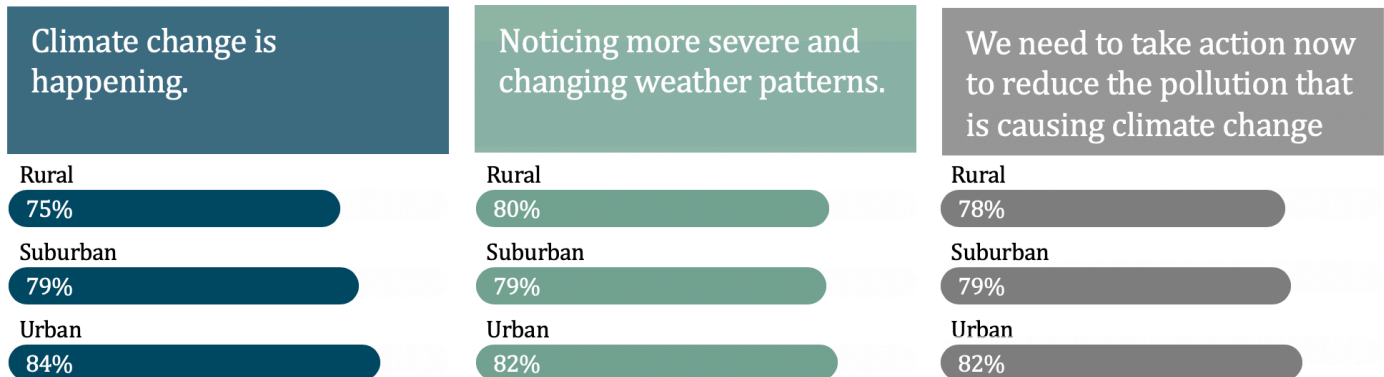
ecoAmerica's new research has found many areas of common ground on climate change, of universal understanding and attitudes. A large majority of

Americans, 88% for instance, believe we have a moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy climate for ourselves and our children (87% Rural, 87% Suburban, and 90% Urban agree). But there are key differences to heed when communicating and engaging Americans on the issue.

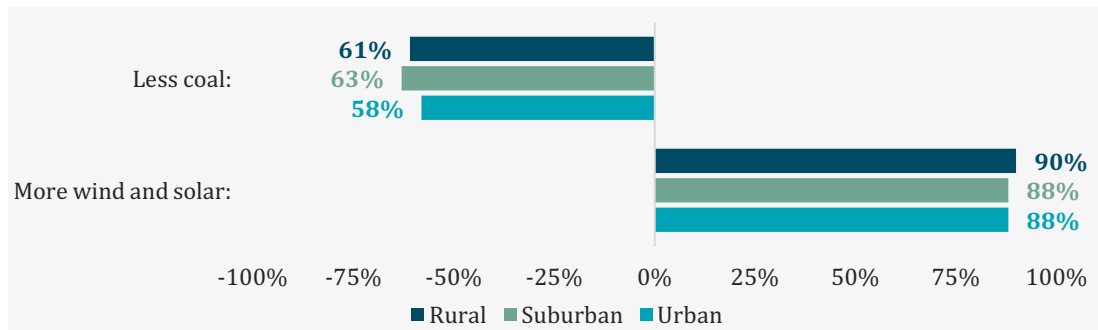
ecoAmerica and Lake Research Partners' 2018 American Climate Metrics Survey identifies opportunities to specialize outreach in each community.

## Climate Consensus: It's Happening, We Need More Clean Energy and to Act Now

The type of community Americans live in seems to have little bearing on key climate perspectives. Rural, Suburban, and Urban Americans are equally aware that climate change is happening, including noticing more severe and changing seasonal weather. High majorities across all community types believe urgent action is needed to reduce the pollution that is causing climate change. They also all believe that the U.S. should produce more wind and solar energy, and less coal. This consensus constitutes a strong foundation of public support for solutions.



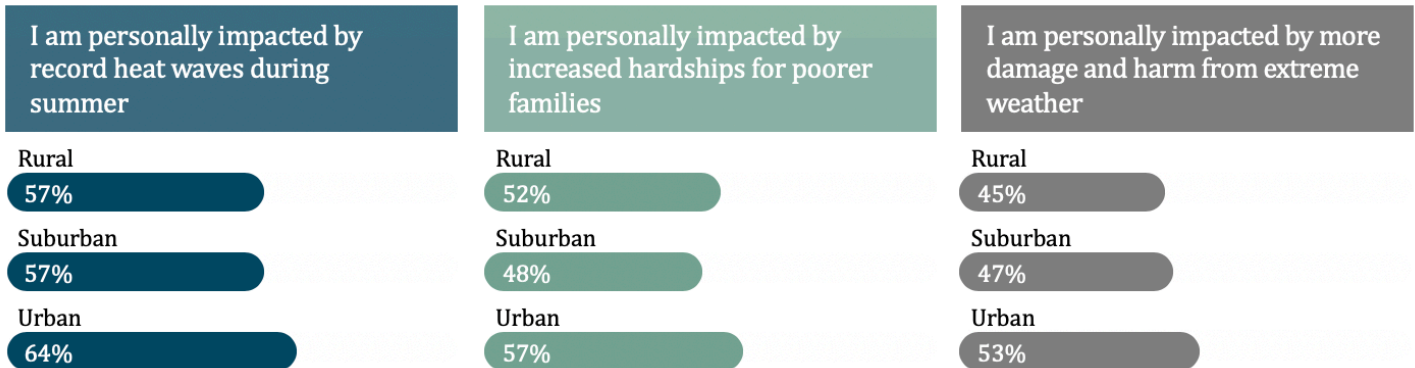
For each of the following, please indicate if you think the United States should be producing more, less, or the same amount of energy from each source as it is today. 800 respondent(s) total nationally, % "Much more" and "Somewhat more"



## Urban Americans Report Highest Impact, Believe It Will Harm Those Around Them

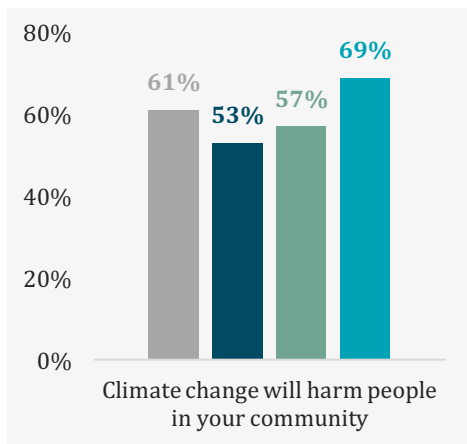
While core understandings about climate change are similar across community types, there are key differences in perceptions of impact. Urban Americans report being more impacted by record heat waves, hardships for poorer families, and damage from extreme weather than do their Rural and Suburban neighbors. Similarly, when looking to the future, Urban Americans are most likely to believe they and those around them will be harmed by climate change, at variances of 13- to 16- points higher than Rural.

**For each of the following issues, please indicate how much they are personally affecting you:** 800 respondent(s) nationally

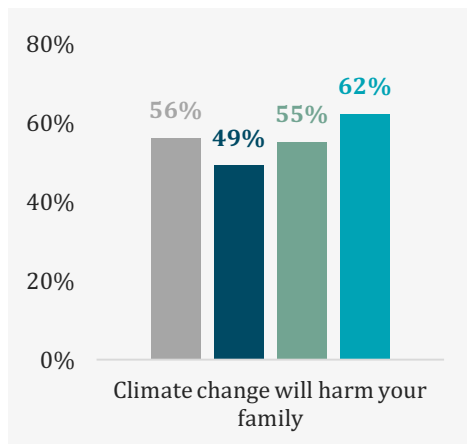


**How much do you think climate change will harm each of the following?:** 800 respondent(s) nationally

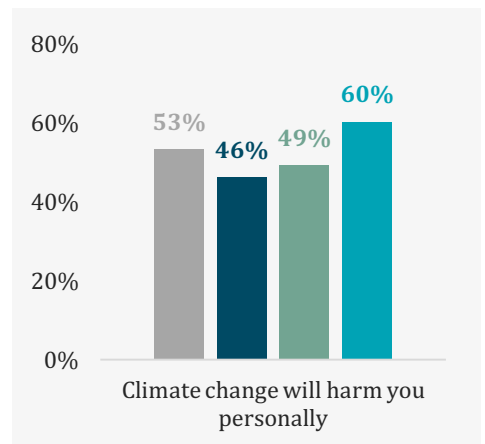
Will harm people in your community:



Will harm your family:



Will harm yourself personally:



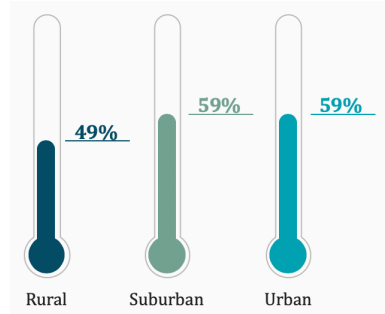
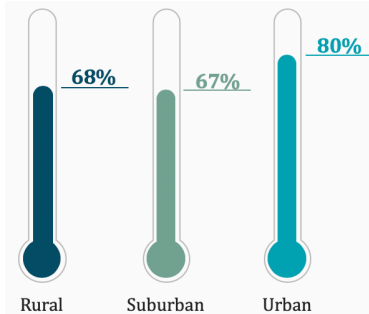
■ U.S. 2018 ■ Rural ■ Suburban ■ Urban

## Urban Americans: Most Concerned, Believe Few Others Around Share Their Concern

Although a majority are concerned about climate change, Urban Americans are 12- to 13-points more concerned than their Rural and Suburban neighbors. When asked if they believe people around them are concerned, Americans reported believing that fewer are as concerned as they. The highest variance in perception of concern is among Urbans (21-points between personally concerned vs. others), followed by Rural (19-points), then Suburban (8-points). It's clear: Americans need to know others around share their concern.

**I am personally concerned about climate change:**

**People around me are concerned about climate change:**



## Propensity for Advocacy Increases with Urban Living

While Americans overall value speaking out on climate change, Urbans place higher importance on speaking out to their family, electeds, friends and co-workers, sometimes 20-point more than Rural. The results show that all of us need to feel more empowered to advance solutions, however Urbans currently feel most empowered.

**I feel it is important to speak out to each about climate:**

	U.S. 2018	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Your family	59%	51%	57%	67%
Elected officials	55%	45%	54%	61%
Your friends	54%	43%	52%	63%
Your co-workers	40%	32%	35%	50%

**I feel empowered to help advance solutions to climate within each:**

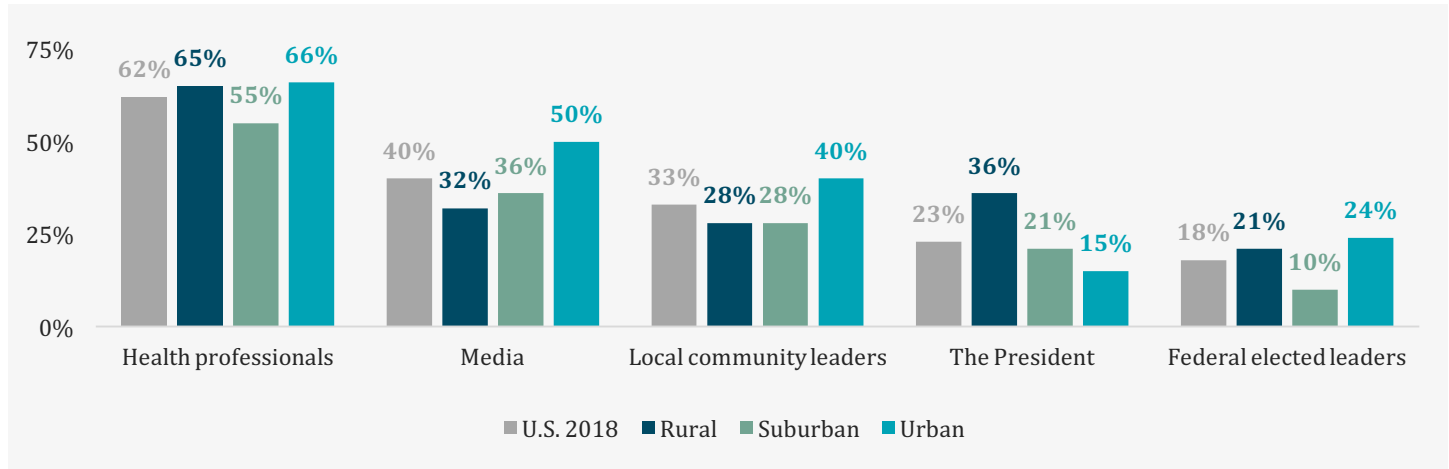
	U.S. 2018	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Friends and family	52%	48%	49%	58%
My community	39%	27%	36%	50%
Nationally	34%	26%	34%	40%
My employer	25%	17%	22%	34%

**Propensity for Advocacy Increases with Urban Living**

## Health Professionals, Media and Local Leaders Are Best Suited to Offer Guidance

Americans are ready for climate solutions, but who will they trust for guidance on the issue? The answer varies fairly significantly depending on the type of community in which they live. However, the study found that health professionals stood above the other categories as the most trusted, followed by the media and local community leaders. Trust is lowest for The President and federal elected officials, however Rural Americans are over twice as likely to trust the President than Urban Americans.

**As a source of guidance about climate change, how much do you trust the following?:** 800 respondent(s) nationally



Full data is available in the accompanying [toplines](#).

### Methodology

ecoAmerica and Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey, which was conducted online September 14-18<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The survey yielded a total of 800 adult responses. The sample was drawn from an online panel and the respondents were screened to ensure that they were over the age of 18. The national sample was weighted slightly by region, age, race, and education. The margin of error for the sample is +/-3.5%. In interpreting the survey results, it is important to note that all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error. Thus, the results of a survey may differ from the results that would be obtained if the entire population was interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of the responses to a particular question. For example, if 50% of the respondents in a sample of 802 respondents answered, "Yes" to a particular question, we can be 95% confident that the true percentage would fall within 3.5 points, or range from 46.5% to 53.5%.

### Suggested Citation

Speiser, M., Kobayashi, N., Gutierrez, M., Lake, C., and Voss, J. (2019). American Climate Perspectives Survey 2019, Vol II: *Climate Attitudes Differ in Rural, Suburban, Urban Living*. ecoAmerica and Lake Research Partners. Washington, DC.

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