

## Vocabulary: Greenhouse Effect



### Vocabulary

- Global warming – a gradual increase in air temperatures near Earth’s surface.
  - The possible consequences of global warming are uncertain but may be severe. They include melting of polar ice caps, rising sea levels, drought, and an increase in the frequency and severity of storms.
- Greenhouse effect – atmospheric heating caused by certain gases in Earth’s atmosphere that are transparent to sunlight but absorb and reflect heat that comes from Earth’s surface.
  - The greenhouse effect gets its name from the fact that the air inside a greenhouse will often be warmer than the outside air. The glass in a greenhouse is transparent to sunlight, but traps the heated air inside.
- Greenhouse gas – a gas in Earth’s atmosphere that absorbs and then re-radiates heat.
  - Examples of greenhouse gases include water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), and hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs).
- Heat flow – the transfer of thermal energy from a warmer object to a cooler object.