

THE MONTANA BOARD OF OIL AND GAS CONSERVATION
MONTANA PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION
ESSAY CONTEST

The Montana Board of Oil and Gas Conservation (MBOGC) in partnership with the Montana Petroleum Association (MPA) are pleased to announce the 4th annual essay contest for Montana high school age students. We believe that the more knowledge Americans have about our industry the more they will understand the challenges facing our country, and the opportunities that exist for those willing to work hard. It is our hope that encouraging students at the high school level will offer an incentive to explore the possibilities that we face and expose them to interesting fields of study. This notice explains and frames the rules for eligibility. Essays will be subjected to a very critical scoring process. The successful essay will demonstrate that the author has done critical thinking and used contemporary and relevant first source material in their research. Listed below are the rules for the contest, plus some insight into why MPA and the MBOGC are offering this contest:

Prizes: 1 Grand Prize of \$2,000
 1 Second Place Prize of \$1000
 6 Runner-up Prizes of \$500 each

Entrants age 18 and older will have the award made payable to them. Entrants under the age of 18 will have the award made payable to them and their parent or guardian. First and second place winners will have to provide their social security number to the MPA for Federal and State tax reporting purposes.

Purpose: One could argue that the petroleum industry is one of the most significant contributors to the American standard of living that we enjoy today. Petroleum heats and cools our homes, fuels our vehicles, and is the basic ingredient for many of the everyday items Americans rely upon. Yet, over the last century, no other industry has come under such a level of criticism from the public and our political leaders.

Today, we live in the information age and have access to magnitudes of information never before experienced. At a time when a person can find answers to their questions with relative ease, we as a society, tend to get our information from mass media sources inclusive of their intended or unintended bias. More often than not, the realities of delivering the supplies to meet the daily global energy demands are marginalized. MPA and the MBOGC believe that if a person gives thoughtful consideration, critically analyzes all sides of an issue, and conducts meaningful research into our industry they will have a better understanding of the challenges we face in the coming years, and they will be able to recognize viable solutions. Our goal, simply put, is to increase the knowledge of energy issues in Montana's future leaders.

Topic: Climate change is the top environmental issue being discussed by Congress at the moment. What Congress ultimately does to address climate change will have a profound impact on the daily lives of all Americans. There are many components

to the whole global warming/climate change debate and this year's essay contest will discuss only one of them. The scientific community is greatly divided on the theories about climate change, global warming and its causes.

The essay will consist of the following three parts:

1. Defend the statement that anthropogenic (human caused) CO₂ is a major contributor to total amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere.
2. Defend the statement that anthropogenic (human caused) CO₂ is NOT a major contributor to total amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere.
3. In your own words discuss which of the above statements you personally believe and why.

Each essay shall address all three items. Parts 1 and 2 should be about 400 words each and these two should comprise 80% of your essay. Item 3 should be about 200 words or comprise about 20% of your essay.

Eligibility: Any Montana resident student who is enrolled in a high school program. Students enrolled in any public or private high school in Montana are eligible. Any child involved in a home school program (for high school age children) is also eligible. Children of the Montana Petroleum Association's Board of Directors, the Montana Board of Oil and Gas Conservation, or MPA staff are not eligible.

Essay submissions must be accompanied by a completed MPA release form available at www.montanapetroleum.org or by contacting the MPA office at 406.442.7582.

Essay submissions that do not have the MPA release, or are not in the proper format, or are not submitted on time are not eligible.

Format: The essays must be double spaced and not in excess of 1000 words, exclusive of the bibliography and title page. Authors must cite sources of information in a bibliography. All information sources used in the essay must be, cited, footnoted and the source listed in a bibliography so that scorers can readily associate a particular statement directly to its source.

Deadlines: Essays can be mailed in the standard fashion or electronic mail to:

The Montana Petroleum Association
P.O. Box 1186
Helena, MT 59602
mpa@montanapetroleum.org

The deadline for entry is Friday, January 15, 2010; at 5:00PM. Essays must either be received, in complete and final form, at the MPA office or have a postmark of January 15th, or before, to be eligible.

Winners will be posted on the MPA website by 5:00 PM on April 23, 2010.

Judging: MPA and MBOGC Judges will score essays based on the ability of the author to present an argument that is rational and supported by research in the prescribed format. Judges will strongly consider the thoroughness and effectiveness of the author's research, and the grammatical quality of the essay. **Essays that do not address each of the three topic components will not be considered.** Judging of the essays and the award of prizes is the sole discretion of the Montana Petroleum Association and the Montana Board of Oil and Gas Conservation.

Tips: We can not overstate the importance of using quality source material for your essay. All too often sources include a newspaper, program, or television show and not quality material or respected data sources. This is important because news articles produced by mass media may contain bias of the author that prevents the reader from making a decision for themselves. The following links should be reviewed prior to beginning your essay project to give you an idea of quality source material:

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/evaluate.html>

<http://www.virtualsalt.com/evalu8it.htm>

Read the topic section carefully to ensure your submission is complete. Essays that have concise supported answers for all the questions will score higher. Essays that do not address each of the three items will not be considered.

Publishing: MPA may publish essays that win a cash award. The publishing of essays is at the sole discretion the MPA and the MBOGC

Release: Essays from students under the age of 18 must include a signed parental notification form that is available on our website: www.montanapetroleum.org . The Montana Petroleum Association wishes to ensure that student's parents are aware of your participation in this program and that winners will receive a direct cash award. The release contains a statement signed by the author that work submitted is original, and the author grants permission for MPA to publish the essay submission. The release also contains the author's contact information and school. MPA is interested in gathering data on this contest and the demographic information is important and required.