



Illustration by Nick Dewar

In the basement: the nondescript equipment lurking in the cellar can have a huge carbon footprint. The water heater (1) and the main heating system (2) are responsible on average for more than 4.5 metric tons of co2 a year alone. Your clothes dryer (3) can use almost 10 times as much Energy as your washer (4). In the kitchen: older refrigerators (5) — those that don't meet energy star standards — are usually among the worst energy draws in the house and over a year can be responsible for almost a ton of co2 emissions. In the living room: a simple rear-projection television (6) draws only about a tenth of the energy annually that an old refrigerator can, but the average American household has more televisions than people. Air-conditioning: If you rely on a central air system (7), you might as well build your own smokestack. It accounts for about 2.2 metric tons of co2 annually, 20 times more emissions than a household's ceiling fans (8).