AMERICANS AREN'T DOING ENOUGH TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change will soon reach a catastrophic tipping point – unfortunately, only 55 percent believe they're doing enough to stop it, according to new research.

And results from the recent survey of 2,000 Americans found that a majority (82 percent) believe that carbon emissions play a major role in climate change.

The survey also found that while people are taking environmentally-friendly actions, a substantial number (44 percent) believe their actions are too small to help stop climate change and a third (32 percent) don't feel knowledgeable about the actions they can take.

Commissioned by Cool Effect and conducted by OnePoll in advance of Earth Day, the survey examined Americans' attitudes toward climate change, the actions they're taking and their thoughts regarding the future.

Americans' environmentally-friendly actions include turning off the lights (55 percent), using LED light bulbs (47 percent) and reusable bags (44 percent).

This is in addition to minimizing their electricity consumption (42 percent), using reusable water bottles (39 percent) and shopping locally or buying local produce (34 percent).

But is it enough? According to a report released by the United Nations in October of 2018, we only have 12 years before climate change becomes catastrophic – 20 years less than the average respondent believes.

While Americans want to do more – with recycling more often (37 percent) at the top of the list, followed by planting trees (31 percent) and using eco-friendly household products (29 percent) – almost 60 percent of respondents do not currently purchase electricity from renewable energy, use solar panels or an electric car.

Less than 25 percent currently reduce their consumption of red meat or use public transport. And over a quarter of respondents (27 percent) have no idea how many emissions they produce each year.

"Making daily eco-conscious choices is a step in the right direction, but our actions to reduce carbon need to be more significant: recycling is not enough. You can have an outsized impact by switching to renewable energy and by supporting organizations around the world that are verifiably and measurably reducing carbon emissions like CoolEffect.org. These include efforts like a U.S.-based grassland protection in the Great Plains or a clean cookstove initiative in Honduras that have been scientifically proven to reduce harmful carbon emissions," said Marisa de Belloy, CEO of non-profit Cool Effect.

In light of the United Nations report, over a third of respondents feel encouraged about our ability to make a change and 32 percent plan to step it up for Earth Day, with plans to be more environmentally friendly on the holiday than they typically are.

But one day is not enough. To make a difference in the fight against climate change, respondents

also believe that people need to think about climate change in every aspect of their lives (60 percent).

"The threats of climate change are very real, but we are also confident that with enough cumulative action, the average American can significantly reduce their carbon footprint. While 31 percent of people said a barrier to fight climate change was that it is too expensive, and 27 percent didn't know how many emissions they produce each year, the solutions and education is out there. With Cool Effect, you can offset your average yearly emissions of 16.6 tonnes for as little as $88," said de Belloy.

AMERICANS DO REPORT BEING KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

- 82 percent believe carbon emissions are important in affecting climate change
- 60 percent believe people need to think about climate change in every aspect of their lives*
- 76 percent report feeling knowledgeable about climate change

*Response comes from "select all that apply" question

BUT PEOPLE STILL NEED MORE EDUCATION ON WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

- 26 percent don't believe they have the main responsibility when it comes to reducing carbon emissions
- 57 percent don't use/own an electric car, solar panels or renewable energy