



Home > News > AI

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How much water ChatGPT's outage could have saved puts environmental impact of chatbot into horrifying perspective

AI requires vast amounts of freshwater to cool off data center servers



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ChatGPT suffered an outage yesterday that saw users unable to send queries to the chatbot.

While this likely caused a mild inconvenience for many regular users of the [AI](#) bot, the lack of power might have had a positive [environmental](#) impact.

This is because [ChatGPT](#) is an energy guzzler, according to a report by the [Washington Post](#), which estimated that one response from the chatbot uses around 0.000085 gallons of water.

AI systems, and in particular generative AI, require vast amounts of freshwater to consume as a way to cool off data center servers and generate electricity.

So, by the logic presented in the report, how much water is saved when the AI assistant goes down?



AI requires vast amounts of freshwater to cool off data center servers (Jakub Porzycki/NurPhoto via Getty Images)

If ChatGPT is effectively unavailable for three hours then that will save around 3,036 gallons.

Four hours saves roughly 4,047 gallons and six hours has the potential to save a whopping 6,071 gallons of water.

However, other studies suggest that AI bots use up a shocking 39.16 million gallons each day of operation, which if true would mean that 1.63 million gallons are used up per hour.

Many people have taken to [social media](#) to share their own thoughts on the water-use of AI, with one user writing on [Reddit](#): “If the data center is operating somewhere that pulls water from an aquifer that replenishes slowly, then yes, from a local water availability standpoint it is lost.”

Another said: “I live in New Mexico. It doesn't rain for the majority of the year, yet they're still guzzling our state's incredibly scarce water resources for a fancy

chatbot”
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n commented: “The concern I think is that facilities that use massive amounts of water like this will contribute to water shortages in areas that are already struggling like California and Texas.”



ChatGPT suffered an outage yesterday (Jakub Porzycki/NurPhoto via Getty Images)

And a fourth added: “Water is gone evaporated any small amounts left are so full of chemicals even after treatment not suitable for drinking or agriculture one day 40 million gallons gone. Government spewing water shortage scares for decades....

“People need to wake up , the world as they know it is nothing but entertainment for the Elites of this world. Brain washing has been so successful for hundreds of years hence why history always repeats itself... If it works don't change it..... This game will continue to such time as the people finally see what's been in front of them all along.”

Featured Image Credit: Jakub Porzycki/NurPhoto via Getty Images



[Home](#) > [News](#) > [AI](#)

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Sam Altman makes defends training AI in shocking rant on how much power it consumes

He branded anti-AI environmental concerns 'fake'



Harry Boulton



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Sam Altman has issued a shocking response to criticism of AI's high environmental impact, as the OpenAI CEO points towards another unexpected energy consumer in comparison to his own product.

Alongside of the threat that [everyone will lose their job](#) or the ethical concerns [surrounding content that's generated](#) by the [tech](#), arguably the biggest concern that many have with [artificial intelligence](#) relates to its impact on the [environment](#).

It's impossible to deny the strain that both AI usage and the process of training the models [is creating on the climate](#), as not only do data centers require an [extraordinary amount of water](#) for cooling purposes, but the overall power demands are predominantly met through unsustainable means.



Sam Altman has responded to claims regarding the energy and water usage of AI (Roberto Salomone/Bloomberg via Getty Images)

You only need to look at the impact that data centers have [already had on surrounding areas](#) to see the local damage, but that'll only extend further as the years go on and demand continues to grow – especially as [scientists](#) warn that we're past a [number of 'tipping points'](#) for climate change.

Who better to come to the defense of AI, however, than Sam Altman – arguably the man that started it all – as the OpenAI CEO has issued a shocking statement in response to environmental criticism.

As reported by [CNBC](#), the [ChatGPT](#) boss spoke at the India AI Impact summit regarding this controversial topic, addressing specifically claims circulating on [social media](#) that each query on the chatbot uses 'thousands' of gallons of water.

Altman blasted this as "completely untrue, totally insane," adding that the allegations have "no connection to reality," but while the numbers might be far off, it would be

remiss to ignore the impact that data centers have on water consumption entirely. ^{UNILAD}
TECH A water technology company Xylem and Global Water Intelligence indicate that water consumed specifically for cooling is set to more than triple over the next quarter of a century, falling directly in line with the rising demands of computing.

Altman did clarify his desire for alternative power solutions amid the growing demand for AI, noting that "we need to move towards nuclear or wind and solar very quickly," joining names like [Elon Musk](#) and [Jeff Bezos](#) perhaps in laying out plans for [data centers in space](#).

What has shocked many, however, is Altman's final point, where he compares the power hungry nature of training AI to another factor that's draining the planet's resources.

"One of the things that is always unfair in this comparison is people talk about how much energy it takes to train an AI model [...] but it also takes a lot of energy to train a human," Altman proclaimed.



Altman compared the energy consumption of training AI to raising humans in a bizarre statement (Tomohiro Ohsumi/Getty Images)

"It takes like 20 years of life, and all the food you eat before that time, before you get smart. The fair comparison is if you ask ChatGPT a question, how much energy does it take once a model is trained to answer that question, versus a human, and probably AI has already caught up on an energy efficiency basis, measured that way."

People, unlike AI, need to exist for the human race to continue, so the comparison in this instance is facetious at best – although Altman does seem to believe that there exists no future without AI [when it comes to his own child](#).

"Sam watches the Terminator movies and roots for the Terminators," jokes one [commenter](#) on [Reddit](#) following the bizarre comparison, with another writing: "Some might argue that humans bring value to the world outside of their ability to perform labour. Not this guy."

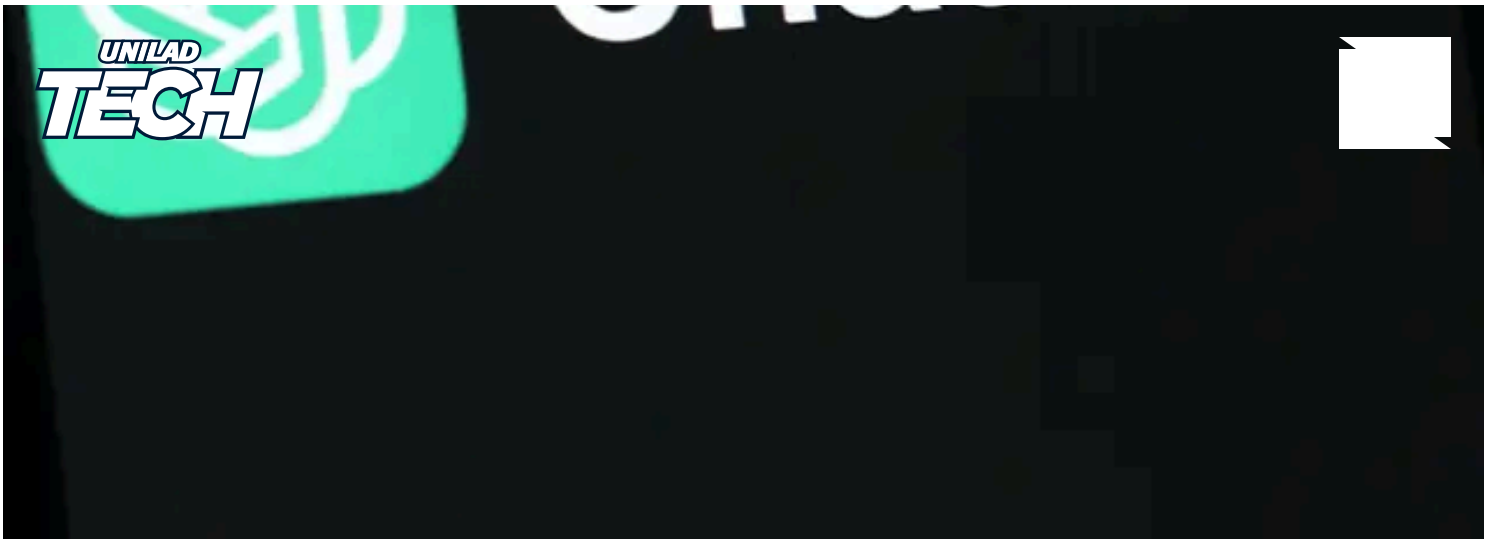
Featured Image Credit: Bloomberg / Contributor / Getty

[AI](#)

[Climate change](#)

[ChatGPT](#)





Home > News > AI

Published 15:45 5 Jun 2025 GMT+1

The real cost of saying 'please' and 'thank you' to ChatGPT as horrifying truth is exposed

The cost of a massive mortgage per day.



Ben Williams



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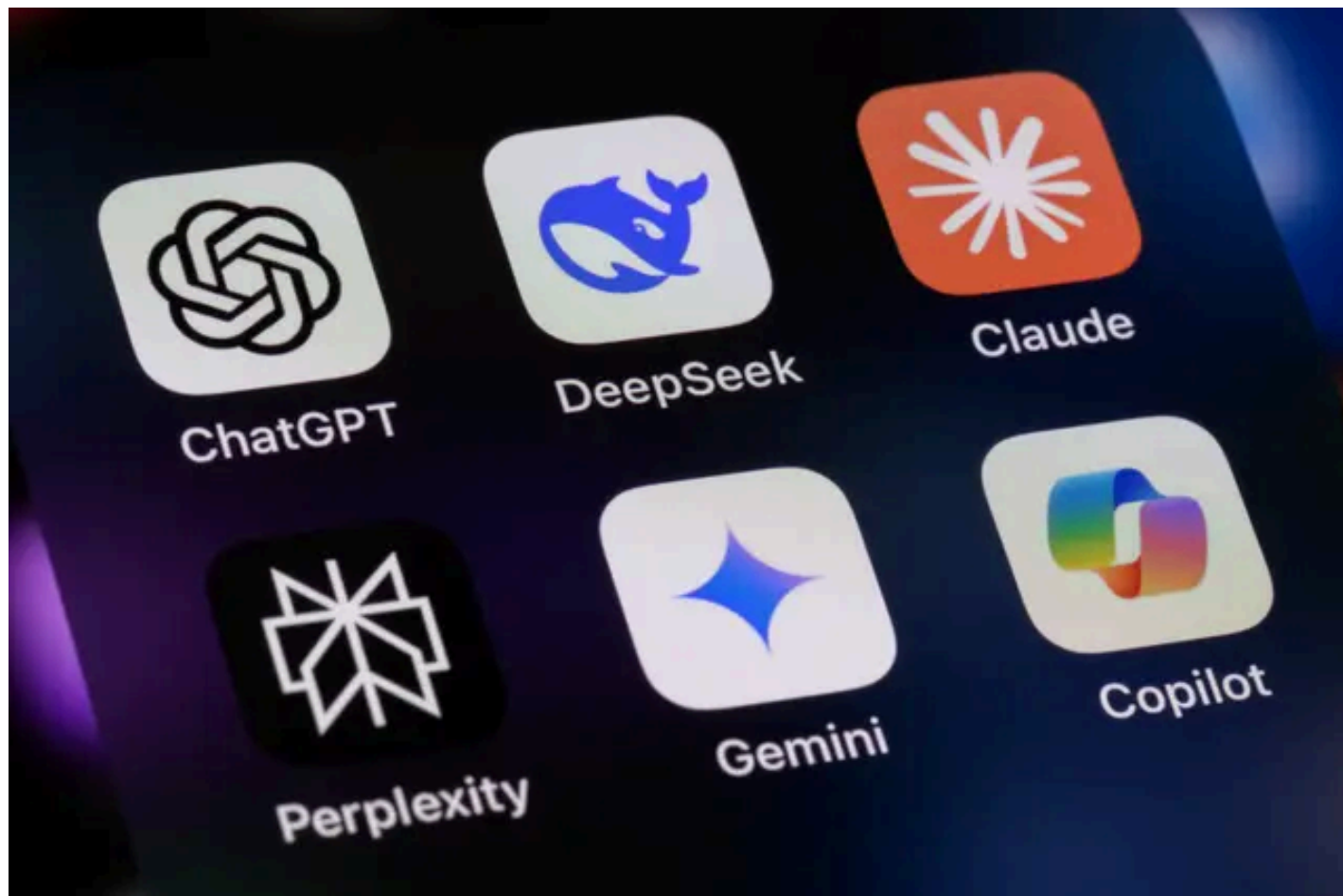
Since its release in 2022, ChatGPT has become a go-to tool for millions, helping with everything from job applications and general questions to lightening the mood with a quick joke. But while it's easy to get comfortable relying on AI for daily queries, there's a darker side to this convenience that many aren't aware of – and it's not just about privacy or accuracy.

Every time you type a question into [ChatGPT](#), there's an environmental price being paid, and it's more shocking than you might think. According to reports, the [AI](#) system uses approximately 50cl of water for every 10 to 50 queries.

This water is used in data centres, where powerful servers generate vast amounts of heat and require constant cooling. David Craig, CEO of British cooling company Iceotope, explains that these data centres, as reported by [The Times](#): “use water-

based systems to cool the plant with towers evaporating the heat, like a huge UNLAD
TECH system, which means that the water is lost.”

Moreover, the water needs to be of high purity to avoid damaging the sensitive equipment.



The ChatGPT app (Getty Images)

But water is just one part of the equation. [Forbes](#) reports that ChatGPT consumes over half a million kilowatt-hours of electricity daily, an amount sufficient to power around 180,000 US homes.

This staggering energy consumption fuels billions of requests, including many that may be arguably trivial. Some of these requests include people politely adding “please” and “thank you” when interacting with the AI, which might sound harmless. However, that adds to the processing workload. [OpenAI’s founder](#) even [joked on X](#) that such politeness “could cost tens of millions of dollars.”

Tech analyst Dylan Patel estimated that ChatGPT costs over \$700,000/£515,651 per day to operate when talking to [The Information](#) – reported by [Business Insider](#) –

and while it's unclear how much of that stems from users simply being courteous to **UNILAD TECH** highlights the significant running costs involved in keeping the service online and responsive.

The environmental impact extends beyond just the immediate resource use. With two-thirds of the world's population projected to face [water](#) scarcity by 2050, using clean drinking water to cool servers feels increasingly unsustainable. Forbes also warns that this shortage "will affect all aspects of people's lives," raising ethical questions about how much water and energy we should dedicate to powering artificial intelligence.

The reality is that AI's environmental footprint is only set to grow as these technologies become even more integrated into our lives. While ChatGPT and similar tools offer undeniable convenience, it's worth considering whether we need to use them for every little query.



That's especially when alternatives like asking a teacher, a family member, or even turning to community forums like [Reddit](#) might suffice.

In response to these concerns, an OpenAI spokesperson said in a statement, that **UNILAD TECH** by [The Washington Post](#): “AI can be energy-intensive and that’s why we are constantly working to improve efficiency. We carefully consider the best use of our computing power and support our partners’ efforts to achieve their sustainability goals.”

So next time you’re about to open ChatGPT for a quick question, perhaps save the “please” and “thank you” for face-to-face conversations. It might just help save a bit of water and electricity in the long run.

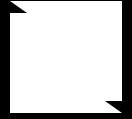
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[ChatGPT](#)

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Home > News > AI

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UN issues warning that we're entering 'water bankruptcy' that could have catastrophic impacts on Earth

AI and industrial agriculture play a huge role in draining the planet of water



Rikki Loftus



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The United Nations has issued a warning that we are entering 'water bankruptcy' which could result in catastrophic impacts for Earth.

This is something [scientists](#) have been warning the public about for decades but it seems like the reality could be worse than previously believed.

Now, the UN has released a statement to say that many regions of the planet are experiencing such persistent water shortages that it is unrealistic for them to recover back to their '[historical](#) baselines'.



The United Nations has issued a warning that we are entering 'water bankruptcy' (Karl Hendon/Getty Images)

Kaveh Madani, who is the Director of the UN University Institute for Water, Environment and [Health](#), said: "For much of the world, 'normal' is gone. This is not to kill hope but to encourage action and an honest admission of failure today to protect and enable tomorrow."

Greenpeace UK has also spoken out through [social media](#), where the organization wrote on [Instagram](#): "The future of life on earth is more important than the profits of Big Tech Billionaires. Pass it on."

"Water is not a commodity, it is a human right. And right now it's being stolen. It's time to resist the Big [Tech](#) and Big Agriculture billionaires stealing our water for profit."

According to scientific findings, the world is rapidly depleting its natural 'water savings accounts'

This means that over half of the world's large lakes have 'declined since the early

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Meanwhile, roughly 35% of the natural wetlands have been lost since 1970.

However, while there has now been irreversible damage to the world's water system, this doesn't mean that all hope is lost just yet.

This is because Madani has highlighted recovery routes that can be taken to help work towards some restoration.



Scientists are warning that there could be catastrophic impacts for Earth (fotograzia/Getty Images)

He explained: "It is the start of a structured recovery plan: you stop the bleeding, protect essential services, restructure unsustainable claims, and invest in rebuilding."

So, what are some big culprits of this crisis? According to Greenpeace UK, AI and industrial agriculture play a huge role in draining the planet of water.

The organization detailed how AI data centers are 'drinking billions of liters of water everyday just to stay cool', while industrial farming is 'draining ancient underground reservoirs that took thousands of years to fill'.

Reacting to the news on Instagram, one user wrote: "We don't need AI, but we need



Another said: "I wonder if water conflicts will out-do our oil conflicts in the future..."

And a third person added: "Humans suck."

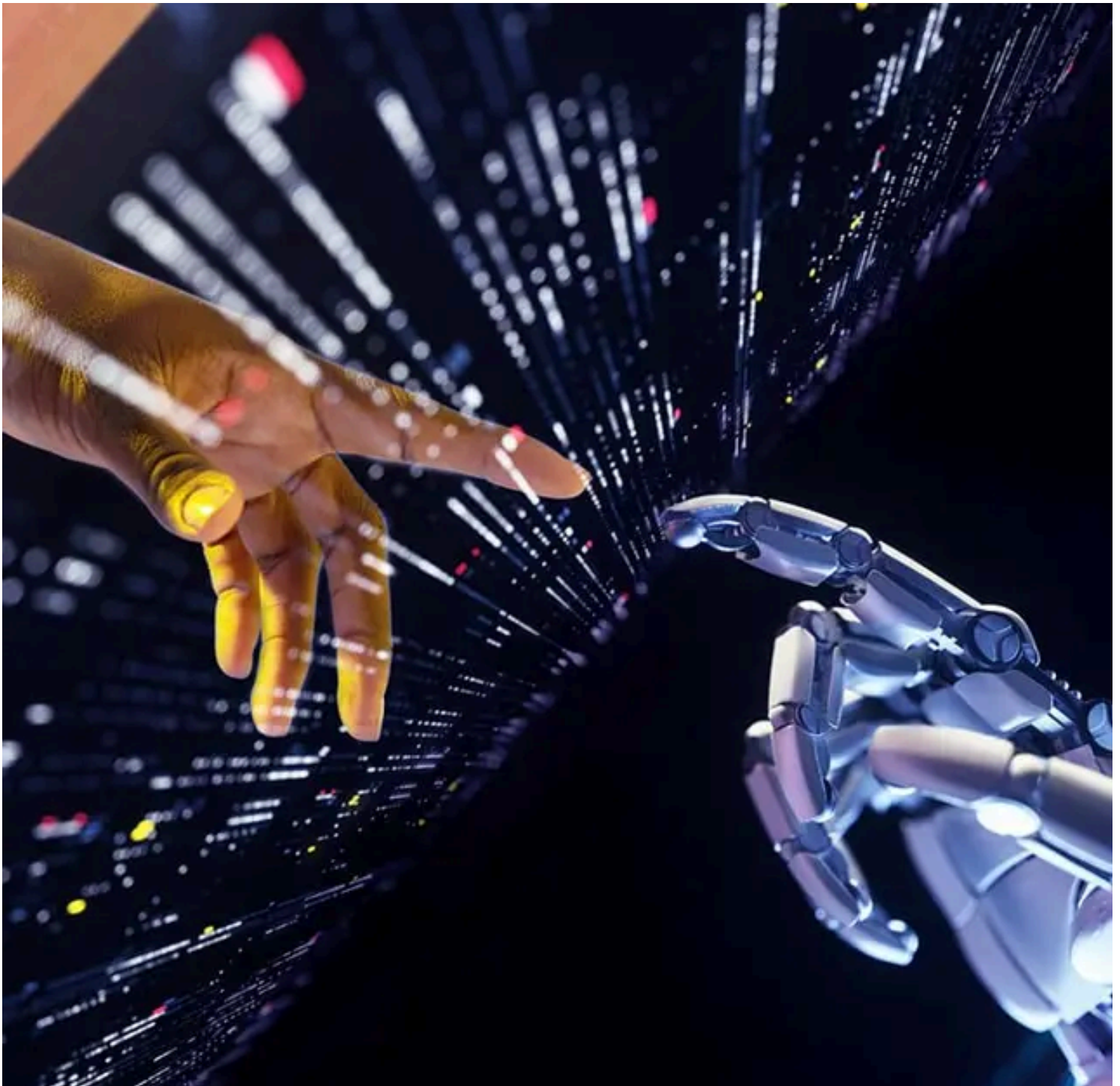
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[Climate change](#)

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Published 16:48 22 May 2025 GMT+1

The 'real cost' of AI's energy footprint revealed and it's having a shocking impact on the planet

All that clever tech comes at a heavy cost for the environment



Rebekah Jordan



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The growing carbon footprint of AI is starting to raise big questions about its environmental cost.

AI is undoubtedly integrated into our everyday lives. If it's not [powering the latest iOS update](#) or tailoring [personal Netflix recommendations](#), it's writing [job applications](#) and predicting the future. For some, it's creating [pictures and videos for content](#) while acting as a [romantic companion](#) for others.

Hundreds of millions of people are using chatbots and AI tools more than ever - but at what cost?

We've already heard from OpenAI's Sam Altman that even being polite with ChatGPT prompts costs the company 'tens of millions of dollars'. Meanwhile, Professor Sajjad Moazeni warned that the energy consumption of a [ChatGPT](#) enquiry is 'probably ten to 100 times more power hungry' than sending an email.

Now, a new deep-dive analysis by [MIT Technology Review](#) has provided one of the most comprehensive views on how much energy AI really uses.

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ChatGPT receives one billion messages a day (NurPhoto/Contributor/Getty Images)

The team spoke to two dozen experts measuring AI's energy demands, reviewed hundreds of pages of technical documents and forecasts, and questioned big-time AI companies about how their models are built and run. It seems the common perception of AI's energy use - at least the way big [tech](#) is selling it - is way off.

The report argued that 'it's likely that our AI footprint today is the smallest it will ever be'.

If we look at the numbers, projections from the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, found that more than half of the electricity going to data centres will be used for AI by 2028.

More specifically, AI could use between 165 and 326 terawatt-hours of electricity annually by 2028. That's more than all electricity currently used by US data centres for all purposes and enough energy to run 22% of all US households, as per the MIT report.

To put that into perspective, this amount of power could generate the same driving over 1,600 round trips to the Sun from [Earth](#).



'It's likely that our AI footprint today is the smallest it will ever be' (Andriy Onufriyenko/Getty Images)

Chatbots like ChatGPT and [Google's Gemini](#) are a big part of this surge. Already, ChatGPT receives one billion messages a day and is now estimated to be the 'fifth-most visited website in the world, just after [Instagram](#) and ahead of X.'

When OpenAI launched its image generator, users were soon creating 78 million images a day from [Studio Ghibli-style portraits](#) to what it predicted an AI god to look like.

"AI data centres need constant power, 24-7, 365 days a year," said Rahul Mewawalla, the CEO of Mawson Infrastructure Group.

Most of that power comes from fossil fuels and despite the push for [solar energy](#), electrical grids still heavily rely on them.

“It’s not clear to us that the benefits of these data centres outweigh these costs”
 Elizabeth Martin, a legal fellow at the Environmental and Energy Law Program at Harvard and a coauthor of the research. “Why should we be paying for this infrastructure? Why should we be paying for their power bills?”

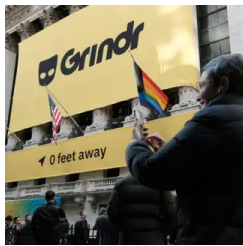
As the demand for AI adoption rises, the environmental impact is only becoming harder to ignore. [Scientists](#) have already warned that climate change is accelerating at a pace we may no [longer be able to control](#). If the current trend continues, this hidden cost might end up doing more damage than anyone bargained for.

Featured Image Credit: Andriy Onufriyenko/Getty Images

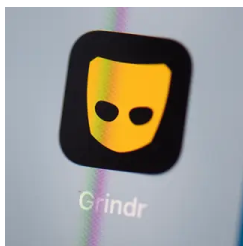
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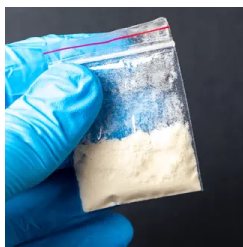
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