

# Scientists Risk Arrest to Demand Climate Action

A growing international movement called Scientist Rebellion calls on world leaders to end the burning of fossil fuels

By [Chelsea Harvey](#), [E&E News](#) on April 11, 2022



Climate and soil scientist Rose Abramoff at a Scientist Rebellion protest at the White House on April 6. Credit: [Scientist Rebellion](#)

Rose Abramoff drove from her home in Knoxville, Tenn., to the nation's capital last week to chain herself to the White House fence.

The climate scientist was among seven demonstrators arrested on April 6 (and later released). Their motivation: the dire warning that time is swiftly running out to meet the world's climate goals, as detailed in a major report last week from the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Two days later, Abramoff was back — this time marching with a group of climate activists down I-395 at rush hour. The group was arrested again, but not before they'd stalled traffic on one of Washington's busiest highways.

In both cases, their demands were clear: faster, stronger climate action from world governments and an end to the burning of fossil fuels.

“It was my first experience with civil disobedience for any reason,” said Abramoff, a climate scientist at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, who emphasized that her activism is conducted on her own behalf and does not reflect the positions of her institution. She also spoke with E&E News only on her own behalf.

In the past, she'd participated in marches and worked with nonprofits, community groups and educational programs on issues related to climate change. But most of her previous activities were “fitting into that regular mold of scientists as primarily non-partisan and non-activist,” she told E&E News. “This was my first real departure from that.”

## **A GROWING REVOLUTION**

Abramoff participated in last week's demonstrations as part of the climate movement "Scientist Rebellion" — a loosely knit, international organization of scientists advocating for stronger climate action through nonviolent protests and acts of civil disobedience. (Abramoff is one of the organizers for participants in the U.S. and Canada.)

Scientist Rebellion started out as a small, largely European movement a couple of years ago, according to Abramoff. It has recently attracted greater attention from scientists around the world. Last November, it held its first coordinated international campaign with demonstrations in Glasgow, Scotland, during a major U.N. climate conference.

Most recently, participants staged demonstrations in cities around the world after the release of the IPCC climate report last week, demanding swifter and stronger global efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

In Los Angeles, four scientists were arrested after handcuffing themselves to the entrance of a Chase bank. In Germany, scientists demonstrated outside the Ministry for Economy and Climate Protection. In England, they protested outside Shell PLC headquarters. They pasted documents to government buildings in Mexico, occupied an oil and gas company's headquarters in Italy, and threw fake blood onto the facade of the National Congress in Spain.

Scientist Rebellion estimates that a total of around 1,000 scientists in 25 countries participated in last week's demonstrations, often wearing lab coats to identify themselves.