

404 Reasons to Use Perma.cc

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70% of URLs cited by Harvard Law Review, Harvard Journal of Law & Technology, and Harvard Human Rights Review suffer from link rot or content drift (Zittrain et al, 2013).

50% of URLs cited by United States Supreme Court cases suffer from link rot or content drift (Zittrain et al, 2013).

76% of URLs cited in Science, Technology, Mathematics (STM) articles suffer from content drift (Jones et al, 2016).

One in five URLs cited by STM research suffer from link rot (Klein et al, 2014).

61% of URLs to public health information published by NGOs suffer from link rot or content drift (Crowe & Hodge, 2006).

Government information is not immune to link rot or content drift. In a study of food waste legislation scholarship, 24% of URLs to government sources suffer from link rot (Hackstadt, 2019). One notable example of content drift is demonstrated below:

Overview of Greenhouse Gases by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is cited by two authors writing about U.S. food waste legislation:

“Methane accounted for approximately ten percent of all greenhouse gas emissions from human activities in 2010,” (Haley, 2013).

“Methane is a greenhouse gas twenty times more damaging to the atmosphere than carbon dioxide,” (Vaz, 2015).

The cited URL redirects to this page, as of May 1, 2019 [Indicating a screenshot of the current EPA website which states, “We want to help you find what you are looking for,” with a link to the January 19, 2017 snapshot of the webpage and other links to search or browse the EPA website.]

Scholars in all disciplines cite open web sources like blogs, non-profit websites, and government information. How do authors protect citation integrity when blogs are abandoned, organizations update content, or administrations change hands? Perma.cc can help!

[Perma.cc](#) is a service developed by the Harvard Library Innovation Lab to preserve web-based content cited by scholars and the courts. Unlike archiving techniques that rely on random captures of web content, Perma.cc creates a permanent link at the request of a user, ensuring future scholars can review a source as it appeared at the time of citation. If the page is updated later, the Perma Linked version is preserved. There’s no need to worry about content drift! Perma Linked web pages can be viewed later – even if the original URL breaks. No more link rot!

[Screenshot of the Create a New Perma Link page as seen by a logged-in user] Copy and paste the URL and click Create Perma Link. Manage Perma Links easily with folders.

[Screenshot of a Perma.cc record <https://perma.cc/7N9W-8JBU> of Overview of Greenhouse Gases as it appeared on July 30, 2018.] Perma Link [indicating URL] When the Perma Link was created [indicating date and time] Link to the live page [indicating linked text View the live page] The web page as it appeared when the Perma Link was made [indicating the webpage snapshot]

[Use of persistent links is] Recommended by The Bluebook (20<sup>th</sup>) and Chicago Manual of Style (17<sup>th</sup>)

Learn more at [Perma.cc/libraries/](https://perma.cc/libraries/)

Sounds expensive. It's free for academic libraries and courts!

## References

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