



## FACT SHEETS

## Global Warming Campaign

# Top Ten Things You Can Do



Individual choices can have a significant impact on global climate change. Reducing your family's heat-trapping emissions does not mean forgoing modern conveniences; it means making smart choices and using energy-efficient products. Americans' per capita emissions of heat-trapping gases is 5.6 tons—more than double the amount of western Europeans—we can all make choices that will greatly reduce our families' global warming impact.

Though you may pay a bit more up front, you will see a return on your investment in terms of energy savings within a couple of years. Your efforts to stabilize our climate is hard to put a price tag on.



### 1. REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE!

Do your part to reduce waste by choosing reusable products instead of disposables. Buying products with minimal packaging (buy in bulk or the economy size when that makes sense for you) will help to reduce waste. And whenever you can, recycle paper, plastic, newspaper, glass and aluminum cans.

- Aim to recycle half of your household waste.

*CO<sub>2</sub> reduction = 2400 lbs/year*

### 2. CONSERVE WATER

You can reduce your energy consumption by using less hot water. Run your dishwasher only when full and use the air dry option.

- Wash clothes in cold or warm water, never hot.

*CO<sub>2</sub> reduction = 500 lbs/year*

When it's time to replace your washing machine, choose a new high-efficiency front-loader. You'll see great savings on water, electricity, and detergent, and you'll discover you can more safely wash delicate items, too.

- Buy low-flow showerheads to save hot water

*CO<sub>2</sub> reduction = 350 lbs/year*



### 3. TAME THE FRIDGE MONSTER

New refrigerators use about 50% less energy than those made just 10-15 years ago. That's important because refrigerators account for between 10 and 15% of total home energy consumption. The next time you buy a new refrigerator or any household appliance look for the Energy Star label to be sure you're getting a high efficiency model. In the meantime, keep your refrigerator's thermostat set to the recommended temperature and clean the condenser coil regularly. This one, very simple thing can improve the efficiency of your refrigerator by a third! If you own a second refrigerator, unplug it when it is not being used for special occasions.

### 4. HOME HEATING AND COOLING



Reduce excessive use of home heating and cooling. Try turning up the thermostat in the summer and turning it down a few degrees in the winter. If you don't have an automated thermostat, install one. Program it to adjust temperatures at nighttime. Try installing better insulation throughout the house. Seal up windows, close vents, and clean filters. If you really want to save energy, try to avoid using air conditioning on all but the very

hottest days. You'd be amazed at how effective ceiling fans alone can be in making you feel cooler.

- Set your water heater at 120 degrees to save energy.

*CO2 reduction (for each 10-degree adjustment) = 500 lbs/year.*

- Wrap your hot water heater in an insulating blanket.

*CO2 reduction = up to 1000 lbs/year*

- Set your thermostat just 2 degrees lower in winter and higher in summer.

*CO2 reduction = 2000 lbs/year*



## 5. CHANGE YOUR LIGHT BULBS

Switch from conventional incandescent bulbs to energy-efficient compact fluorescents. Or better yet, try to maximize your use of natural sunlight for daytime lighting needs. Replacing just one 60-watt incandescent light bulb with a CFL will save you \$30 over the life of the bulb. CFLs also last 10 times longer than incandescent bulbs, use two-thirds less energy, and give off 70 percent less heat. If every U.S. family replaced one regular light bulb with a CFL, it would eliminate 90 billion pounds of greenhouse gases, the same as taking 7.5 million cars off the road.

## 6. THINK BEFORE YOU DRIVE

Consider driving less by taking public transportation, walking, bicycling, or carpooling. Drive a more energy-efficient vehicle. When you drive, follow the speed limit and drive at a consistent speed. Take your car in for regular tune ups. Take off any rooftop carriers when not in use. Keeping your tires properly inflated can improve your gas mileage by more than three percent. Every gallon of gas you save not only helps your budget, it also keeps 20 pounds of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.



- Leave your car at home at least two days a week (walk, bike or take public transportation to work instead).

*CO2 reduction = 1,590 lbs/year*



## 7. PLANT A TREE

Plant leafy trees around your house to provide windbreaks and summer shade. Each year, the average yard tree cleans 330 pounds of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. An average tree absorbs ten pounds of pollutants from the air each year, including four pounds of ground level ozone and three pounds of particulates.

## 8. BUY LOCAL

As much as possible, buy local produce and other goods. The fewer miles your fruits and vegetables travel, the less energy is used for refrigeration and transportation. Whenever possible, select organic produce. The pesticides used to kill pests also kill the organisms that help keep carbon dioxide in the soil.



## 9. STAND TALL



Yes, your individual actions do add up! But we won't be successful in reducing global warming pollution without strong federal leadership. These changes will come about *only if you act*. You can do a lot to press local and state government, and Congress to curb global warming. Stay informed, write letters to your leaders, raise the issue at Town Hall or district meetings, and support candidates who promise to take the aggressive and farsighted actions necessary to curb global warming. You can stay informed and take action by signing up to our E-Activist list, [www.audubonaction.org](http://www.audubonaction.org).

## 10. CUT EMISSIONS IN YOUR YARD

Gasoline mowers are big polluters and greenhouse gas emitters. In one hour, a conventional lawn mower produces as much pollution as 40 late-model cars driving for the same amount of time. Try a manual or cordless electric mower, or be sure to tune up and maintain your gas mower so it runs with fewer emissions. Reduce the amount of lawn you need to mow by planting native species of ground covers, plants and



wildflowers, or vegetables – that's better for birds too! Plant trees for shade, CO2 absorption and improved air quality. Water Less. Mulch gardens with pesticide free clippings. Take your yard organic and eliminate chemical inputs of pesticides and fertilizers. Nitrous oxide, a byproduct of nitrogen-based fertilizers, is a potent greenhouse gas.