

Actions to Reduce Emissions in Your Household

Action items are described below which members of your household can undertake in order to reduce the GHG emissions associated with your household transportation and home energy use.

Transportation

Use Cruise Control

Cruise control gives you better mileage.

Group Errands Together

If you have more than one errand, try to group them together and do them all in one trip. This will save you time and gas. This helps mitigate climate change because it helps to make sure that cars are driven less and used efficiently.

Buy a Fuel-Efficient Car

Obviously, buying a new car is a big investment. But, if you are planning a purchase of a new car, carefully examine and compare the fuel efficiency of each vehicle. Not only will it reduce your carbon footprint, it will reduce the amount of money that you may spend on fuel for the whole lifetime of the car.

Telecommute

Many employers have a telecommuting policy that may allow employees to work from home one or more days a week. Find out whether your employer has a telecommuting policy, and take advantage of it. This will save gas and the time that you would normally spend commuting. And it helps mitigate climate change by reducing the amount of fossil fuels burned for transportation.

Carpool

Many trips, especially the daily commute, can be made by carpooling. You can find someone you work with that lives near you to take turns driving to and from work. You may even be able to carpool to events and to go shopping. This will reduce the number of cars on the road and reduce the amount of money you spend on gas.

Travel by Bicycle

Traveling short distances by bicycle saves money and is a quick and easy way to get some exercise.

Travel by Walking

Walking short distances for errands or short commutes will save you money and create an opportunity for exercise.

Get a Tune-Up

Your car will be most fuel-efficient when all of its parts are functioning at peak efficiency. Get a regular tune-up to make sure your car is operating properly.

Use Seasonal Tires

Make sure to use snow tires in the winter, and take them off in the summer. Seasonal tires are designed to make the most of typical road conditions to improve engine efficiency.

Don't Idle

Idling your car creates unnecessary emissions. When waiting in your car for periods longer than 30 seconds, shut the engine off.

Reduce Drag

Remove accessories (like bike and ski racks) and baggage from the outside of the vehicle. This will reduce aerodynamic drag on the car and improve its fuel efficiency. Gradual starters

Maintain Tire Pressure

Check your tire pressure often, perhaps several times a year. Low tire pressure will seriously reduce your car's fuel efficiency. A regular check is quick to do, and easy to fix if you find low pressure. And it will make sure that you aren't unnecessarily wasting money on extra gas because of inefficient fuel use.

Home Energy

Shut Off Your Lights

Many of us have the habit of leaving lights on when we leave a room. This extra lighting doesn't benefit you and even costs you on your energy bill. Make a habit of shutting off the lights as you move between rooms.

Switch to Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs

Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs are x% more energy-efficient than incandescent light bulbs.

Programmable Thermostat

A programmable thermostat will automatically change the temperature.

Seal off Unused Rooms

Why heat rooms that you don't use? Close the heating vents and firmly close the windows and doors in the room. You may want to fill the cracks around the adjoining doors. You will be heating a smaller area in your house, which would naturally require smaller energy demands.

Seal Off Air Leaks

Your house may be exchanging air with the outside through cracks and improperly sealed areas around windows and doors. Find leakages in the building envelope and thoroughly caulk and seal these leaks. Maintaining your building envelope will make heating your house more efficient.

Seal your Fireplace

Your fireplace opens your house to the outside air. Sealing off your fireplace will maintain the building envelope and make heating your house more efficient.

Keep Your Air Conditioner in the Shade

An air conditioner in the sun will heat up over the day, which will have to work harder to cool the house. Shading your air conditioner will improve its efficiency.

Adjust Your Air Conditioner Thermostat

Do you run your air conditioner till the air is ice-cold? Adjust your thermostat so that temperatures in your house are comfortable, but not cool, as it needs to be. Even changing your thermostat by 2°C will make a difference in saving energy.

Turn Down Your Water Heater

Often, the thermostat on your water heater is set very high, maintaining your water at a temperature much higher than you would ever use. You can permanently set your water heater's temperature safely as low as 55°C (130°F). Likely, you won't notice the difference at all as you continue to use hot water. This will save energy and, therefore, save you money.

Shut Off Your Water Heater When You're Gone

Your water heater requires a lot of energy to keep your water hot in the event you will want to use it. If you're leaving for a vacation or a business trip, consider shutting off your water heater before you leave so that you won't waste energy maintaining hot water in your house.

Unplug Your Electronic Devices

When your electronic devices are turned off, they still draw power from the grid. So, if you can unplug your devices when you are not using them you'll be saving energy. Unplugging every device in your house before you go on vacation is an especially good opportunity to save energy.

Turn Off your Computer and TV

Many of us have picked up the habit of leaving the TV or computer on when we're not using it. Make sure to shut these off when you're done with them.

Purchase Energy-Efficient Appliances and Electronics

If you're about to purchase a new dishwasher, microwave, computer, printer, toaster, washing machine, dryer, or other appliance, consider purchasing an energy efficient one. You can spot the energy efficient choices by the accompanying EnergyStar® label. These appliances will likely save you money in the long run by saving you money on energy bills.

Lower Your Thermostat

Often you can re-adjust your thermostat to a few degrees lower without noticing a significant difference in comfort levels. This slight change, however, saves plenty of energy.

Change Your Air Conditioning Filter

Cleaning and replacing your air conditioning filter will help your air conditioner work properly. A clogged filter will make your air conditioner work harder and reduce its energy efficiency.

Insulate Your Water Heater

You can improve your water heater's efficiency by insulating it. Wrap your water heater in an insulation blanket to avoid unnecessary heat loss. This is especially important for older water heaters.

Cover Your Pots While Cooking

Always make sure to cover your pots while you're cooking. This will retain heat within the pot. Food will cook faster, shortening the time in which you'll use power.

Don't Pre-heat Your Oven

It isn't necessary to pre-heat most modern ovens. Except for occasions when you may be baking, pre-heating the oven will not benefit you; rather, it will just use extra energy.

Use Cloth Diapers

Over its production and use, a cloth diaper will use less energy and resources than the production and use of disposable diapers. Consider replacing disposable diapers with cloth diapers to save energy and gain from many other benefits.