



EXERCISING CARBON CONSCIENCE: PERSONAL ACTION

Simple ways to behave that help reduce carbon emissions

1. Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle

Reducing, reusing, and recycling in your home helps to minimize the energy it takes to extract resources, and manufacture and dispose of more goods.

- **Recycle** your newspapers, beverage containers, paper and other goods.
- **Use products in recyclable containers** and use items that can be repaired or reused.
- **Support recycling markets** by buying products made from recycled materials,
- **Use recycled products**; they consume less energy to manufacture than products made from completely new materials. Save two pounds of carbon for every 20 recycled glass bottles. Repurposing recycled paper saves trees that can then continue to remove carbon from the atmosphere in their natural growth cycle.

2. Sustainable Eating

- **Eat local.** The distance your supermarket food travels to reach the shelves uses transport energy. A wine delivered from the other side of the world burns fossil fuels the entire trip. Shop at local farmers markets; buy local products.
- **Eat less meat.** According to Time Magazine, 4-9-07, the international meat industry generates roughly 18% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, even more than transportation.

3. Sustainable landscaping

- **Plant native trees.** Trees absorb carbon dioxide from the air and use it as their energy source, producing oxygen for us to breathe. A tree-shaded house can reduce its air conditioning needs and save 200 to 2,000 pounds of carbon over the tree's lifetime.
- **Use a push mower.** It consumes no fossil fuels and emits no greenhouse gases. If you do use a power mower, make sure it is a mulching mower to reduce grass clippings.
- **Compost** your food and yard waste. See EPA's GreenScapes program for tips on how to improve and manage your lawn or garden.

4. Sustainable water use

Municipal water systems require a lot of energy to purify and distribute water to households. Saving water, especially hot water, is energy efficient. Look for products with EPA's WaterSense label.

- **Irrigate** lawn or landscape only when needed and during the coolest part of the day.
- **Save little bits of water** all day while shaving or brushing teeth. .Repair toilet and faucet leaks. A leaky toilet can waste 200 gallons of water per day. .

5. Sustainable power use

Green power is environmentally friendly electricity that is generated from renewable energy sources such as wind and the sun. There are two ways to use green power: you can buy green power and you can modify your house to generate green power.

- **Buy renewable energy.** Electricity generation produces 40 percent of carbon emissions from the United States. A growing number of utilities generate electricity from renewable energy sources using solar, windmill and other technologies. If your utility offers renewable energy, buy it. If not, ask them about why they don't.
- **Generate renewable energy:** Consider installing solar panels. Research incentives for renewable energy in your state and water and power company.

6. Sustainable household

- **Heat and Cool smartly.** Heating and air conditioning draw more than half of the energy that a US home uses. Turn down the heat or AC. Install a programmable thermostat. Clean air filters regularly and tune your heating and cooling equipment annually with a licensed contractor.
- **Change a light bulb.** Replace the conventional bulbs in your 5 most frequently used light fixtures with bulbs that have the ENERGY STAR. If all US households did this, the equivalent of emissions from nearly 10 million cars would vanish.
- **Look for ENERGY STAR qualified products**
When buying new products, such as appliances for your home, look for more than 50 ENERGY STAR product categories, including lighting, home electronics, heating and cooling equipment and appliances.
- **Seal and insulate your home**
A home energy auditor can evaluate the over-all energy efficiency of your home. The biggest leaks are usually found in the attic and basement. Seal and insulate any ducts. If you replace windows, choose ENERGY STAR qualified windows.

7. Sustainable travel

- **Walk or bike instead of driving.** In the US, automobiles produce over 20 percent of total carbon emissions. Walk or bike to save one pound of carbon per mile.
- **Teleconference instead of flying.** Meet by telephone or videoconference. Airplanes produce 12 percent of transportation sector emissions.
- **Inflate your tires** for better gas mileage.. Check your tire inflation monthly. Save 300 pounds of carbon dioxide for every 10,000 miles you drive.

8. Talk it up

Tell family and friends that energy efficiency is vital for the environment, easy on their wallets, and simple to act on. <http://www.worldweatherpost.com/2011/01/09/youtube-eddsworld-climate-change/>

9. Calculate your personal "Carbon Footprint"

<http://www.whatsmycarbonfootprint.com/calculate.htm>