

## Act to Save our Planet

We all contribute to global warming. We can all be part of the solution.

Global warming is a reality. The release of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the combustion of oil, gas, and coal (fossil fuels), will make the earth warmer in the coming years. The only scientific debate now is how much warmer the earth will get and what the consequences will be. Experts agree that unless we achieve major reductions in fossil-fuel consumption in the near future, the rise in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> will likely lead to catastrophic planetary changes. These changes include rising ocean levels, causing loss of coastal land, and drastic weather fluctuations, resulting in major droughts and devastating storms.

We can make a difference! In order to avoid the most catastrophic of changes, we must all take immediate action to decrease our individual and collective “carbon footprint.”

## Consider

Approximately 19 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> is released for every gallon of gas burned while driving a car, SUV or truck.

Almost 50% of the power used to generate electricity in NJ comes from consumption of fossil fuels (and > 50% for most other states). Every time a light is turned on, or a LED glares red, or the air conditioner runs, a power plant somewhere in the US has spewed out CO<sub>2</sub> in generating the required electricity.

Each molecule of CO<sub>2</sub> released from the combustion of fossil fuels remains in the atmosphere for approximately 100 years. We must start decreasing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions *today* in order to prevent a planetary catastrophe at the end of this century.

## Here are some actions that you can take to conserve energy and reduce your carbon footprint:



### Switch to compact fluorescent bulbs (CFBs).\*

- Converting a single conventional 60W incandescent bulb to a 13W CFB can save:
  - \$30 in electric costs over its lifetime.
  - 10 conventional bulbs from being produced, transported, and discarded in a landfill.
  - 220 lbs. of coal from being burned.
  - 450 lbs. of CO<sub>2</sub> from reaching the air.

- If every household in the United States changed one incandescent bulb to a CFB the effect on CO<sub>2</sub> release would be equivalent to removing approximately 1 million cars from the road.
- If every household in the United States replaced the 5 most heavily used light bulbs with a CFB 17 power plants could be shut down.
- CFB are sold at local hardware and major retail stores.
- Visit [www.fightglobalwarming.com/page.cfm?tagID=608](http://www.fightglobalwarming.com/page.cfm?tagID=608) to learn more about the different kinds of CFBs and which ones are right for your home,

\*CFBs must be disposed of properly and cannot be discarded as regular or recycled waste. In Essex County call 973-857-2350 for disposal information or visit [www.earth911.org/master.asp](http://www.earth911.org/master.asp).



**Turn off the lights when you leave a room—even for just a minute.**

- Remind all your family members to do the same.



**Support clean energy alternatives.**

- Buy electricity for your home from power generated by alternative energy sources. Through the CleanPower Choice Program you can buy the equivalent amount of electricity generated by solar, wind, and hydro power sources instead of by coal or gas power plants.
  - For more information and to sign up, go to <http://www.njcleanpower.com/html/sign-up.html> or call 800-515-5353.
- Offset your carbon footprint. Visit [www.carbonfund.org/site/](http://www.carbonfund.org/site/) or [terrapass.com/](http://terrapass.com/) or [nativeenergy.com/](http://nativeenergy.com/) for more information.



**Turn the air conditioner off when you leave the house.**



**Unplug electronics not in use.**

- Stop phantom energy waste.
  - Appliances and electronic devices used energy even when they are turned off, unless they are **unplugged**.
- For convenience, use power strips and turn them off when equipment is not in use.



**Replace old appliances.**

- Select the most energy-efficient models available
- Look for the Energy Star symbol (visit [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov) for more information)



**Adjust your thermostat.**

- Setting the thermostat just 2 degrees lower in the winter and 2 degrees higher in the summer will prevent the release of 2000 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.



### **Check your water heater setting.**

- Keeping the thermostat no higher than 120<sup>0</sup> F prevents the release of 550 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.



### **Cut your lawn with a green lawn mower**

- A hand pushed non-powered lawn mower will emit zero pounds of carbon dioxide per year. Use an electric lawn mower instead of a gas powered mower if you must use a powered lawn mower.



### **Use less hot water.**

- Use a low-flow showerhead, which will prevent the release of 350 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.
- Wash clothes in cold water to prevent the release of at least 500 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.
- Take shorter showers.



### **Drive less and smarter.**

- Walk, bike, carpool, or take mass transportation more often.
- Choose a fuel-efficient car to drive.
- Consider a hybrid car for your next purchase.
- Avoid high-speed driving and jack-rabbit starts, which increase both fuel use and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.



### **Keep automobile tires inflated.**

- Maintain optimally inflated tires to improve gas mileage by more than 3% . .



### **Help to protect trees and forests.**

- Plant a tree: each mature tree removes 2,000 lbs of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> per year.
- Use recycled paper for your printer and other paper needs.
- Print on two sides or use the blank side of pages you no longer need.
- Buy lumber and wood products that are FSC certified (visit [www.fscus.org/](http://www.fscus.org/) for more information).
- Buy Fair Trade coffee that is grown on small farms that do not cut down forests. Fair Trade coffee can be bought at Terra (10 Church Street) and at Beans Choice (42 Church Street) and is sold at Starbucks but you need to specifically request it.



### **Buy minimally packaged goods.**

- Choose bulk whenever possible and avoid single-serve packaging.
- Use cloth or reusable bags when shopping.



### **Recycle, Recycle, Recycle**

- By recycling just ½ of your household waste, you can prevent the release of 2,400 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.

## Here are some suggestions for taking action in the larger fight against global warming



### **Watch *An Inconvenient Truth***

- See this groundbreaking documentary, if you haven't already.
- Encourage your family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues to see it,
- Buy it as a gift—your friends and family will thank you for enriching their perspective.



### **Sign on-line petitions.**

- Join the Stop Global Warming Virtual March and become part of the movement to demand real solutions to global warming now. Go to [www.stopglobalwarming.org](http://www.stopglobalwarming.org).



### **Write letters encouraging others to take these personal and community actions.**

- To the editor of your local or regional newspaper.
- To your state legislators and Governor Corzine.
- To your congressional representatives and senators.
- To the President of the United States.



### **Invite a Climate Change Messenger to speak to your organization or your children's school.**

- In Northern NJ, Gray Russell, the Montclair Environmental Coordinator, has received training by Al Gore's Climate Project to make this presentation.
- For other Climate Messengers in NJ or elsewhere, check with [www.theclimateproject.org/](http://www.theclimateproject.org/) for trained speakers.



### **Get involved in Montclair!**

- Join the BlueWaveNJ Energy and Global Warming working group by emailing Michael Yellin at [yell@comcast.net](mailto:yell@comcast.net).

## Check out these LINKS for more information:

- [www.stopglobalwarming.org](http://www.stopglobalwarming.org).
- [www.njcleanpower.org](http://www.njcleanpower.org)
- [www.environmentnewjersey.org](http://www.environmentnewjersey.org)
- [www.theclimateproject.org/](http://www.theclimateproject.org/)
- [www.worldchanging.com](http://www.worldchanging.com)
- [www.heatisonline.org/main.cfm](http://www.heatisonline.org/main.cfm)
- [www.ucsusa.org/](http://www.ucsusa.org/)
- [www.environmentaldefense.org/home.cfm](http://www.environmentaldefense.org/home.cfm)