

10 WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR PERSONAL CARBON EMISSIONS

1. Use compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs) throughout your house and buy LED holiday lights.

The average household uses up to 20% of its energy budget for lighting. By using newer lighting technology, this can be reduced by 50% to 75%. CFLs are initially more expensive to purchase than regular incandescent bulbs but will last up to 10 times longer. They are 75% more efficient than traditional lightbulbs and pay for themselves in energy savings over their lifetime.



If every American household replaced their 5 most frequently used lights with bulbs that have earned the Energy Star rating (CFLs), it would save almost \$8 billion each year in energy costs. It would be the equivalent of preventing the greenhouse gases from nearly 10 million cars!!

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=lighting.pr_lighting

It's a myth that fluorescent lamps should be left on because they require more energy to turn on and off repeatedly. As a general rule of thumb, if you leave a room for more than 15 minutes, turn off a CFL. If the cost of electricity is high in your area, this time could be as low as 5 minutes.

For more info:

- http://www.consumerenergycenter.org/myths/fluorescent_lights.html
- http://www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/your_home/lighting_daylighting/index.cfm/mytopic=12280

CFLs contain a small amount of mercury and must be properly disposed.

For more info go to:

- http://www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/promotions/change_light/downloads/Fact_Sheet_Mercury.pdf
- <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2007/05/070518-cfls-bulbs.html>

For more information on lighting:

- <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/lighting.html>
- <http://www.consumerenergycenter.org/lighting/bulbs.html>

2. Turn down your thermostat in the winter and up in the summer. Install a programmable thermostat.

For most homes, over 50% of energy consumption is for heating and cooling. During the winter, adjusting your thermostat down 10°F to 15°F for at least eight hours can save you about 10% on your energy bill. Set your thermostat at 68° F while awake and then drop it the 10°F to 15°F when asleep or not at home. In the summer, follow the same strategy. Lower the thermostat to 78° F only when you are at home and need cooling.



- http://www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/your_home/space_heating_cooling/index.cfm/mytopic=12720

3. **Unplug chargers and turn off computers, monitors and other electronics when not in use. Beware of electronics and appliances that use power even when turned off.**

One gentleman determined that it cost him \$140 annually to leave his computer on 24/7! By modifying his habits, he was able to cut that in half.

<http://tech.msn.com/guides/green/article.aspx?cp-documentid=5952829>1=10832>

In idle and standby modes, computers, printers, speakers and other electronic items are still sucking juice. If they aren't being used, just turn them off. With today's hardware, it's a myth that it's better to leave on computer on than it is to turn it on and off between use.

Be wary of the phantom! Many electronics continue to use power even when they are powered off. VCRs, TVs, stereos, computers and kitchen appliances are all capable of pulling these "phantom loads". In the average home, 75% of the electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while the products are turned off. "Standby" energy consumption can be equivalent to that of a 75 or 100 watt light bulb running continuously.

The answer to phantom loads? Plug electronics and appliances into a power strip. This gives you the option of plugging something in only when you use it as well cutting all power by turning off the main switch.



For more info on computers and gadgets go to:

- http://www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/your_home/appliances/index.cfm/mytopic=10040
- <http://www.nrdc.org/air/energy/genergy/easy.asp>
- http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/home_office.html
- <http://www.epeat.net/ReferThisSite.aspx> green computers

4. **Buy Energy Star rated products.**

When looking for new household products or even a new home, look for the Energy Star rating. In 2006, Energy Star rated items decreased carbon emissions equivalent to 25 million cars and decreased utility bills by \$14 billion. For more info and to look up a product, go to:

<http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=home.index>



5. **Hang dry your laundry instead of using a clothes dryer. Wash only full loads and in cold water.**

A clothes dryer is one of the top three energy consuming appliances. On average, it costs \$85 year to operate.

Using a drying rack or clothes line will not only save money and reduce your carbon footprint but will:

- Help clothes last longer and prevent shrinking.
- Produce less static cling.
- Provide a free humidifier during the dry winter months.
- Give the freshest smelling sheets and pillowcases when dried outside.



About 80-85% of the energy used in washing clothes is for heating the water. Wash in cold and decrease your energy consumption.

For more laundry tips and information, go to:

- <http://www.fixingtheplanet.com/comprehensive-guide-green-laundry>
- <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/laundry.html>
- <http://www.consumerenergycenter.org/home/appliances/dryers.html>
- <http://www.nrdc.org/air/energy/genenergy/easy.asp>

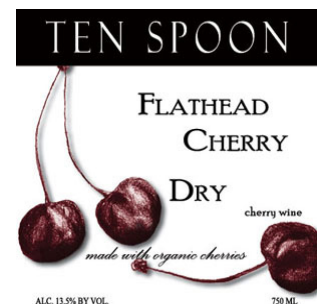
6. **Eat and drink locally produced foods and beverages.**

Buying locally produced items not only keeps money in your local economy, it reduces carbon emissions. Most produce in the US travels 1500 miles from the farm to your plate. A typical meal contains ingredients from 5 countries outside of the US.

Support farmers' markets and local farms. To find one in your area go to: <http://www.localharvest.org/>

For more info on nationwide/global food transportation and its consequences go to:

- <http://www.nrdc.org/media/2007/071121.asp>
- <http://www.nrdc.org/health/effects/camiles/contents.asp>



7. **Drink tap water instead of bottled water.**

Facts about tap water:

It's freeeeeeee!!! Bottled water costs 1,000 times more per gallon than tap water.

Tap water isn't any less clean or safe than the less regulated bottled water. <http://www.nrdc.org/thisgreenlife/0709.asp>

Tap water doesn't require packaging, transporting and bottle disposal. Bottling and shipping water is the least efficient method of water delivery ever invented! Each year, 1.5 million barrels of oil are used to make the plastic bottles. The majority of these end up in land fills; in 2002, only 11% were recycled!



For more info:

http://www.pbs.org/pov/borders/2004/water/water_bottle.html

<http://www.thegreenguide.com/products/Kitchen/Water%20Filters>

8. **Stop unwanted catalogs and other junk mail.**

53 million trees are required to produce the 19 billion catalogs Americans receive each year. The energy required to produce the paper is enough to power 1.5 million homes for one year and equals the annual carbon emissions of 2 million cars.

Stop unwanted catalogs at <http://www.catalogchoice.org/>

On average, someone receives only 1.5 personal letters compared to almost 11 pieces of junk mail each week!! 100 million trees are used each year to produce junk mail.

To opt out of prescreened credit cards and insurance offers call 1-888-567-8688 or go to <http://www.optoutprescreen.com>.

To stop approximately 75% of all national mailings from coming to your home, contact the Direct Marketing Association and have them remove your name. Download the online form at <http://www.dmaconsumers.org/cgi/offmailinglist>

For more info on junk mail go to:

<http://www.dmachoice.org/consumerassistance.php>

http://www.nativeforest.org/stop_junk_mail/nfn_junk_mail_guide.htm

https://www.directmail.com/directory/mail_preference/

9. **Reduce, reuse, regift, and recycle.**

Before making a purchase, ask if you really need it. If you do, try to buy the most eco friendly and durable item you can find. BYOB (Bring Your Own Bag) to carry your purchases. If everyone did this, 12 million barrels of oil would be not be used to make plastic bags.

Recycle those peanuts! Many mailing/shipping stores will take your extra packaging material such as styrofoam peanuts.

To locate recycling services in your area go to:

<http://earth911.org/>

For rechargeable batteries and cell phone recycling:

<http://www.rbrc.org/call2recycle/dropoff/index.php>

<http://www.epa.gov/cellphone/cell-recycling-locations.htm>

Computers and other electronics:

<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/recycle/ecycling/donate.htm>

Ink cartridges for printers:

http://www.idealbite.com/tiplibrary/archives/think_ink_recycling_cartridges/

Appliances: <http://www.recycle-steel.org/appliances.html>

General recycling info: <http://www.epa.gov/msw/reduce.htm>



10. Drive less, drive slower and drive smarter.

Transportation accounts for nearly 30% of yearly CO₂ emissions in the U.S.

http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/solutions/common-sense-on-climate-change-solution-1-make-better-cars-and-suvs.html



Drive less - carpool, use mass transit, walk, bike

Drive conservatively - minimize quick starts and stops, accelerate slowly

Drive slower - above 60 mph, fuel economy begins to decrease quickly

Don't idle for more than a minute - stop using the drive-thrus!

Minimize numerous short trips

Use cruise control

Keep your car tuned up

Buy a greener car

Pump up your tires



For more info on maximizing fuel economy:

- <http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/cars/new-cars/resource-center/fuel-economy/a-guide-to-stretching-your-fuel-dollars/index.htm>
- <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/drive.shtml>
- http://www.sierraclub.org/globalwarming/gas_savers/

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