

## The Initiative:

United Nations 1997 - More than 160 countries ratified the Kyoto Treaty with an objective of reducing greenhouse gases that cause our climate change. United States and Australia are two that refrained from the ratifying the Treaty.

## Determine Your Impact:

<http://green.yahoo.com/calculator/>

or

<http://www.climatecrisis.net/takeaction/carboncalculator/>

## What you can do at Home:

- Keep damper closed when fireplace not in use. This minimizes the loss of conditioned air.
- Keep blinds closed on sunny days to keep heat out (especially important on windows or glass doors receiving direct sunlight )
- Almost half of the energy we use in our homes goes to heating and cooling. Just by moving your thermostats down 2° in winter and up 2° in summer, you could save about 2,000 pounds of carbon dioxide a year with this simple adjustment.
- Replace a regular incandescent light bulb with a compact fluorescent light bulb (cfl)
- Plant a tree - It's good for the air, the land, can shade your house and save on cooling (plant on the west side of your home), and they can also improve the value of your property.
- Buy recycled paper product
- Whenever possible, dry clothes outside in good weather. Sunlight is free!
- Turn off the lights and appliances when leaving a room
- Use toaster ovens, crock-pots, and microwaves when cooking small to medium sized meals; they use less energy than the stove or oven.
- Take shorter showers
- Go paperless on Online Statements
- Give it away! recycle at freecycle.com
- Use hair dryers on "low" setting to save energy and protect your hair
- Fix all leaky faucets and Toilets
- Unplug things that glow in the dark
- The average adult receives 41 pounds of junk mail each year. Stop your junk mail and protect the environment at 41pounds.org
- Close shades and windows during the day
- Let hot food cold before putting it in the refrigerator
- Smaller pans takes less energy to heat up
- Food cook more quickly when a lid is placed on top to trap the steam
- Use energy-saving cycles on a dish washer
- Use cold water for laundry
- Wash clothes in full loads
- Install a water saving shower-head to save water
- Install rain-water collection system

## At Work:

- Encourage employees to use electronic means to communicate
- Make double-sided copies
- Use "draft" mode for printing saves more than 50% of the ink compare to "normal" mode
- Printer cartridges can be traded for discounts. Collecting used ones for recycling can be a

profitable fund raiser for groups

- Seek out and support local farmers markets
- Turn off computers at night - By turning off your computer instead of leaving it in sleep mode, you can save 40 watt-hours per day. That adds up to 4 cents a day, or \$14 per year. If you don't want to wait for your computer to start up, set it to turn on automatically a few minutes before you get to work, or boot up while you're pouring your morning cup 'o joe!
- Rethink bottled water - 90% of the bottled water are not recycled
- Use both sides of paper

On the Road (improving gas mileage and reduce carbon emissions):

- Reduce unnecessary loading weight
- Properly inflate the tires
- Carpool
- Ride a bike whenever you can
- Keep your car tuned up
  - 1) Adjust tire pressure
  - 2) Replace Spark-plugs
  - 3) clean fuel injectors

These regular maintenance helps improve fuel efficiency and reduces emissions.

- Before you leave home, adjust the thermostats on your air conditioning unit and hot water heater
- Hypermiling, a term coined by the Washington Post, describes methods of increasing drivers' gas mileage by altering driving habits such as vehicle acceleration, allowing drivers to save on gas. Studies have shown that by altering driving habits alone can contribute up to 30% difference in gas milage. You can save more gas and more energy by
  - 1)Avoid rapid acceleration
  - 2)Maintain a smooth, legal pace
  - 3)Anticipate upcoming stops and starts
- Purchase energy efficient cars with 41+ MPG
- Slow down. For most vehicles, fuel efficiency begins to drop rapidly at 60 mph. Driving within the speed limit can improve fuel efficiency by up to 23 percent.
- Take it easy. Slamming on the brakes and accelerating too quickly can reduce fuel efficiency up to 33 percent.
- Get a tune-up. Routine maintenance can up fuel efficiency by 4 percent, while fixing more serious problems can improve efficiency up to 40 percent.
- Plan your routes for any destination ahead of time to avoid unnecessary trips

Investment:

- Construction companies should join the Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design(LEED), a nationally accepted standard developed by the US green Building Council (USGBC). LEED provides strategies for sustainable site development, water savings, and energy efficiency. The standard promotes elegant design, increases profitability without sacrificing the environment.
- Home Builders should join the federal Energy Star program, American Institute of Architects and Green Building Council which call for sustainable, efficient, energy saving practices in the construction

Home Building:

- Find a builder who recycles
- Avoid meandering pipes, choose pipe routes that come directly from the source to increase efficiency
- Insulate your home better with spray foam insulation. Use the foam to fill every crevice, keeping

- hot or cool air inside the building
- Choose durable, long-lasting material for your construction

#### Shopping:

- Buy or make reusable bags to go shopping with
  - Terracycle, Target, and Newsweek teamed up to create a Retote bags from used Target plastic bags

#### Online:

- Search with [www.ecocho.com](http://www.ecocho.com) - A new Yahoo search engine that fights climate change by growing 2 trees for every 1000 searches made.
- earth911.com can help you find recycling resources in your area.

#### High Tech Trash:

- Computers can go to underfunded schools
- Find donation bins at electronics stores - [recyclewirelessphones.com](http://recyclewirelessphones.com)
- There are two prices on an appliance: The price of buying it and the price you pay for the energy to run it. Next time when you purchase appliances, choose ENERGY STAR. ENERGY STAR qualified products meets tough federal criteria for energy efficiency.

#### Beauty Products:

Stumped by claims of "organic," "natural," "biodegradable," "cruelty-free," cosmetic products? Here's a brief rundown of what each of them meant:

- Organic: In 2005 USDA allowed cosmetic manufacturers to label qualifying products with an USDA Organic seal. Products bearing the seal must be made by at least 95% of organic ingredients, for example, plants grown without the use of pesticides. Products with only 70% of organic content may not use the seal. However, they may be labeled "made with organic ingredients." Products with less than 70% of organic ingredients may not use the word "organic" anywhere on the packaging.
- Natural: Consumers naturally assume these products do not contain ingredients that would pose health risks, but don't be surprised to find petrochemicals along with olive oil in your cosmetic products. So far the FDA (US Food and Drug Administration ) does not have a clear guideline regulating the label of the "natural" standard. Many companies have now taken the matters into their own hands in defining the term in the world of cosmetics.
- Cruelty-free: Animal rights organizations offer the use of these logos to cosmetic companies who comply with their standards as a testament of animal-friendliness. Suppliers of these products must sign a compliance declaration , and Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics conducts routine checks to ensure manufacturers live up to their promise. Look for the CCIC's leaping bunny next when shopping for your cosmetics.
- Biodegradable: The term certainly sounds eco-friendly. Federal Trade Commission created this label in junction with the EPA for products that should decompose "into elements found in nature within a reasonably short period of time." However, the FTC doesn't review the products before they're sold. A violation may go unnoticed until a complaint is filed.
- Choose products in recycled-content or recyclable packaging.
- Buy from companies that have signed the Compact for Safe Cosmetics (see [safecosmetics.org](http://safecosmetics.org))

for more detail)

- Look for 3rd party certifications like BDIH, Ecocert, Australia's Organic Food Chain or even USDA Certified Organic, which is now applicable to personal care products.

List of Kitchen Cleaners:

The best way to ensure a cleaner won't harm your health or the environment is to make your own!

- All Purpose cleaner
  1. 1/2 cup borax ( look for borax in your grocer's laundry aisle)
  2. 1 gallon of hot water
  3. mix in pail or use smaller amounts in a spray bottle (1/8 cup borax to 1 qt. hot water) Dissolve the borax completely and wipe surfaces clean.
- Glass Cleaner
  1. 1/4 cup white vinegar to 1 teaspoon lemon juice
  2. 2+ cups of water
  3. fill a clean spray bottle with water and either white vinegar or lemon juice; wipe surfaces with an old newspaper.

The following is a list of cleaner brands that are relatively environmentally sound:

- Ecover All Purpose Cleaner
- Seventh Generation Natural All Purpose Cleaner
- Method All Purpose Cleaner
- Clorox Green Works Natural All Purpose Cleaner
- Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day All Purpose Cleaner
- Biokleen Spray & Wipe All Purpose Cleaner
- Vermont Soap Organics Liquid Sunshine Spray & Wipe All Purpose Cleaner

Want to be more informed about environmental choices in your daily lives?

- Checkout [thegreeguide.com](http://thegreeguide.com)
- Location of other recycling organizations [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org)
- <http://greenlivingideas.com/>
- Take the GreenIQ Quiz [www.greeniq.com](http://www.greeniq.com) will plant a tree for you