



## What Can I Do? - Taking Community Action on Climate Change in Hamilton



Hamilton



## When We're At Home...

- ✓ Monitor your energy bills – when you notice an increase in your bills, you may be able to tie it to something you're doing at home and make changes to save money and reduce energy consumption.
- ✓ Turn off lights when not needed or use timers, occupancy sensors, or natural light when possible.
- ✓ Turning off equipment and unplug when not in use to discourage phantom power usage. Turn on energy efficient settings on equipment ex. Eco Print, EnergyStar setting for monitors, air-dry setting on dishwashers, etc.
- ✓ Insulate old hot water tanks and piping and turn down the temperature setting on your water heater to cut energy consumption. It's usually set to 60 degrees Celsius and can safely be reduced to 54 degrees Celsius.
- ✓ Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows.
- ✓ Turning down/up thermostats or use a programmable thermostat to reduce heating and cooling requirements seasonally or while buildings are unoccupied.
- ✓ Close your drapes and blinds at night to keep heat trapped in the winter and open then during the day to capture heat in the winter.
- ✓ Close your drapes and blinds in the day to reduce heat inside during the summer. When closed and lowered on a sunny window, reflective blinds (white or near white) are capable of reducing heat gain by 45 percent.
- ✓ Check your home insurance to see what you are covered for in extreme weather events or flooding.
- ✓ Keep informed of local weather and prepare for emergency events.
- ✓ Have a back-up energy/power source in case of extreme weather or blackouts.
- ✓ Create an Emergency Plan and a Household Emergency Kit..
- ✓ Check your lot grading to ensure that water flows away from your home and basement properly.
- ✓ Consider taking public transit, biking, walking carpooling or signing up for a carshare or bikeshare membership to reduce your personal transportation emissions.
- ✓ Plant a vegetable garden to produce more local food and save money at the grocery store.
- ✓ Plant trees or plant fruit trees to reduce emissions, provide shade, increase water retention and local produce.
- ✓ Compost organic waste in your garden or with a worm composter (vermicomposter) if you live in an apartment.
- ✓ Take shorter showers and turn off the tap while brushing your teeth or soaping up your hands to use less water.
- ✓ Fix any leaks in taps or showers to reduce wasting water.
- ✓ Always completely fill your laundry machines and dishwashers before turning on a load and use energy-saving cycle settings.
- ✓ Rinse and wash clothes with cold water and hang clothes to dry.
- ✓ Install a rain barrel or cistern to harvest free rainwater and use for irrigation.

## When We're At Work...

- ✓ Make a Climate Plan for your place of work that covers energy, water, transportation, and waste. Track your actions.
- ✓ Have an Emergency Plan in case of emergencies and extreme weather events.
- ✓ Have a back-up energy/power source in case of extreme weather.
- ✓ Find out what insurance coverage you have and to what types of events due to extreme weather.
- ✓ Undertake an energy audit and identify better energy management practices.
- ✓ Turn off lights when not needed or use timers, occupancy sensors, or natural light when possible.
- ✓ Turning off equipment and unplug when not in use to discourage phantom power usage. If you can't turn off your computer, just turn off the screen as it uses over 50% of the total energy needed to run a computer.
- ✓ Turn on energy efficient settings on equipment ex. Eco Print, EnergyStar setting for monitors, air-dry setting on dishwashers, etc.
- ✓ Turning down/up thermostats or use a programmable thermostat to reduce heating and cooling requirements seasonally or while buildings are unoccupied
- ✓ Monitor your energy bills – when you notice an increase in your bills, you may be able to tie it to something at work and make changes to save money and reduce energy consumption.
- ✓ Consider taking public transit, biking, walking carpooling or signing up for a carshare or bikeshare membership to reduce your personal transportation emissions.
- ✓ Join Smart Commute to reduce emissions associated with commuting.
- ✓ Monitor fuel consumption in your fleet and personal vehicles – when you notice an increase in your bills, you may need to service your vehicle, put air in your tires, or change your oil.
- ✓ If possible, try working from home one day per week.
- ✓ Pack litterless lunches using containers and reusable bags.
- ✓ Consider permeable pavement for any parking areas and proper grading to allow water to flow through and away from buildings.
- ✓ Fix any leaks in pipes or taps to reduce wasting water.
- ✓ Consider installing showers for employees to encourage active transportation to work.
- ✓ Plant a vegetable garden at your workplace for local produce and donate to food banks or let employees take harvest home for home meals.
- ✓ Plant trees or plant fruit trees to reduce emissions, provide shade, increase water retention and local produce.
- ✓ Undertake a waste audit and identify better waste management practices.
- ✓ Find efficiency in production and consider new products from waste products.
- ✓ Join or create a work waste exchange.
- ✓ Spread the word and engage and reward employees taking action.

## When We're On The Move...

- ✓ Walk or cycle when you can and where you can. If your trip is less than 5km leave the car at home.
- ✓ Take public transit
- ✓ Join a Car Share or Bike Share
- ✓ Organize your errands and shopping trips so that you can make fewer trips.
- ✓ Ride share with others to work
- ✓ If you need a vehicle, purchase a fuel efficient economical vehicle that meets your needs.
- ✓ Don't idle your vehicle, if you plan to be parked for more than 10 seconds switch off your car to save fuel and reduce emissions.
- ✓ Keep informed on weather, road repairs and closures
- ✓ Have an Emergency Car Kit handy
- ✓ Top up your tires regularly and give your bike a thorough maintenance check once a year.
- ✓ Avoid drive-thrus
- ✓ Slow down! For every 10km over 100km/h you drive, you lose approximately 10% of your fuel efficiency
- ✓ When driving on the highway, keeping a steady speed uses less fuel. Accelerate smoothly and avoid hard braking by leaving room between your car and the one in front.
- ✓ Every extra hundred pounds reduces fuel efficiency by up to 2%, so keep your trunk clear of unnecessary items, and in the winter remove all snow and ice.
- ✓ Just one tire under-inflated by 8 psi can increase fuel consumption by 4%, and reduce the life of the tire by 15,000km. Check the pressure once a month.
- ✓ Keeping your vehicle in tune can reduce fuel consumption by up to 15% and smog causing emissions by even more. Follow the schedule in your owners' manual.
- ✓ Monitor fuel consumption in your vehicles – when you notice an increase in your bills, you may need to service your vehicle, put air in your tires, or change your oil.
- ✓ When taking shorter vacation trips, avoid flying on a plane and take a train or bus instead.

## When We're At School....

- ✓ Walk or bike to school or take public transit.
- ✓ When dropping your kids off at school, don't idle your engine. Switch off your car to save fuel and reduce emissions. Plus, all those kids are walking through your cars pollution and emissions on their way into school.
- ✓ Keep informed on weather, road repairs and closures.
- ✓ Make a Climate Plan for your school that covers energy, water, transportation, and waste. Track your actions.
- ✓ Reduce energy usage.
- ✓ Turn off lights when not needed or use timers, occupancy sensors, or natural light when possible.
- ✓ Turn off computers when finished.
- ✓ Start a recycling program in your school.
- ✓ Do a waste audit of your school waste.
- ✓ Reduce waste and reuse whenever you can.
- ✓ Save water by turning off the tap, using rain barrels.
- ✓ Have an Emergency Plan in case of emergencies and extreme weather events.
- ✓ Plant trees or plant fruit trees to reduce emissions, provide shade, increase water retention and local produce.
- ✓ Plant a vegetable garden for local produce.
- ✓ Eat local produce for lunch.
- ✓ Pack litterless lunches using containers and reusable bags.
- ✓ Compost - About 20 per cent of Canada's methane emissions come from landfills.
- ✓ Spread the word – share your Eco Tips with friends and family
- ✓ Do a class project on climate change and what we can do locally.

## When We're Shopping...

- ✓ Bring a list with you to make sure you get what you need.
- ✓ Organize your errands and shopping trips so that you can make fewer trips.
- ✓ Keep informed on weather, road repairs and closures.
- ✓ Buy and support local produce and products.
- ✓ Frequent farmers markets or farms themselves.
- ✓ Consider using a local Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program.
- ✓ Shop for produce that is in season .
- ✓ Don't be picky - Over 30 percent of fruits and vegetables in North America don't even make it onto store shelves because they're not "pretty enough" for picky consumers.
- ✓ Consider going meat-less one or two days a week.
- ✓ Buy food items in bulk, consider dry goods and canning to preserve food longer and have an emergency supply in times of need.
- ✓ Bring reusable shopping bags to reduce waste.
- ✓ Buy and support locally made products.
- ✓ Buy high quality made durable products that do not need to be replaced regularly.
- ✓ Consider reducing waste and packaging when buying products.
- ✓ Consider reused or pre-loved items before buying new.
- ✓ Check out on-line ads, local markets or garage sales for items.
- ✓ Use the library to reduce spending on books and videos.
- ✓ Create or use a tool-library or rent tools when you need tools.
- ✓ Buy Energy-Efficient Products. Look for labels like EnergyStar which highlight energy efficiency.
- ✓ Read labels when you shop and ask questions of merchants – Where is it made? What is it made from?
- ✓ Donate products you no longer need before buying more products.