

# Take Action: Reduce Global Warming

Global warming — caused by greenhouse gas emissions such as carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuel to heat and light buildings and to power vehicles and machinery and from methane released from decomposing solid waste — is a major concern for Rhode Island. Rising global temperatures cause sea-level rise and in Rhode Island it means there is potential for flooding in coastal areas, saltwater contamination of drinking water, extreme weather events and damage to local crops. Every time we drive a car, flip on a light switch, or turn on the heat we release greenhouse gases. You can help reduce global warming by taking action today and making a commitment to practice the tips below.

## Save Energy

### Use less electricity: here are some bright ideas

- Replace incandescent bulbs with more energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulbs
- Use natural sunlight as often as possible
- Buy energy efficient Energy Star to replace major appliances
- Run the dishwasher and washing machine only when full
- Turn off lights when you leave a room
- Use the smaller burners on your electric stove for smaller pans
- Throw your TV out the window (optional)



### Use less energy for heating water

- Insulate your water heater
- Avoid baths—they require much more hot water than showers
- Turn your water heater down to 120°F
- Use warm water in your washing machine for the washing cycle, and cold water for the rinsing cycle
- Install low-flow aerators on shower heads and faucets to reduce hot water usage



### Heat and cool your home/office/school wisely and efficiently

- In the winter, keep your thermostat at 65-68°F and put on a sweater
- Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows, or consider more efficient replacement storm doors and windows
- Insulate your walls and attic. Install an attic fan to vent off hot air in the summer. It will keep the floors below much cooler
- Keep the filters on your air conditioners clean. Check them every year
- Ceiling fans can keep rooms cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter
- Install automatic set back thermostats to save 10-15% on fuel costs
- Use a fan instead of air conditioning

## Save Gas

### Use the car less

- Make a commitment to not drive your car one day a week
- Whenever possible, replace driving with biking or walking. Take advantage of one of RI's Bike Paths, go to <http://www.dot.state.ri.us/WebTran/bikeri.html> for more information



- Use public transportation more often. Call RIPTA for fares and schedules at 781-9400

### Car pool

- Match up work, school, or teammates who live near each other
- Ask your employer to provide incentives, like free parking to encourage car pooling

### Keep your car well maintained

- Tune-ups, properly inflated tires, changing oil and oil filters, proper wheel alignment, and properly adjusted brakes all help improve fuel efficiency and auto safety

### Write your leaders

- Urge them to raise the mile per gallon standards to 45 mpg for cars and 34 mpg for sports utility vehicles and light trucks

### Buy locally

- Food sold in this country travels an average of 1,200 miles, often by truck. Buy local groceries and help reduce gas or diesel emissions. Call RIDEM at 222-2781 for a list of local farmers markets



### Make your next car a fuel efficient one (more than 35 mpg overall).

- Go to [www.fueleconomy.gov](http://www.fueleconomy.gov) for information on fuel-efficient vehicles
- Choose a hybrid vehicle like the Toyota Prius, Honda Insight, and Honda Civic Hybrid and encourage car manufacturers to offer other types of hybrids or alternative fuel vehicles like SUV's and light-duty trucks.

## Reduce Waste

### Recycle and Reuse

- If you don't have curbside recycling, find out about recycling centers in your community
- Reuse things that still have life in them
- There are two sides to every piece of paper. Use it until there's no room left to write
- Recycle through garage sales, donations (like Salvation Army) and giving things away to friends and family
- Start a recycling program in your school/business/church
- Maintain and repair durable products



### Pre-cycle when you shop—reduce waste before you buy

- Buy containers that can be recycled
- Buy products that can be reused. Try to avoid single-use items
- Try to avoid over packaged products
- Buy in bulk whenever possible
- Use 800 numbers often located on packages to encourage manufacturers to reduce excess packaging and find alternatives to disposables

### Stop new junk mail

- Write to Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, PO Box 282, Carmel, NY 10512, and tell them to stop selling your name to mailing list companies

### Compost your yard waste and fruit and vegetable waste

#### Buy recycled products

- There are many recycled paper products for the home and office. Look for items in containers made from recycled materials



#### Reduce waste toxicity

- Learn about and practice organic gardening and eliminate the use of toxic fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides
- Learn about alternatives to household cleaners containing hazardous substances
- Buy ready-made environmentally safe cleaning products
- Trade-in old car batteries when you purchase a new one or bring it to a battery recycler
- Contact your city/town Department of Public Works to dispose of used engine oil & fluids
- Call RI Resource Recovery Corporation at 942-1430 to find out how to dispose of paints, solvents, etc

## Be Green

### Educate yourself and your family on the effects of Greenhouse Gas and Global Climate Change

- Visit the DEM website
- Get involved in the planning process in your local community

### Promote trees

- Maintain trees and shrubs around your home to reduce heating and cooling costs.
- Organize a conservation project, like tree planting, in your community.
- Join organizations, like your local land trust, dedicated to conserving forests and open space.



### Support efforts to promote clean air

- Let your elected officials know that you support legislation to reduce GHG emissions
- Take action – Join an environmental organization or start your own to get involved
- Avoid CFC-containing products, like Styrofoam (encourage manufacturers to use alternative packaging materials), halon-containing fire extinguishers, and some aerosol cans

*Congratulations and thank you  
for your commitment to a  
healthier planet!*

For more information, please call or write:  
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