



**Southern Oregon Climate Action Now**  
**'What We Can Do'**  
**compiled by Alan Journet**

**The Focus:**

Any activity we undertake that uses energy should be reviewed. Most energy we consume is generated (to some extent) from processes that burn fossil fuels and release carbon dioxide into the atmosphere (unless the means involve renewable or perpetual sources – solar, wind, geothermal).

Also, activities that release methane and oxides of nitrogen should be minimized.

While reducing energy usually saves money – even if the savings accrue to someone else (a landlord/landlady, for example) the emissions reduction benefits us all.

**The Effort:**

Don't think you have to do it all at once; try changing one or two behaviors the first week, and then adding another one or two the next week, and so on.

**Day-To-Day**

- Turn electrical items/appliances (e.g. radios, TVs, computers) off whenever they are not in use; leaving them on just wastes energy, money and pumps out greenhouse gases.
- Beware the 'phantom load' of appliances using electricity when off; attach them to a power strip and switch that off; even when 'off,' many appliances use energy.
- Replace traditional incandescent bulbs with Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs) or Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs); these use much less energy and last much longer.
- Instead of constantly buying new batteries, buy rechargeable batteries and a charger; batteries consume resources; used batteries are hazardous waste.
- Recycle everything you can – before throwing anything away stop and think; this reduces landfill needs and energy consumption in processing raw materials.
- Close the circle; buy recycled items whenever you can reducing consumption.
- Wash clothes on cold using appropriate detergents; heating water consumes energy.
- Fill empty spaces in freezers with something, even bottles of water; reduces energy needed to cool the area.
- Install a programmable thermostat to heat and cool only when you are present and need it.

- Heat water only during times of day when it is used.
- Set living area thermostat a little lower in winter and higher in summer.
- Use an energy efficient TV – smaller screens are better; Liquid Crystal screens are more efficient than Plasma screens; incorporating LED screens is most efficient. All beat the old Cathode Ray Tube.
- For large appliances visit [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov) for efficiency comparisons and energy star items; more energetically efficient items.
- Whenever possible buy locally grown, brewed, fermented, or manufactured items saving transportation costs.
- Buy and reuse canvas shopping bags when shopping, and retain and reuse plastic veggie bags; say "No!" to "paper or plastic?".
- Reuse, Reduce, Recycle paper – print front and back and reuse paper printed on one side.
- Avoid over-packaged products; don't accept store bags unless you can re-use them; packaging consumes resources and clogs landfills.
- Replace home paper mop-up products with washable cloth items; disposable paper consumes energy and clogs landfills.
- At restaurants – don't accept extruded polystyrene (styrofoam) or plastic – ask for ceramic / metal utensils or take your own 'doggie bag' food container; washable ceramic consumes less energy than disposable items.

- Avoid restaurants that don't offer biodegradable or recyclable containers; there's no excuse.
- Avoid disposable items whenever possible saving energy and resources.
- Eat low on the food chain – it's healthier and more energy efficient. Energy is wasted at each level up the food chain while meat production can emit vast amounts of greenhouse gases.
- **NEVER EVER** buy bottled water – buy a reusable container and carry your own; bottled water quality regulations are no better than tap water – and the bottle takes energy to produce and transport, and usually ends in the landfill.
- Use recycled trash bags or *better* biodegradable trash bags; reduce the production energy, resource consumption and landfill space occupied.
- Buy organic produce whenever possible – unless high in shipping costs; it takes energy both to produce and distribute pesticides and fertilizers.
- Buy 'fair trade' items whenever possible; by paying the producer a fair price, resource destruction is reduced.
- Avoid using elevators and handicapped door openers unless necessary; it takes energy to haul you up and down and open doors.
- When cooking – cover boiling pans – they heat more quickly.
- Use appropriately sized cooking containers – the smaller the better; save energy by heating as little water as possible.
- Prepare more food than needed and use 'leftovers' for future meals.
- Conserve water – when washing dishes, cooking or cleaning teeth; it takes energy to purify and pump the water.
- Solar heated water is the low-hanging fruit of solar energy. All new buildings should have a solar water heating system.
- Buy carbon credits to offset carbon emissions due to travel,
- Support Pacific Power's Blue Sky program promoting clean energy,
- Avoid credits cards (banks) that support fossil fuel corporations.

- Divest from fossil fuel corporations.
- Support and vote for candidates at all political levels who acknowledge climate change and its causes, and who commit to considering the climate change impacts of all issues they confront.

#### **Travel:**

- Since each gallon of gas burned results in about 20 lbs of Carbon dioxide emissions, reduce consumption.
- Whenever possible, buy the most energy efficient vehicle.
- Don't idle – avoid drive-through restaurants; park and walk in.
- Maintain your vehicle; well-tuned engines are more efficient.
- Drive gently – avoid hard acceleration and braking.
- Slow down – slower speed really does use less gasoline.
- Car-pool whenever possible.
- Set the cruise control at 60 or 65 mph – and leave earlier if necessary.
- Plan ahead and consolidate trips thus making fewer of them.
- Rather than drive everywhere, take public transportation, bike or walk.
- Buy credible carbon offsets/credits.

#### **General:**

- Try to serve as a role model.
- Especially serve as a role model for friends and family.
- Ask friends and family to think before acting.
- Remember that saving the planet is as important as saving money.
- It's a matter of inter-generational justice.
- Divest from all fossil fuel stocks.
- Get involved:

<http://socan.info>

