



PERSONAL PRACTICES TO SAVE ECOSYSTEMS

Reducing Greenhouse and Ozone-Depleting Gases

HOME

1. Home heating. Reduce the size of your living space if possible since larger spaces require more heat. In a typical home, 40 percent of energy consumption is from space heating. Arrange a home energy audit through your utility and follow the recommendations to keep heat from escaping. See energystar.gov for insulation and sealing instructions and "Anatomy of an Energy Efficient Window" on Google. Turn the thermostat down to 55° at night and when gone.

2. Hot water is the second largest energy consumer in homes. Reduce the time spent in the shower and the number of loads of laundry each week. Other strategies include installing a solar hot water system and/or tankless water heater, putting a timer on your water heater, and keeping the setting no higher than 120°.

3. Lighting is third in home energy use; one-third of this use is outdoor lighting. To reduce outdoor energy use, keep lighting to a minimum, use a motion detector so that lights go on only when someone approaches, and/or use a compact fluorescent bulb on a timer. Indoors, replace all light bulbs that are used for two hours or more each day with compact fluorescent bulbs. Turn off lights when you leave a room.

4. Appliances. Purchase the most energy-efficient appliances. New models of furnaces, refrigerators, and washing machines are significantly more efficient than those ten or twenty years old. Front-loading washing machines use about half as much energy and water as standard washers. New refrigerators also can save half the energy of old ones if you avoid models with freezers on the side, in-the-door icemakers, and water dispensers. State tax credits for the purchase of energy efficient appliances provide an added incentive. Even if you have a dryer, try to air dry clothes for six months of the year.

5. Solar power. If your home receives enough sunlight, install photovoltaic panels. Significant tax credits are available. If you are building or remodeling a home, develop a design to maximize passive solar heat. See www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/your_home/designing_remodeling.

TRANSPORTATION

6. Commuting. Since sixty-two percent of vehicle miles traveled in the US are from commuting, living close to work may be the single best strategy for reducing auto travel. Whether you live near or far, determine a way to commute by foot, bike, transit, or carpool. Even doing this three times a week will make a difference.

7. Auto trips. As an effective way to reduce trips, limit cars to one per household. When a car is not always available, single trips are reduced. Individuals put more effort into combining trips, carpooling, riding buses or light rail, and other options such as using FlexCar.

8. Fuel-efficiency. If you are in the market for a new car, limit your options to those that get at least 33 miles per gallon.

9. Airplane travel. Keep airplane trips to a minimum. Aircraft emissions are the fastest growing transportation contributor to global warming. High altitude CO₂ emissions have a more harmful impact than emissions at ground level. Therefore the warming effect of a single individual's airplane trip across the US and back is equivalent to 15,077 passenger miles in a car (assuming 1.6 car passengers per trip and 22.23 mpg). For vacations, explore your local bioregion. Try Amtrak.

PURCHASING

10. New products. Since thirty-two percent of energy in Oregon is used by industry, keep purchases of new products to a minimum and recycle everything possible. In Oregon, recycling already saves enough energy to power 359,000 cars each year.

11. Air conditioning. If you have an older car with air conditioning, have it maintained at a facility with EPA-certified technicians. Air conditioning systems are inherently leaky and may be emitting ozone-depleting CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons). If all leaky systems were repaired, the release of millions of pounds of CFCs would be prevented. If you are purchasing a home air conditioner or heat pump, look for alternatives to HCFC-refrigerants, such as GENETRON A2-20, SVUA 410A, or Puron.

12. Styrofoam. Avoid rigid foam insulation, or purchase a type made without CFCs or HCFCs.