

Appendix 4:

Vermonters Quick Tips for Carbon Dioxide Reduction

Buying green tags and carbon offsets is only part of the solution to global warming. We must also reduce the amount of activity that creates excessive carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases (GHGs) such as methane. Here's a quick series of tips that all of us can put into action:

TRAVEL

- Reduce unnecessary short trips in your car. Plan out and combine your daily trips (work, errands, shopping, etc.) so you can maximize your efficiency with the fewest number of trips.
- Remove unnecessary weight from your vehicle; this will cut down fuel consumption and carbon dioxide emissions
- Improper tire inflation causes your vehicle to use more fuel and wear out your tires more quickly, so make sure all 4 tires are inflated properly
- Use public transportation wherever possible – if public transit is lacking in your area; express your concerns & ideas to local officials

HOME

- If you don't need it, switch it off at the wall or power strip. Appliances running on standby power (such as remote control TVs, computers, stereo equipment, etc.) consume a great deal of energy, unnecessarily even when not in active use.
- Take shorter showers and use the shower instead of the bath (you burn less fuel to heat the water, release fewer GHGs and save gallons and gallons of water too!)
- Turn down the heat a few degrees in winter and don't set the air-conditioning too cold in summer. Do you really need to get around in summer clothes during the winter? Even setting your thermostat up or down a degree or two can make a huge difference in electricity consumption.
- Recycle and reuse whatever you can. While recycling glass, paper, and cans etc. does require energy to reform new products, it's far less than having to mine, drill or harvest the raw resources.

WORK/OFFICE

- See if you can telecommute (work from home) a day a week. This will save you gas and money and your employers a bit of electricity at the office!
- Talk to your employer about carbon emission reduction strategies e.g. a 'lights off when not in use' policy. Approach it not only from the warm and fuzzy environmental viewpoint, but point out the financial benefits. You never know, you may just get a promotion or a salary raise!

GARDEN

- Don't burn leaf litter - mulch or compost it instead – burning vegetation emits carbon dioxide and other pollutants, which are harmful to your health, into the atmosphere.

FOOD

- Try to buy local, organically grown fruits and vegetables. Some green produce is shipped thousands of miles in refrigerated trucks before it hits your supermarket.
- Cut down a little on red meat – livestock release millions of tons of methane, which is 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide, into the air each year.

GENERAL PURCHASES

- Before buying anything, ask yourself – “Do I really need this?” Rampant consumerism plays a huge role in greenhouse gas emissions. Manufacturing products and packaging materials requires energy, which leads to emissions of carbon dioxide and toxic pollutants. When purchasing, keep “green” close to mind. This reduces GHG emissions and keeps more “green” in your wallet.

OFFSET

- We can't all buy 100% organically and locally produced items that have been created with renewable energy all the time, so try to purchase green tags to help offset carbon dioxide emissions. Rather than being an exercise in futility, offsets and green tags help provide investment capital for renewable energy programs.

SOME USEFUL WEBSITES WHERE YOU CAN LEARN MORE

<http://www.anr.state.vt.us/air/Planning/htm/ClimateChange.htm>

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/oar/globalwarming.nsf/content/actionsIndividual.html>

http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/ind_calculator.html

<http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/wycd/home.html>

<http://www.ctclimatechange.com/WhatCanIDo.html>