



"You must be the change you wish to see in the world." - **Mahatma Gandhi**

The Problem

For too long, global warming has seemed like something that we have no power to stop. Cool Rochester's ongoing work is powerful evidence to the contrary. It is now clearer than ever that we have the power to show the nation and the world how individuals and businesses can reduce their carbon emissions, and save money, without waiting for the government to act, starting right now.

Our Goal

Cool Rochester Challenge unites the entire Rochester region -- individuals, schools, congregations, businesses, governments and other institutions -- to take a billion-pound bite out of the region's carbon dioxide emissions by the end of 2012. Together we can save money on our energy bills, help America's quest for energy independence, and meet the challenge of the climate crisis.

The Climate Crisis

The basic science of climate change -- that the earth is warming and that human activity is a principal cause -- is beyond dispute. Here are a few links that will help you understand the issues:



- <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/index.html>
- http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/science/science-of-global-warming.html
- <http://www.who.int/globalchange/en/>

Take the Challenge

Become a CoolChampion - A CoolChampion makes a pledge to reduce the carbon emissions in his or her household and to develop wider networks for the same reason. Anyone can pledge carbon reductions to the overall Cool Rochester goal.

Visit our website at www.CoolRochester.org and click "take the challenge".

Our website has some great resources for any person interested in saving energy and reducing their carbon footprint.

- 1) "Carbon Footprint" is a term to specify how much carbon dioxide you cause to be emitted into the atmosphere. The website will help you calculate your carbon footprint so you have a good idea of the carbon you emit yearly. It does this by helping you evaluate your daily energy use including heating and cooling, other electricity use, airplane, and car miles.
- 2) The website has a list of simple ways you can improve your energy efficiency. Remember to make an **ambitious but achievable** pledge; we want you to accomplish the goals you set.
- 3) Become a **CoolHero** and also create a team – friends, relatives and colleagues in your neighborhood, residential building, company, congregation, school, or household. The teams are a great way to start energy efficient competitions and to support you in achieving your carbon reduction goal.
- 4) Think about holding team meetings or otherwise connecting (listservs, for example) to keep the momentum going.

Spreading the word and Networking

In addition to your pledge, you can contribute by spreading the word to your friends, neighbors and colleagues at work.

Five talking points that can be used when discussing the Cool Rochester Challenge are:

- 1) Don't wait. Once released, carbon builds in the atmosphere and stays there for decades. We must act now, and we can act now, in our households and neighborhoods.
- 2) Energy efficiency is win-win. When you are energy efficient, you also lower your electric bill and the money you spend on fuel. You can help stimulate the development of new green businesses and green technology innovation.
- 3) Being energy efficient has health and life-style benefits. Walking and biking to work reduces the amount of energy you use and is good exercise. When you buy locally grown and organic foods, you help cut down food transportation and support local farmers.
- 4) Being energy efficient has commercial benefits. For example, LEED-certified apartment complexes (buildings that can prove they are genuinely energy efficient) rent out space faster.
- 5) We have the power! Help reduce the carbon emissions in the Rochester area, please take the challenge at www.CoolRochester.org.



Visit the FAQ's section of the website, and the facts and myth section for more talking points and ideas.

Networking for change

Start with the people nearest you – friends, family, congregations, schools (PTA, school board etc.), community media and community groups (homeowners associations, soccer or athletic clubs, girl or boy scout groups, etc.).



Chat up your friends and colleagues with this sample script

I'm helping an all-volunteer local effort to reverse the climate crisis. It's called the Cool Rochester Challenge. It's a three-year, one-billion-pound carbon diet for Rochester region. It's amazing- with pledges from local businesses, and we're looking for more people to join us in saving money and energy. The idea is, instead of waiting for the government or other people to act on climate change, we can all work to help each other make changes right now in how we use energy - in our homes, our businesses, our schools, our community. Check out the website www.CoolRochester.org for tips on how to get started.

Ways to Spread the Word



Engage people to take action. Talk to your friends and networks. Host a green house party to demonstrate energy efficiency. Recruit your network to plan and carry out the event. Concrete examples from real-life experience can help inspire others to act.

- Use examples from the community and how the community has such a strong power when they come together to accomplish a goal.



Email

- Are you on a neighborhood, ANC or building listserv? Can you use that to share information about energy efficiency and climate change and to augment your network?

Local newspapers

- The Rochester area has several local, community newspapers. An article or letter to the editor is a great way to share information and recruit new people to the network.



Community Action

- Everyone is part of a variety of networks -- congregations, schools, PTAs, community gardens, and neighborhood media sources.
- Encourage your community group and organizations to make energy efficiency a joint goal
- Local businesses and apartment complexes are good candidates for saving money on heating, lighting and cooling.
- Appeal to your audience
 1. Talk to friends and see if they care
 2. Brainstorm about who the decision makers are
 3. Talk to the decision maker
 4. Thank and follow up with decision maker in email

What can you do, right now, to save energy and save money?

- ✓ Turn off unnecessary lights and electronics; appliance often draw electricity when they are plugged in, whether or not in use
- ✓ Less is more -- reduce, reuse, repair
- ✓ Walk, bike, carpool, car share, use public transportation
- ✓ When you have to drive, do so efficiently. Stay at 55 mph, check tire pressure, and keep your car tuned.
- ✓ Adjust your thermostat lower in the winter and higher in the summer; install a programmable thermostat so that you are not heating or cooling when you are away from the house.
- ✓ Recycle and choose recyclable products
- ✓ Carry a reusable bag to the store when you shop
- ✓ Weatherize your house
- ✓ Buy energy efficient products (look for the Energy Star label) and compact fluorescent (CFL) light bulbs.
- ✓ Utilize day light and the open your windows, not the AC, to cool down.
- ✓ Spread the word about Cool – acting together is powerful.



“What happens if I run into someone who has taken energy efficiency measures already?”

- Invite them to become a **CoolChampion**.
- Invite them to join a Cool Rochester meeting.
- Invite them to share their experience, for example by showcasing their homes as models of energy efficiency.



As a CoolChampion you have the opportunity to improve the environment and show others how to do the same. Teach others to be energy efficient. Join together to make Rochester an energy efficient community and reduce our joint carbon footprint.

Web Resources

- The EPA has a website individuals who want to lower their CO₂ contribution.
 - <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/wycd/index.html>
- Tree Hugger has a number of how-to green guides including greening your meals to more intense measures to further to green your lifestyle.
 - <http://www.treehugger.com/gogreen.php>
- The Green Living website provides an extensive list of green products that minimize impact on the environment.
 - <http://www.green-living.com/>
- The Green Guide website is also gives weekly tips and articles on green topics
 - <http://www.thegreenguide.com/>
- Adults and children can find easy ways to fight global warming including great energy efficiency tips.
 - <http://www.fightglobalwarming.com>

We graciously acknowledge www.CoolCapital.org for the original version of this document.