



## CO<sub>2</sub> Reduction Plan for Municipalities

---

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has initiated Climate Smart – a program to encourage municipalities to stand up against climate change by making CO<sub>2</sub> reductions within their municipal operations and their communities. [www.dec.ny.gov/energy/50845.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/50845.html)

"The 31 communities that quickly adopted the Climate Smart Communities Pledge demonstrate how committed our local leaders are to decreasing energy use and waste, increasing recycling and supporting a green economy. By doing so, they are working to improve our natural environment and to ensure a sustainable future for New York." Governor Paterson

Cool Rochester can help your municipality achieve significant CO<sub>2</sub> reductions, becoming a successful Climate Smart leader in the fight against climate change.

### The Problem

For too long, global warming has seemed like something that we have no power to stop. Cool Rochester's work is powerful evidence to the contrary. It is now clearer than ever that we have the power to lead the nation and the world 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 unites individuals, schools, congregations, neighborhoods, businesses, governments and other institutions to take a billion-pound bite out of the region's carbon dioxide emissions by 2012. Together we can meet the challenge of the climate crisis.

### Become a Cool Rochester Participant

- 1) **Agree** to develop an ambitious but achievable CO<sub>2</sub> reduction.
- 2) **Identify a Cool Leader** within your institution for Cool Rochester training as an energy efficiency liaison.
- 3) **Link to Cool Rochester** on your website. **Market** Cool Rochester in your organization's newsletters and emails. **Promote** Cool Rochester by linking websites.
- 4) **Reach out to your employees and constituents.** They will appreciate your leadership knowing you are taking action.
- 5) **Pledge to reduce your current carbon footprint.** The institutional calculator on our web site will help with this step. Any organization pledging to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 5 million pounds or more gains the distinction of being a **Cool Rochester Partner.**
- 6) **Execute the carbon reduction plan** and improve the plan when needed. Cool Rochester will provide programs to help get you started and provide assistance if you have questions, need help with carbon emission reduction ideas, or want to think about other ways to accomplish your pledge.



## Take Action!

---

Your municipality can become a Cool Participant by addressing CO2 reductions on three fronts: emissions from your municipal buildings, emissions from your employees' commutes, and emissions from your employees' and constituents' homes:

### 1. Cool Your Municipal Workplaces:

**Buildings:** Institutions account for a large amount of energy consumption and carbon emissions and offer a huge opportunity for energy savings. By lowering your carbon footprint, you make an obvious impact, and empower others to take the same steps.

Some steps to take:

- Keep thermostat three degrees lower in the winter and three degrees higher in the summer.
- Make sure doors and windows are closed when heating and air conditioning are running.

For further measures to take within your institution go to the Cool Capital Resources or [http://www.coolcapitalchallenge.org/institutional\\_resources](http://www.coolcapitalchallenge.org/institutional_resources)

An especially helpful link is the energy star checklist for institutions: [http://www.imt.org/Capital/ENERGY\\_STAR\\_Checklist.pdf](http://www.imt.org/Capital/ENERGY_STAR_Checklist.pdf)

**Operations:** Institutions can lower their carbon footprint and be a model. If you require these steps to be taken daily, your employees will contribute to the company bottom line and at the same time develop cool habits beneficial to their wallets and the environment. Some practices to employ:

- Turn off computers when not in use
- Turn off all lights by closing time, or use time or motion controlled lighting
- Harvest daylight as much as possible
- Turn off the air conditioner or heater one hour before everyone leaves the building
- Adjust the thermostat 2 degrees lower in the winter and 2 degrees upper in the summer
- Program the cleaning during work hours
- Conduct meetings through telecommunication
- Operate paper free
- When possible, print double sided; print drafts on 100% PCW recycled paper
- Put all electronics on smart power plug strips so that everything can be turned off at once
- Give everyone a recycling bin
- Provide reusable coffee mugs/ plates/ utensils
- Create signs that notify employees of measures that your company is taking to conserve energy.

**Fleets:** Many municipalities have large diesel fleet utility vehicles that emit tons of carbon each year. In the long term think about:

- Greening your fleet to hybrids, electric vehicles, or alternate fuels. Check out:
  - <http://www.milesev.com>
  - <http://www.zenncars.com>
  - <http://zeropollutionmotors.us>
  - <http://www.bgelectriccars.com/>
- Shutting off the engines of the trucks if they are idle or not being used.
- Consolidating tasks so that vehicles are on the road for fewer hours in the day or fewer days of the week, if possible.
- Developing more efficient travel routes that take less time to travel to the destination.
- Keeping vehicle engines tuned-up and tires inflated to proper pressure.
- Consider the use of bicycles or electric scooters for shorter distances.

**People:** Your informed employees are a resource. Empower your employees:

- Allow workers to work for 4 long days instead of 5 shorter ones
- Allow people to work from home
- Make joining the Cool Rochester challenge easy & accessible (print out surveys and direct workers to link via emails, host join up meeting)
- Give benefits for those who join challenge to encourage participation
- Create healthy competition among employees to achieve energy efficiency goals by creating teams (teams can identify themselves through colors or t-shirts)
- Award leading team with prize
- Communicate goals and means of achieving them (for example, top 10 tips) through displays and emails

## **2. Cool Your Commutes:**

Large quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> are generated by employees traveling to- and from- work. Since most commutes occur during peak traffic times, more CO<sub>2</sub> is generated as cars idle longer at intersections, off-ramps, and traffic jams. Consider and promote alternatives to your employees:

- Allow workers to shift their work hours to commute at non-peak times.
- Allow people to work from home
- Encourage and reward employees who use alternate transportation methods – the bus, cycling, walking, carpooling, and car sharing.

**Bus, Cycling, Walking:** There are various ways to encourage your employees to seek alternate transport methods.

- Promote the health benefits of walking to cycling to work, even in conjunction with a bus ride.
- If your business pays for or subsidizes parking fees for your employees, give this amount as a bonus to any employee who uses alternate transportation.
- Pay for or subsidize bus-passes for employees.

**Carpooling:** Set up transportation car pooling system

Commuter Connection's website is a great resource to make carpooling easy for your employees who want to make the right choice. Within a couple of minutes you can enter information about your business and get help with your carpooling plan. <https://www.commuterconnections.com/cgi-bin/signup.cgi>

- *Create survey to give to employees, include;*
  - *info about carbon emissions from driving & alternative modes*
  - *Provide benefits for those who choose to carpool/ mass transportation/ bike to work; some ideas include casual attire, provide lunch on Fridays, have monthly party.*
  - *deter people from driving to work by selling parking spots at a premium*

*Talking Points to get your employees motivated to carpool:*

- 1) Carpooling saves everyone money
- 2) Carpooling creates friendships
- 3) Carpooling creates faster ways to work

**Car Sharing:** Car sharing is a progressive way to save money, gas, and limit your carbon emissions. Flexcar offers this service for a minimal hourly fee, enabling your employees to share cars without the worries of gas, maintenance, and insurance. In addition, Flexcar only uses low-emission, fuel efficient cars. Another option is Zipcar.

<http://www.flexcar.com/>

<http://www.zipcar.com/>

### **3. Cool Your Homes:**

Fifty to ninety percent of a community's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is generated from the residential sector. To make a significant contribution to the Rochester area's CO<sub>2</sub> reductions, municipalities need to engage their employees and constituents to reconsider their use of energy at home.

**Go on a Low Carbon Diet:** This proven program helps individuals lower their household CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by an average of 24%.

- Host workshops in-house ("Global Warming Cafés") to introduce the Low Carbon Diet to employees.
- At the end of each workshop, invite employees to form household-based EcoTeams – approximately eight people who serve as a peer support group for completing the carbon-reduction program. (Like a Weight Watchers support group for one's carbon diet, EcoTeams follow a series of four structured meetings guiding participants through the diet's carefully crafted carbon reduction actions.)
- Encourage inspired individuals to form and lead more EcoTeams with family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues. The more EcoTeams that form, the more people are motivated to make CO<sub>2</sub> reductions.
- Identify a motivated individual(s) to attend Cool Rochester's Capacity Building Training – to spread the formation of EcoTeams throughout the community.
- Establish and promote similar workshops throughout your community – through Continuing Education programs, schools, community groups, etc. Set a goal of how many of your municipality's households you would like to engage through the Low Carbon Diet program.



## More Ways to Help

---

### **Spread the Cool Word**

Your employees and constituents are a huge resource and provide an immense **opportunity** for energy efficiency communication. Now is the time to act and spread the word.

#### **Target constituents**

- Cool window decals
- Inserts in municipal publications, notices, mailings.
- Displays in municipal buildings encouraging energy efficiency & Cool participation
- Media underwrite
- Provide parking space for flexcar or zipcar

#### **Target employees**

- Advertise Cool & energy efficiency in buildings
- Require energy efficient practices in the office
- Build a sense of community through emails raising Cool awareness, encouraging sign up, top 10 tips
- Hold Cool events
- Have Cool competitions

### **Tax Incentives for going Green**

Tax deductions brochure

[http://www.energystar.gov/ia/business/comm\\_bldg\\_tax\\_incentives.pdf](http://www.energystar.gov/ia/business/comm_bldg_tax_incentives.pdf)



## Web Resources

---

- The EPA has a website with tips for individuals who want to lower their contribution to warming.
  - <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/wycd/index.html>
- The Center for Working families is developing a program to make home efficiency renovations affordable to everyone.
  - <http://www.centerforworkingfamilies.info/cleanenergygreenjobs.php>
- Tree Hugger has a number of how-to green guides including basic options for 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, from dog collars to manual lawn mowers.
  - <http://www.green-living.com/>
- The Green Guide website is also a source of green information including a weekly tip and articles on specific 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>

### **Hand Out for individual of top 10 measures to be taken**

[http://www.fightglobalwarming.com/documents/5203\\_fgdownloadtips.pdf](http://www.fightglobalwarming.com/documents/5203_fgdownloadtips.pdf)

### **Hand out for kids to get involved with checklist**

[http://www.fightglobalwarming.com/documents/5204\\_fgdownloadkids.pdf](http://www.fightglobalwarming.com/documents/5204_fgdownloadkids.pdf)

### **Checklist of green operations to take**

[http://www.ecu.edu.au/fas/EcoECU/docs/Green\\_Office\\_Checklist.doc](http://www.ecu.edu.au/fas/EcoECU/docs/Green_Office_Checklist.doc)

--- Cool Rochester graciously thanks www.CoolCapital.org for an earlier version of this document ---