



## **OUR MISSION**

*Cool Rochester is dedicated to making this planet a healthier, more sustainable environment to pass on to our children and grandchildren. To accomplish this goal, we need to make changes now—and we need to start at home. That's why Cool Rochester offers the tools to empower the Rochester, NY community (businesses, colleges/universities, communities and individuals) to:* Understand your carbon footprint; Reduce your energy consumption and carbon emissions; Help create and implement organizational policies and practices; Realize the future environmental benefits of making lifestyle changes now; Appreciate immediate benefits, including: Lower energy bills, A cleaner environment, Improved physical health (from eating locally and walking/biking more). Actions promote change. Together we can preserve our natural resources and ensure a brighter future for our children.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS**

**Monday Feb 22, 2010** - 6:30-8pm  
General Meeting to be held at the Downtown Presbyterian Church. This is open to the public and all are encouraged to come share their experiences and ideas to help us foster development and growth.

**Monday March 22, 2010** - 6:30-8pm -  
General Meeting to be held at the Downtown Presbyterian Church. (see above)

Other events happening around town that may be of interest to our participants include:

**Green drinks: 4th Thursday** of every month, hosted by Upstate Green Business Network & The Center for Environmental Information - Tap &

Mallet, 381 Gregory St (unless otherwise noted on their website). This is an opportunity to meet and network with other like-minded community members.

<http://www.ceinfo.org/ugbn/greendinks.php>

**Better Contractor's Bureau's 26th 2010 HOME FAIR EXPO at the Dome**  
FRIDAY Feb. 26, 2010, 3-8pm;  
SATURDAY Feb. 27, 2010, 10 am-8pm; SUNDAY, Feb. 28, 2010 10 am-5pm <http://www.the-bcb.net/homefair/>



## **DO SMALL CHANGES REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?**

By Jim Tappon

How many times have you wondered if little things like checking the tire pressure really make a difference? I am here to tell you that it really does. Last April I bought a new vehicle: a Toyota Prius. I love it! For the first 7 months I never averaged less than 45 MPG per tank. Then the weather turned cold and in a flash the mileage dropped to 35 MPG. I drive short distances (5 miles) in the city, so I attributed it to cold weather and engine being cold using the choke... until about a week later my low tire pressure indicator came on. Pulling into my service station I found that all 4 tires were down from 35 PSI to almost 20 PSI. I had them pumped up to the recommended 35 PSI and my MPG returned almost to the original 45 MPG.

I watch my average MPG like a hawk and I have learned how to drive to get better mileage, but the main lesson here is that when the temperature goes down, get your tire pressure checked and keep checking it (especially during the winter) to keep that pressure up. It will save you gallons and dollars.

The other lesson is that unless you are watching for these things, they can easily go unnoticed.



## **NYS POLLUTION PREVENTION INSTITUTE (PPI) JOINS FORCES WITH COOL ROCHESTER**

We are pleased to announce a partnership with PPI. This organization, which is located at RIT and funded by NY DEC, has a mission, to develop and implement innovative and cost-effective techniques and technologies that address environmental concerns, that is very simpatico with ours.

Since its inception in 2008, NYSPPPI has created a series of initiatives that provide direct outreach to local companies, support local communities and provide education and outreach. They have helped 13 companies save over 240,000 lbs of annual waste, reduced water consumption by 16 million gallons and reduced energy consumption by over 7500 MBTU per year, which is roughly equivalent to

one million pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>. PPI has also funded a number of local non-profits.

PPI has vowed to help Cool Rochester get the word out at both the local and state level, assist us in our recruiting, and to help us look for funding opportunities. You can learn more about PPI at: [www.nysp2i.rit.edu](http://www.nysp2i.rit.edu)

## 2010 GREEN RESOLUTIONS

<http://www.greenrightnow.com/rochesterhomepage/2009/12/30/11-green-new-years-resolutions-for-2010/>

By [Barbara Kessler](#)  
**Green Right Now**

One thing we learned in 2009 is that you can't wait for big institutions to take the green lead. For every clean tech entrepreneur, there's a climate change heel-dragger. We're thinking of Copenhagen obstructionists, Congress and entrenched fossil fuel interests, as examples.

### **You can, however, do what you can.**

And in that spirit, here are 11 ways to lower your carbon footprint this New Year. Adopting even one of them can help reduce the pollution that's leading to dire consequences. And while some New Year's resolutions are hard, and cost you money (gym fees aren't going down you know), these resolutions are likely to save you money, reduce your exposure to toxins and help you lead a healthier life. We've included only those ideas that really make a big impact, and scuttled those that we consider to be "boutique green" — those non-starter nice ideas that matter, but just a little bit.

To help make this list something you can really use, we've included some nifty online tools to help you find a greener track in 2010. [If you are reading this online, click the [BLUE](#) links]

**1— Drive Less.** If you live in the city, or in a small town, you can accomplish this easily. Hop on the bus. Use the corner grocery. Walk. In the suburbs, which were designed to disperse us, it's trickier. But you can group errands, and your kids may be able to walk to

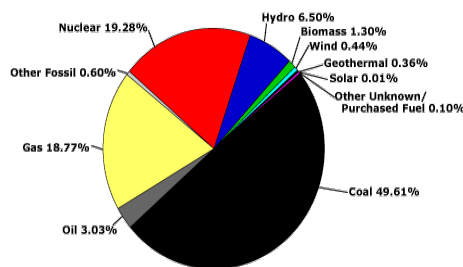
school. Maybe this is the year that you ask your employer about working from home one day a week, to cut your commuting costs.

Here's some ammunition: If you work for a large company, it may soon be inventorying its greenhouse gas emissions. [New EPA rules](#) will require some 12,000 of the country's largest emitters to inventory their GHGs in 2010, and while this mainly concerns utilities, power companies and other heavy industries, it is likely to launch a new era of transparency. Companies across the board could soon discover that a friendly work-at-home policy would cut their carbon imprint, as well as yours.

In the meantime, you can find many Ride Share programs already up and running.

Another sign that things may turn your way: Insurance companies may reward temperate driving with better rates. Check out [MileMeter](#), a company based on giving preferential rates to those who take it easy on their wheels.

If you're in the market for a new car, find the most economical ones at [fuelconomy.gov](http://fuelconomy.gov).



Breakdown of U.S. power sources (Image: EPA)

**2 — Buy Green Power.** Do this and drive less and you'll have cut a big slice out of your personal or family energy consumption total. Many power companies now offer menus where a consumer can select a green power package, or even power generated specifically by wind (especially in big wind generation states like Texas, Iowa and Minnesota). Some companies offer cleaner power packages that focus on hydropower —

not the greenest, but better than getting your electricity from a coal-fired plant. Use the [EPA's map finder](#) to see what's available by state. The EPA also puts out a [Guide to Green Power](#).

You've probably heard by now that buildings — commercial and residential — account for nearly 40 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions produced in the United States. That's largely because they use electricity produced by coal-fired plants, the most carbon polluting of all electricity sources. See the chart above, which shows that about half of our electricity is fueled by coal, the cheapest and dirtiest source of power. So hooking up with a green provider really does make a difference. You'll reduce your personal carbon footprint, and you'll be helping shift the market toward cleaner options that your children and grandchildren will need.

**3 — Connect with Congress.** Send your senator or representative a letter that you support action against climate change. This might take a little time, but the net, aggregate effect could be big. You could point out your personal efforts to conserve; special needs for clean air (like we all don't need that) and maybe mention the kids and grandkids that you hope to protect from catastrophic changes brought about by human greenhouse gas emissions that are melting the glaciers, turning the oceans acidic, ruining habitat and agricultural lands. Congressional leaders are pretty easy to find these days on the Internet. [Congress.org](http://Congress.org) helps you connect. Just type in your zip code and voila! [Congress.org](http://Congress.org) also chronicles environmental bills, and their many permutations on its news pages.



Farmers Market (Photo: Green Right Now)

**4 — Buy Local, Organic Food (when possible).** Used to be that this was touted as a way to strengthen the local economy, which frankly didn't much concern most Americans over the past few decades as groceries burst forth with more and more far-flung, highly engineered foods and treats. But rather than get started on that, let's just say that getting back to basics can be good.

There are two main points in favor of going local and organic: The first is better nutrition. Even though experts still debate whether organic produce is nutritionally superior to conventionally grown (with pesticides) food, this debate will soon go the way of the one over whether cigarettes are damaging. [A 2008 review of recent studies](#) comparing foods, found that organically grown produce and grains are indeed more "nutritionally dense" — which makes intuitive sense because organic farming doesn't poison the soil with pesticides, allowing plants grown there to take up the full nutrient load from the ground. The study was done by the Organic Center, a group with a bent, but check out the candlepower of [the experts involved](#) and you may be swayed.

The second argument for buying local is indisputable. If you want to lower your carbon footprint, or your "foodprint" as it's now called, buy food that comes from closer to home. It will come with fewer "food miles" and have contributed less to greenhouse gas emissions. And by the way, it will help the local economy.

**5 — Reduce Harmful Chemicals.** Step back from some of the toxic chemicals you buy for household use, and those you use to "treat" the lawn and you will be contributing to cleaner indoor air and healthier ground water, especially if you use no-phosphate laundry and dishwasher detergents, now widely available. Consider, too, trying [Soap Nuts](#), the natural laundry soap that is highly concentrated and comes from, well, a nut. We also like [Dropps](#), an eco-laundry detergent packed in individual pouches that dissolve in the wash. Presto — packaging gone!

Outside, try using [corn gluten](#) as a pre-emergent weed killer. You will be restoring life to the soil, which can then

better sustain life. We won't get into the debate about whether organic lawns look better than chemically greened turf (some do, but often they don't have that same ethereal green glow). But a healthy organic lawn can look pretty good, and the availability of organic options in mulch, weed suppressants and other organic compounds is growing.



**6 — Reduce the Personal Paper Products You Use.** One word here: Forests. We need to cherish them again, not plunder them to wipe our noses. Look for personal paper goods made from recycled and unbleached paper. This simple step, if we all made a concerted effort, can go a long way toward saving forests. Even Kimberly-Clark, maker of virgin fiber Kleenex, is offering recycled tissues and paper towels and has pledged to take sustainable steps (after a three year tussle with Greenpeace). We've printed it before, but it's worth mentioning here that the Natural Resources Defense Council has put together [a guide to the brands using recycled paper](#). The list of environmentally conscientious products is growing! And one other thing, instead of even using paper towels, try a washcloth. We use one that's made of hemp, which is naturally germ resistant.

**7 — Buy in Bulk.** This reduces packaging and can make shipping easier and more efficient. Look for large laundry boxes, wine in boxes and soup... in boxes. The packaging is more degradable and you can buy bigger, storable portions. Bulk products can help conserve energy in many ways, even beyond the savings in packaging. They can make shipping more efficient, and when the carton is degradable, recyclable or reusable, it can save on landfill space and pollution.

**8 — Invite Wildlife into the Yard.** This can be a tough concept for people who've spent a lot of time keeping wildlife out. And we understand. We don't want moles or armadillos digging up our garden either. But there are ways...set aside a brushy area in one corner of the yard to serve as a haven for small critters and birds. Plant native plants that feed butterflies and birds, and don't forget shrubs that produce winter berries. Construct a water garden to support amphibians. The hows and whys here get pretty deep. We can recommend a book, [Bringing Nature Home](#), for people with yards. People in apartments can do their part by hooking up with a local conservation project.

**9 — Conserve Water.** We assume you don't let the water run when you brush your teeth or shave. This year, pledge to take shorter showers or install rain sensors for your lawn sprinkler. Set the dishwasher on economy and see if it doesn't get the job done; wash only full loads of clothing. We found a new way to conserve this year by using waterless products to clean cars. The [Baye's High Performance Waterless Wash/Detailer](#) produced a great shine — and used NO WATER.

**10. Generate Your Own Power.** This is still a pricey proposition, but [the cost of residential solar installations](#) came tumbling down this past year. And we saw neighborhoods incorporating solar power in ways that don't even show, with tiles that mimic shingles. On-site wind is a growing option for homeowners with the space and the gusts to try it. Some wind installations have gotten more compact. And don't count out geothermal, also available on a residential scale.



Michelle Obama oversees an education day in the White House Garden (Photo: White House Photographer Samantha Appleton)

11 — **Grow Your Own Food.** Take a look at your yard, it's probably not working for you, but it could. This past year saw a boom in home gardening led by the First Family, who installed a [bountiful food garden](#) at the White House. Without the Park Service to help, you might have to run with a smaller scale project, but even if you've only got a condo deck or windowsill, you can grow a few herbs and tomatoes. Urban dwellers also can find a rooftop garden to help with, like [Brooklyn's Rooftop Farms](#) for instance. Or, provide the patch of ground and hire the garden help, as detailed in [this story by KGO-TV](#).

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**JOIN OUR TEAM: VOLUNTEER !**

The Cool Rochester Core Team is looking for volunteers to take shifts at a booth or table at any of the following events:

Wednesday March 10<sup>th</sup> 11:30 to 2:30  
St John Fisher Sustainability Fair

Saturday March 27<sup>th</sup> 10 am - 7 pm  
Rochester Home Builders Association  
Home & Garden Show at the  
Convention Center

Saturday April 10<sup>th</sup> 10 am – 4 pm  
Pittsford Pre-Earth Day, Pittsford  
Library

Saturday April 17<sup>th</sup> 9 am –4 pm  
Broccolo 20th Anniversary Earth Expo  
at the Cornell Cooperative Extension,  
249 Highland Ave.

Saturday April 24<sup>th</sup> 10 am to 2 pm  
Earth Day in the Park at Hamlin Beach  
State Park

All handout materials (such as brochures) will be supplied. You just

need to bring yourself and your enthusiasm. Please send a note to [lci\\_msw@hotmail.com](mailto:lci_msw@hotmail.com) and indicate which events are of interest and someone will contact you.

Cool Rochester is a 100% volunteer organization, and is looking to fill a few more volunteer posts in the next couple of months. Please contact: [Info@CoolRochester.org](mailto:Info@CoolRochester.org) if you are interested in more information about any of the following volunteer roles:

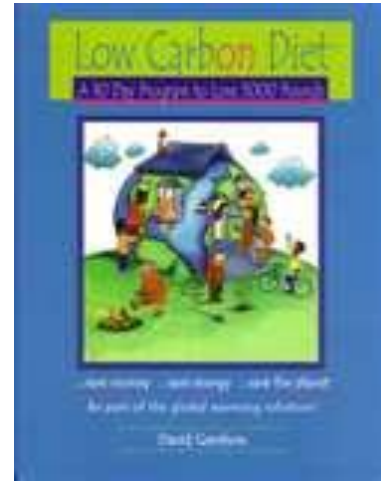
**Events Coordinator:** Planning and coordination of Cool Rochester events, including Climate Cafe Training sessions (approx 6 / year), Partner Recruitments (2 / year) and other events as identified. Report to Director of Operations. Approximately 3-4 hours per week.

**Program Office:** Research, preparation and distribution (collaterals) of major program elements, such as on-line energy-savings program resources, state- and national financial incentives for energy efficiency, development of a Cool Rochester "help line", etc. Coordination of program content between the various Cool Rochester sectors: residential, business, municipal, Cool Champions, campuses, schools, etc. This position would become an additional member of the Cool Rochester Executives, and participate in weekly executive meetings. 5 - 8 hours per week.

**Volunteer Coordinator:** Serve as primary liaison for all Cool Rochester volunteer posts. Facilitate communication among volunteers and plan volunteer recognition events. Report to Director of Operations. Approximately 2-3 hours per week.



Johnny Johnson/Getty Images



**OUR HISTORY**  
By Cheryl Munson

Back in the fall of 2006, Rochester Sierra Club's Global Warming & Energy Committee had an idea to launch a local effort to enforce the initiatives of Sierra Club's Cool Cities program in place in other US cities such as Washington, DC. To expose the concept to the Rochester community, they rolled out the Low Carbon Diet challenge in 2008. By Spring of 2009, a 501-c3 organization was formed that included a core team of individuals with diverse expertise: Bob Siegel, Executive Director; Alison Davidson, Director of Operations; Jim Tappon, Communications Officer; Diane Newton, Project Management Support; Chris DiMuro, Public Relations Manager; Tanya Cuda, Treasurer; Barbara Grosh, Web Developer; and Clayton Munnings, Intern. On June 24, 2009, a public meeting to recruit other volunteers and to identify additional strategic partners and sponsors for the program was held and met with success.

**TIP FROM COLOR BRIGHTON GREEN**

**Reduce, Reuse, Recycle...**and Reap a tax deduction using the "Community Wishbook – Rochester's Charity Giving Guide" web site to donate your unwanted items to over 200 Rochester charities. Whether by agency or by the item you wish to donate, you will find the Wishbook and index an invaluable resource for donations of materials or of your time.

[www.communitywishbook.com](http://www.communitywishbook.com)