

**Think climate change is a problem?**

**Realize we need to act now?**

**Need some direction on what you can do to help?**

**Here are some areas where you can make changes that help  
from Doctors for the Environment Australia.**

## **Travel**

Transport is one of the largest contributors to the carbon footprint of an individual.

- When purchasing your next car, consider its environmental impact and safety ratings. Include hybrid and electric cars, and vehicles that use alternative fuels to petrol or diesel. [www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au](http://www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au) is a useful reference.
- If you need to use your car, try to combine trips (trip-chaining) or share with others.
- Avoid start-stop traffic and stick to the speed limit. Accelerating and decelerating abruptly increases greenhouse gas emissions and wear-and-tear on your vehicle.
- Use public transport, cycle or walk where possible. This is especially important for short trips, as cold car engines generate approximately 40% more greenhouse gases than when warm.
- Consider train travel for interstate trips and when you must fly, buy carbon offsets to help reduce the impact of your travel.

## **Temperature control in the home**

The carbon emissions produced by heating and cooling of homes are dramatically altered by the target temperature. Every degree warmer in winter and degree cooler in summer will increase energy use by around 10 percent.

- Change the set-point of your thermostat. Temperatures of 25-27°C in summer and 18-21°C in winter are comfortable for most people.
- Add extra layers to keep warm in the winter, rather than increasing the temperature on your air conditioning.
- Only heat or cool the rooms you are using.
- Consider installing evaporative air-conditioning, rather than refrigerated.
- Install insulation in walls and additional insulation in your roof space.
- Open your windows on fine days and on cool evenings in the summer. This will not only reduce the need for artificial temperature control but also reduces indoor air pollution which has a range of health consequences.

## **Hot water**

Heating water is energy expensive. Many of the changes you make will not only reduce your electricity bill but also your water consumption.

- Take shorter showers.
- Wash your clothes in cold water.
- Lower the set point of the thermostat of your hot water service, especially in summer\*.
- Turn your hot water service off if you are going to be away for more than a few days.
- When replacing your hot water service consider the energy star rating – contact the SA advisory service on 82041888 or see [www.energyrating.gov.au](http://www.energyrating.gov.au) or [www.energy.sa.gov.au](http://www.energy.sa.gov.au)

\* Thermostats should be set at or above 60°C to prevent growth of Legionella pneumophila which causes Legionnaire's Disease

## Food

The food choices we make have a dramatic impact; from product selection to preparation and waste

- Choose locally produced and grown foods.
- Avoid products that are packaged. When you have to buy packaging, ensure it is recyclable.
- Reduce the amount of red meat you consume in a week and change to sources that produce less greenhouse gases in production, such as kangaroo meat.
- Bring your water with you rather than buying bottled water.
- Only buy what you will use and make a food plan for the week to avoid throwing away food. Compost your food scraps. This will save you money as well as saving the planet – in 2004 Australians threw away \$5.3 billion of food.

## Electronic appliances

Appliances on standby and computers on sleep continue to consume electricity.

- Turn electronic appliances off at the wall when they are not in use.
- Shut down computers after you have finished using them.
- Investigate switching to green energy sources – [www.greenpower.gov.au](http://www.greenpower.gov.au)

## Refrigeration

Refrigeration was a huge advance for food storage, however it can be environmentally costly.

- Ensure that your thermostat is appropriately set using a thermometer.
  - Your fridge should be 3°C to 5°C.
  - Your freezer should be between -18°C and -15°C.
- Try to only use one fridge.
- When buying a new fridge, choose one that has a good energy rating.
  - Use <http://www.energyrating.gov.au/> to research your new appliance.
- Place your fridge in a cool spot, away from heat sources like direct sunlight and ovens.

## Waste

Despite recycling, each Australian sends 880kg of waste to landfill every year.

- Avoid additional packaging or bags when shopping.
- Attach a 'no junk mail' sign to your letter box.
- Use local recycling services provided by your local council, Scouts and other community groups.
- Have a compost bin – not only will you be reducing methane production at rubbish dumps, but it is a great organic fertilizer for your garden.
- Use recycling programmes like Mobile Muster to dispose of your unwanted electrical items.
- Buy products built to last and only buy what you need.

## Clothing

The energy put into the manufacture and transport of clothing is significant. To help offset this, make sure your clothes are well cared for and live their full life.

- Use biodegradable detergents.
- Use a wash cycle that utilizes cool water with low water and energy consumption.
- When you need a new wardrobe, donate your unwanted clothes to an op-shop.
- Fix small holes in your clothes before they become large and un-repairable.
- Use clothes that can no longer be mended as rags and dusters.

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