

# How you can make a difference

## Simple actions you can take to help reduce emissions

Climate change is the single biggest environmental threat facing the world today. In Queensland, climate change is expected to have major impacts, including warmer temperatures, rising sea levels, changes in rainfall patterns and more intense storms and tropical cyclones.

Electricity generation and transport usage are two of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas production.

The Queensland Government has set ambitious goals to achieve Queensland's Toward Q2 carbon target of reducing Queenslanders' carbon footprint by one-third by 2020. Using less power or driving less and using public transport more are effective ways to reduce your personal carbon footprint. There are a number of simple actions you can take to reduce your emissions.



### 1. Join Ezygreen

EzyGreen, launched in July 2010, is a new energy reduction scheme available to Greater Brisbane residents. Under the scheme, residents have access to discounted renewable energy and energy reduction products including GreenPower™, solar hot water and solar power systems, designed to reduce household emissions. Visit <http://www.ezygreen.com.au>.

### 2. Support green power schemes

Green power is a voluntary scheme that gives you the option to support renewable energy by making a small extra payment with your electricity bill.

Renewable energy comes from sources such as the sun, wind, water, geothermal energy and organic matter. Generating electricity from these sources reduces greenhouse gas emissions and reduces impacts on the environment.

### 3. Leave your car at home

Driving a car is the single most polluting activity the majority of us do. When travelling to and from work or school, try riding your bike, car pooling with others or catching public transport. Next time you fill up your car with unleaded petrol, try using E10 (10 per cent ethanol blend). It will run in most 1990 or newer model cars and is better for the environment. If you are in the market for a new car, think about purchasing a 'greener' car (such as a hybrid-engined model, an Ultra-Low Emissions Vehicle rated model or a turbo-diesel car).

### 4. Check your fridge temperature

Many household fridges are over-chilled. Four degrees Celsius is all you need to keep food cool and safe. Make sure there is a gap of at least five centimetres between your fridge and the wall on all sides so air can flow freely. Restricting the air flow can add up to 15 per cent to your fridge's running costs.

### 5. Keep cool with fans and use air conditioning efficiently

Fans are the most energy-efficient cooling system, saving money and producing less greenhouse gas emissions. The optimum temperature for air conditioners is 24 degrees Celsius and they work best when you keep curtains closed and doors closed to areas that do not need to be cooled.

### 6. Lower your hot water temperature

Reducing the temperature on your hot water system's thermostat by as little as five degrees Celsius can reduce your water heating bill by up to 20 per cent. The minimum temperature should be 60 degrees Celsius for health and safety.



## 7. Install energy-efficient lights

Conventional incandescent light bulbs use 95 per cent of their energy producing heat and only five per cent for generating light, making them very inefficient. Compact fluorescent lights last six to 15 times longer and use up to 80 per cent less energy than incandescent light bulbs, saving you money and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Use solar powered lights in the garden or on the balcony.



## 8. Be water wise

A tap that leaks, dripping at one drip per second, will waste 10 000 litres of water a year. Replacing a tap washer is inexpensive and takes just minutes.

Have you considered installing a rainwater tank? They come in a range of shapes and sizes, and rebates are available from the Queensland Government and some local councils.

In addition to your rainwater tank, use other water-saving devices including dual-flush toilets and at least three star-rated showerheads to save more money on your water bill.

## 9. Let your clothes dry naturally

Use the economy settings and try to wash a full load of clothes, but do not overload the machine. Drying your clothes in the sun rather than in the clothes dryer is the most energy and cost-efficient choice potentially saving you around 500 kilograms of greenhouse gas emissions each year.

## 10. Turn off appliances at the wall when you are not using them

Your home appliances may be using standby power if they are still turned on at the wall. Standby power can account for four per cent of your electricity bill. Turn off non-essential appliances at the wall, or buy products with low standby power use.

## 11. Use water-efficient appliances and fittings to limit water waste

Replace your old toilet with a dual-flush system (a rebate may be available when replacing the entire suite). A three- and six-litre dual-flush cistern can halve the amount of water used. A three-star rated showerhead can reduce your energy bill by a fifth if you have an electric hot water system.

## 12. Offset travel

If you fly, check with your airline about offsetting your flight. You can now carbon offset your vehicle for cars, mopeds or trucks through the government's vehicle offset scheme <[www.reversetheeffect.com.au](http://www.reversetheeffect.com.au)>.

## More information

Going green or becoming 'climatesmart' need not cost you the earth with a range of government incentives, rebates, grants and funding available to help you reduce your carbon footprint. For more tips or to calculate how much carbon your household uses visit <[www.climatesmart.qld.gov.au](http://www.climatesmart.qld.gov.au)>.