

# *Individuals :* What You Can Do



The human brain now holds the key to our future. We have to recall the image of the planet from outer space... a single entity in which air, water, and continents are interconnected. That is our home.

-David Suzuki

## Reduce energy consumption

In Manitoba, energy use is the one activity that emits the largest amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Fortunately, there are easy, economical choices to reduce the energy we use.

- Buy energy-efficient lights and appliances. Turn them off when you aren't using them.
- Use a timer on your car's block heater and seasonal outdoor lights.
- Make sure your home and buildings are properly insulated.
- Use your blinds and drapes wisely: window coverings keep the sun's heat out during the summer days and trap heat inside during cold winter nights.
- In summer, turn the temperature setting UP (25 °C instead of 20°C) on your air conditioner if you are leaving your home for the day. Adjust to the ideal temperature when you will be home for an extended time. Shut it off completely if you are leaving for several days.
- During the winter, turn DOWN your thermostat a couple of degrees when you aren't home, and then again at night (it's healthier). A digital programmable thermostat is an excellent investment.
- Make sure the temperature control on your hot-water heater isn't set too high. Don't forget to set it to "vacation" when you're away for extended periods.
- Plant deciduous (leafy) trees on the south side of your home to provide cool shade during the summer and allow sunshine through during the winter. Choose local species because they are adapted to Manitoba's climate and require less water and maintenance.
- Plant coniferous (evergreen) trees on the north side of your home to protect your home from cold winter winds. They also provide welcome shelter for winter birds.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Climate Change Connection - Tips for Climate-Friendly Living

[www.climatechangeconnection.org/pages/tips\\_cfl/tips\\_heat.html](http://www.climatechangeconnection.org/pages/tips_cfl/tips_heat.html)

Manitoba Hydro Power Smart for your home

[www.hydro.mb.ca/saving\\_with\\_ps/psmart\\_home.shtml](http://www.hydro.mb.ca/saving_with_ps/psmart_home.shtml)

## In your car

In Manitoba, the transportation sector uses the most energy and is therefore the greatest source of GHG emissions. Fossil fuel burning vehicles generate over one-third of the province's climate changing pollutants.

The use of single passenger vehicles is one of the most influential ways Manitobans contribute to global greenhouse gas emissions. Fortunately, it's easy to get started on the road to more sustainable transportation choices.

- Leave the car at home whenever you can.
- Walk, cycle, run or skate to reduce GHGs and gain a variety of health benefits.

**When you do drive, here are a few driving and maintenance tips to consider.**

- Check your tire pressure twice a month, especially in changing weather. Under-inflated tires cause greater drag, reducing fuel efficiency by up to five per cent. Be especially vigilant during cold weather, when air volume is reduced due to low temperatures.
- Avoid idling. Just 10 seconds of idling burns more fuel than restarting your engine. If you aren't going anywhere, shut your engine OFF.
- Travel at moderate, steady speeds. Posted speed limits are not just for safety. They also represent optimal rates of travel that maximize vehicle fuel efficiency.
- Lessen your impact by buying a more efficient vehicle or using an ethanol-blended fuel.



### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Climate Change Connection Tips for Climate-Friendly Living

[www.climatechangeconnection.org/pages/tips\\_cfl/tips\\_transport.html](http://www.climatechangeconnection.org/pages/tips_cfl/tips_transport.html)

Downloadable Tips for Drivers

[www.climatechangeconnection.org/pages/tips\\_cfl/tips\\_transport.html](http://www.climatechangeconnection.org/pages/tips_cfl/tips_transport.html)

## Working with cities and communities

Studies have shown that if you stop throwing everything into the garbage and begin recycling, you can cut the amount of household waste you produce by 40 per cent! Biodegradable waste in landfill breaks down anaerobically, producing methane gas. Methane is 21 times more powerful than carbon dioxide as a contributor to climate change.

- Reduce the amount of paper you receive in your mailbox.
- Avoid plastic bags at the checkout. Bring your own re-usable bags. Buy products with the least packaging.
- The more you recycle, the fewer trips to take out the trash and the more recyclables diverted from landfill. Contact your local municipal office for more information.
- Ask Green Manitoba about your local hazardous waste and used oil disposal depots.
- Consider composting your organic waste.
- Maximize greenery. Every bit of greenery helps clean the air, sequesters carbon dioxide and prevents soil erosion.
- Greenery doesn't have to mean huge lawns. Try attractive, no-mow groundcovers and other creative landscaping alternatives to cut down on your grass cutting emissions.
- Nitrogen-based fertilizers produce nitrous oxide, which traps 310 times more heat reflected from the Earth than carbon dioxide. The average suburban lawn is deluged with 10 times as much chemical fertilizer per hectare as farmland. Use mulched clippings instead.
- Buy food that is grown and processed locally, and products that are sourced and manufactured in your region, to reduce the emissions that come from the packaging and transportation.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Climate Change Connection - Tips for Climate-Friendly Living

[www.climatechangeconnection.org/pages/tips\\_cfl/tips\\_yard.html](http://www.climatechangeconnection.org/pages/tips_cfl/tips_yard.html)

Climate Change Connection Shopping and Consuming Tips

[www.climatechangeconnection.org/pages/tips\\_cfl/tips\\_shop.html](http://www.climatechangeconnection.org/pages/tips_cfl/tips_shop.html)

City of Winnipeg Blue Box Recycling

[www.winnipeg.ca/waterandwaste/recycle/bluebox.stm](http://www.winnipeg.ca/waterandwaste/recycle/bluebox.stm)

City of Winnipeg Household Hazardous Waste

[www.winnipeg.ca/waterandwaste/garbage/hhw.stm](http://www.winnipeg.ca/waterandwaste/garbage/hhw.stm)

Green Manitoba Waste Minimization

[www.greenmanitoba.ca/cim/1001C1\\_1T376T3T377.dhtm](http://www.greenmanitoba.ca/cim/1001C1_1T376T3T377.dhtm)

Resource Conservation Manitoba Compost Action Project

[www.resourceconservation.mb.ca/cap/](http://www.resourceconservation.mb.ca/cap/)



## At work

Reducing operating costs can be a fine balance between maintaining quality and efficiency and minimizing excess spending. When it comes to saving energy and resources, and reducing GHGs, better bottom-line business practices also mean climate-friendly living.

- Turn off your electronic equipment or, if you can't turn it off, make sure the power management or energy saving features are turned on.
- Manitoba Hydro's Power Smart program offers lighting program incentives to businesses looking to make their lighting systems more efficient, effective and climate-friendly. For more information, contact the Power Smart Lighting Program at **204-474-3403** (toll free 1-888-624-9376) or online at: [www.hydro.mb.ca/saving\\_with\\_ps/psmart\\_lighting.shtml](http://www.hydro.mb.ca/saving_with_ps/psmart_lighting.shtml).
- **Get on board the Commuter Challenge.** This program is designed to encourage organizations of all types and sizes to adopt more climate-friendly commuting practices, such as car pooling, increased transit use and active transport. For more information, contact Resource Conservation Manitoba at **204-925-3773** or online at: [www.resourceconservation.mb.ca/gci/gci.html](http://www.resourceconservation.mb.ca/gci/gci.html).
- If you are thinking about building new facilities, consider earth energy. Geothermal heat pumps are among the most energy efficient and environmentally friendly electric heating and cooling systems available.
- Photocopy or print on both sides of the page. Put a reusable tray on your copier/printer where old, one-sided documents can be reused for rough copies or internal communications.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Climate Change Connection Tips for Business

[www.climatechangeconnection.org/pages/tips\\_cfl/tips\\_office.html](http://www.climatechangeconnection.org/pages/tips_cfl/tips_office.html)

Manitoba Hydro Earth Energy for Business

[www.hydro.mb.ca/earthpower/for\\_your\\_business.shtml](http://www.hydro.mb.ca/earthpower/for_your_business.shtml)

Manitoba Hydro's Power Smart for Business

[www.hydro.mb.ca/power\\_smart\\_for\\_business/index.shtml](http://www.hydro.mb.ca/power_smart_for_business/index.shtml)

Manitoba Hydro's Power Smart for Industry

[www.hydro.mb.ca/power\\_smart\\_for\\_industry/index.shtml](http://www.hydro.mb.ca/power_smart_for_industry/index.shtml)