



## What Can Residents and Local Businesses Do About Climate Change?

Everyone is concerned about how climate change will affect our lives. We know we can expect stronger storms, more rain, longer droughts and rising seas. As a coastal community, the effects of climate change could affect us more severely. Reducing energy use will reduce costs, save money, and reduce greenhouse gas-causing climate change. Here are some suggestions that residents and businesses can take to become more energy efficient:

- **Buy ENERGY STAR® Products:** ENERGY STAR® is a joint EPA/DOE (NY Department of Energy) program that rates products for energy savings. See [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov). The list has common home and business appliances such as air conditioners, laptops, refrigerators, washers, etc. that generally reduce electricity or fuel usage by 20%, 30%. When purchasing an appliance, make sure it has an ENERGY STAR seal. The product may be slightly more expensive, but you will get that money back in energy cost savings.
- **Upgrade lighting:** There has been a revolution in lighting in the last 5 years. Most light emitting diodes (LEDs) use less than half the electricity as standard bulbs. In most cases, the light is whiter and there is no flickering. LEDs last longer too. But be careful, there are some producers that sell LEDs of inferior quality. Do your research, but replace lights with LEDs and enjoy a major drop in electricity usage!
- **How about no lighting?** Turn off lights in rooms that are unoccupied. Occupancy sensors dim or turn off lights when nobody is in the room and can save you a lot of money and electricity. There are also sensors that sense natural sunlight that comes into a room and dim your lights accordingly.
- **Drive a more fuel efficient car:** While gasoline prices are relatively low right now, you will save money driving a more fuel efficient car and reduce greenhouse gases. Many hybrids and electric cars are twice as efficient or more than standard sedans. Larger cars (mini-vans, trucks) are being made with hybrid engines, too!
- **How about no car?** Walk or bicycle when possible. It's good for your health! Think about carpooling (especially to children's events – your kids will like it!). Think about mass transit (Westchester has a very developed bus system). Fewer cars on our roads means less traffic and cleaner air for all.

- Improve heating and cooling efficiency: Plug the holes in your home and insulate better. Invest the time to have professionals find and plug holes in your home and to install greater insulation to keep the heated/air-conditioned air in. This means less electricity used in the summer and less gas or oil in the winter, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and costs.
- Assess boiler and air conditioning Systems: You should have a professional assess and tune your boiler and air conditioning systems annually. Ensure they are working efficiently and learn when it may be time for a new one. If you need to buy a new system, make sure it has an excellent energy efficiency rating.
- Consider renewable energy: Solar technology is now available and reliable. Solar energy means no greenhouse gas emissions, and the price of such units makes it a bargain compared to getting your electricity from Con Edison. The Solarize campaign of Larchmont and Mamaroneck is over, but New York State incentives still exist to make solar a cost-effective move. Speak to several experienced solar vendors to determine if your home is a candidate for solar and see how much you can save by installing such a system.

We encourage you to consider these tips to reduce our contributions of greenhouse gases to climate change.