

Galaxy Answers Save **R. P.L.A.N.E.T.**

In the U.S. 70 percent of our energy is produced by fossil fuels (coal, oil, and natural gas). Fossil fuels have high CO₂ emissions. This is predicted to have undesirable climate change consequences. By reducing our energy use, CO₂ emissions are reduced as well. The average U.S. household accounts for release of 55,000 lbs of CO₂ annually. Listed below are a few simple and effective things everyone can do to cut CO₂ emissions. (Prioritized actions are listed by the amount saved; actions 1-7 will reduce the average household CO₂ emissions by 20%)

Annual pounds of CO₂ saved per household for each action are in parentheses.

- 1 R. reduce weekly solid waste by 25 gal. (2,650 lbs, every pound that goes to the landfill generates 1.5 lbs greenhouse gasses from transporting and decomposition. The average household produces 4.5 lbs solid waste daily, of which a third is packaging)**
- 2 P. auto engine tune up and maintain tire pressure (1,500 lbs, increases mileage)**
- 3 L. use programmable thermostat; set 68° day 58° night (1,400 lbs, home heating accounts for over ¼ of home heating bill)**
- 4 A. dry clothes outside (1,386 lbs, let solar and wind energy do the drying, they cost nothing and are renewable)**
- 5 N. recycle ALL recyclables (1,300 lbs, example: recycled aluminum alone saves 95% over producing new aluminum from raw materials)**
- 6 E. turn computer off over night (1,120 lbs, equivalent to leaving 2 100/w light bulbs on 16 hours every day)**
- 7 T. reduce driving speed from 75 to 55 miles per hour (1,110 lbs, with 30 mpg vehicle)**
- 8 S. seal and insulate heating and air conditioning ducts (800 lbs)**
- 9 G. buy an Energy Star appliance (refrigerator 500 lbs, dishwasher 100 lbs, front-loading washer 500 lbs, air conditioner 600 lbs)**
- 10 Q. eat meat free meals every other day (470 lbs, meat requires 20 times more energy than corn or soy per ton. Includes the 80 m tons of methane released)**
- 11 M. replace or clean air conditioner filter (350 lbs, makes AC more efficient)**
- 12 B. replace 3 incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent (300 lbs, more light for less)**
- 13 H. switch one load of laundry each week from hot to cold (275 lbs, heating water requires a lot of energy)**
- 14 K. install low flow shower head (250 lbs, uses less HOT water)**
- 15 C. install insulating blanket on water heater (175 lbs, heating water represents 20% of household CO₂ emissions; turn thermostat to 120 degrees)**
- 16 D. get rid of junk mail (95 lbs, write Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, PO Box 9008, Farmington, NY 11735 & request removal from all 3rd class mailing lists)**
- 17 J. take cloth shopping bags rather than using store plastic or paper (74 lbs, in U.S. 100 billion plastic bags are produced annually, using 12 million barrels of oil; 4 billion paper bags are produced using 14 million trees.)**
- 18 O. plant a tree (25 lbs, shade cools and plants absorb carbon)**
- 19 I. water your lawn only once a week (small savings from pumping water)**
- 20 F. use ethanol instead of gasoline (0 lbs, production and processing of corn requires high fuel input; ethanol yields less energy per gal.)**

The choices you make about your personal energy consumption are important.