

Resources To Help You Be Energy Efficient

There are many resources online that can help you in determining energy usage. Some resources, included local ones, are listed below.

Estimate your home energy appliance use:

<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/save-electricity-and-fuel/appliances-and-electronics/estimating-appliance-and-home>

Consult an Electric Appliance Calculator (WPS):

https://accel.wisconsinpublicservice.com/home/electric_calculator.aspx

Check out an MGE Energy Meter from the Monona Library! Navigate to this link, <https://www.linkcat.info/>, and then search using the term “watts up”.

Find out more about the MGE Shared Solar

Program: <https://www.mge.com/environment/green-power/solar/shared-solar-program.htm?redirect=index.htm>

Consider participating in the MGE Green Power

Tomorrow Program: <https://www.mge.com/environment/green-power/gpt/>

Calculate your carbon footprint:

<http://css.umich.edu/factsheets/carbon-footprint-factsheet>

<https://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/consider-your-impact/carbon-calculator/>

<https://www.focusonenergy.com/myhome>

Schedule a Home Energy Audit:

<https://www.focusonenergy.com/residential#program-assessments-and-insulation>

Find out more about Energy Star:

<https://www.energystar.gov/>

Eco-Action Tuesdays

Eco-Action Tuesdays is a program series based on the “ripple effect”.

Beginning in our own backyard, we explore sustainability issues through hands-on, entertaining presentations on the fourth Tuesday, March–October.

Discover how the eco-actions you take at home—and share with others—can ripple throughout the community, creating a healthier, more sustainable place.

mymonona.com/163/Eco-Action-Tuesdays

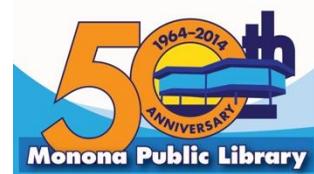
Eco-Action Tuesdays are sponsored by:



and

willy street co-op

With in-kind support from:



Monona Public Library
1000 Nichols Road
Monona, WI 53716
(608) 222-6127
mononlibrary.org



Energy Challenge

Why Should I Be Energy Efficient?

Reducing the amount of energy we use at home has important benefits for our health, our wallets, and our environment. Coal, oil, and natural gas still supply most of our transportation and household energy needs but burning fossil fuels releases more carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere than Earth's oceans and plant life can naturally absorb. The buildup of CO₂ traps heat in the atmosphere, which is raising the average temperature on Earth and, in turn, is causing extreme weather events that threaten lives, property, and food production and that are costly to recover from. Moving away from fossil fuels into **Renewable Energy** is in its early stages and it will take many years to transition our energy system. **Energy Conservation** and **Energy Efficiency** practices are of the utmost importance during and in preparation for this transition to directly reduce the amount of CO₂ released in the environment.

Helpful Hints: What Can You Do Right Now?

It's impossible to immediately provide our energy needs with solar and wind. Not enough solar panels, wind turbines, and electric vehicles have been manufactured to date. But we can make a significant impact in the interim through **Energy Conservation and Energy Efficiency**, by choosing devices and developing habits that use less energy to accomplish the same amount of work, and by noticing and turning off energy when it's not needed.

You can do much RIGHT NOW to help roll back climate change. You'll be saving money too, which you can use to fund future clean energy upgrades. Make it a habit and a part of your decision-making processes to reduce carbon or *decarbonize*. For instance, when you flip on a light switch, think of it as if you're turning a carbon pump on and off. Which appliances will pump less CO₂ into the atmosphere? Driving a vehicle 25 miles today leaves a 25-mile trail of CO₂. Can you reduce that? By reducing the amount of energy used, the size and cost of building energy systems to meet future needs is also reduced.

Try to quantify the energy you use. Finding out how much energy something uses and how often you use it helps focus your efforts on the largest energy uses first, allowing the most impact for your efforts. Monitor energy use at home; compare it to past years.

Do you wonder what the biggest electricity user in your home is? Many devices (such as a digital receiver) use energy even when they appear to be off. Energy meters tell you how much energy your plug-in appliances and devices consume. This can allow you to "target" some of the biggest consumers of electric energy. The meters not only tell you instantly how many watts are consumed; they can also tell you how much it costs you on a monthly basis. Try one out, they're free to check out at the Monona Library!

Stay cool, use a fan! Fans give a cooling effect by moving air and only use a fraction of the energy needed to run an air conditioner. You should be able to raise your thermostat a few degrees when using fans and still stay cool. Fans are much less expensive to operate than an air-conditioning unit, you'll save money and use less energy.

Bump Up Your Energy Efficiency Game

Change your household vehicle use habits. Walk or ride a bike to school or work; for longer distances, carpool or choose public transit rather than drive alone. Group errands to make fewer trips. Vehicles are the source of 30% of CO₂ emissions in the atmosphere!

Shop mindfully. Reduce, reuse, recycle, and **refuse!** Choose to buy things that are produced/grown locally, less processed, and not excessively packaged. Consider the source, where an item was made or resourced. Where did it come from? Can you get it locally? Is it single-use or multi-use? What happens when it is no longer useful? Do I really need it? To decide not to purchase something you don't really need is, in essence, decarbonizing! (See the Shopping Challenge.)

Plant trees, rain gardens and vegetable gardens. These draw CO₂ out of the atmosphere. Shade trees, properly sited, moderate indoor temperature, reducing heating/cooling costs. Your carbon footprint becomes smaller when you grow some of your own food.

Support MGE's efforts to get to 100% renewable energy: join Green Power Tomorrow. Sign up by phone or online; it adds only a small amount to your monthly electric bill. Participate in MGE's Shared Solar program.

Sign up for a Focus On Energy home energy audit and make and act on an implementation plan.

If you are in need of a new appliance, look for one that is Energy Star-approved—for purchases of major appliances, look for Energy Star comparative ratings.

Take the Household Energy Efficiency Challenge!

- 1. Team Up for Success.** Test your awareness, creativity and commitment to reducing your family's household energy use. *How far can your team go?* As a family (or an individual teaming up with a friend), choose a project leader who will record everyone's ideas. Decide on a special reward you can all share for participating in the energy efficiency challenge.
- 2. Take Inventory.** Choose one room in your house or apartment (or your garage or shed) and list all the energy users in that space you can find. Be careful not to miss things like ceiling fans, clocks and lights on coffee pots, battery chargers, thermostats and things in cabinets, etc. Next list what job(s) these items do for you.
- 3. Brainstorm Alternatives.** Once you think you've found all the items using energy in a room, take turns thinking of ways you might use these items that consume energy less often, more efficiently, or perhaps not at all, to get their jobs done. Record your ideas. As an example, in the kitchen, perhaps you might try keeping coffee hot (or water cold) by using a thermos to avoid reheating the coffee (or opening the refrigerator door) all day. Or, you might use a fan instead of air conditioning.
- 4. Make a Plan.** Now pick one or more ideas you would like to try, or one energy efficiency plan you can work on together. Write down what you will do, for how long, and how much energy you think you can save.
- 5. Practice, Practice, Practice.** Once you've completed the challenge on the first room, repeat these steps throughout the summer with two other rooms, which might include the garage or a shed. What did you discover? What changes will you keep doing?
- 6. Reward Yourself!** Record the results of your challenge and submit them with your other Eco-Challenges. Remember to reward yourself/yourselves for taking part in this challenge!