

# Commit to Reducing Your Carbon Footprint

## *Here's How:*



### What We Eat

- Eat more plant-based foods and fewer animal-based foods.
- Eat local—and organic.
- Minimize your food scraps—Buy what you need and eat what you buy.
- Compost your food scraps rather than landfill them to create a valuable soil amendment and avoid methane emissions. See our resources list for more information on how to get started.
- Plant a garden.

### How We Get Around

- Choose active (walking and biking) and public (trains and buses) transportation over solo car trips.
- Drive less, by mapping out errands to reduce the number of miles driven, and carpool when possible.
- If driving less is not an option, consider switching to an electric or hybrid vehicle.
- Travel less and travel wisely—holiday closer to home, opt for train travel over plane travel, choose non-stop flights over connecting flights, use video conferencing, and consider carbon offsets.



### What We Buy and Wear

- Buy less stuff. Period.
- Buy quality clothing rather than “fast fashion” and buy second-hand.
- Support and buy from companies that are sustainable—look for a “fair trade” or similar logo.
- Wash your clothes in cold water. Doing two loads of laundry weekly in cold water instead of hot or warm water can save up to 500 pounds of carbon dioxide each year.

## ...Reduce Your Carbon Footprint



## Around the House

- Reduce, reuse, and recycle to waste less.
- Lower your thermostat in winter and raise it in summer; use fans instead of air conditioners if possible.
- Choose energy-efficient appliances—or none at all—and use a clothesline to dry your clothes!
- Switch lights off when you leave a room and unplug electronic and other devices when they are not in use.

## In Our Community

- Move your money to make a difference—investigate whether your bank supports/finances the fossil fuel industry—and take your business elsewhere if so.
- Purchase carbon offsets and/or renewable energy credits—and ask the Village to do the same.
- Attend local meetings—the Village of Winnetka, New Trier School District 203, and Winnetka Public School District 36 have long-term strategic plans—and advocate for sustainable thinking and action.



## Metrics Matter

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency offers an easy-to-use Household Carbon Footprint Calculator that provides a general idea of your family's current impact in the areas of home energy, transportation, and waste. No carbon footprint calculator is perfect or comprehensive. Some of the suggestions in this guide may not be included in the EPA's calculator but will make meaningful impacts in reducing the amount of greenhouse gases your household generates. Carbon footprint calculators are also offered by other governmental organizations (like the United Nations), non-governmental organizations (like the World Wildlife Fund & CoolClimate/UC-Berkeley), and private companies (like CarbonFootprint.com).

## Resources

### Get Started Composting in Winnetka

<https://gogreenwinnetka.org/f/get-started-composting>

### Carbon offsets

<https://native.eco/our-approach/carbon-offsets/>

### Renewable Energy Credits

<https://cleanpathpartners.com/>

### EPA Household Carbon Footprint Calculator

<https://www3.epa.gov/carbon-footprint-calculator/>

## Words Matter

What is a carbon footprint? It is the total amount of greenhouse gases (including carbon dioxide and methane) caused by an individual, event, organization, service, place or product, expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent. It describes the best estimate that we can get of the full climate change impact of something. If we want to reduce a carbon footprint, we first must assess and measure it so appropriate reduction strategies may be investigated.

## Actions Matter

What you do makes a difference. And you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make. We hope this Guide helps you to understand, measure, and reduce your carbon footprint in ways that work for you in your home and in our community.

## GO GREEN WINNETKA

Stay up-to-date on sustainability efforts in our community by signing up for our newsletter at:  
[gogreenwinnetka.org](https://gogreenwinnetka.org)

Join us for one of our monthly meetings and follow us on Facebook and Instagram.