

# Earth Week Challenge Log

## What Is Your Carbon Footprint?



### Carbon Footprint Log Instructions

We want Alameda kids and families to keep track of their own carbon footprint for Earth Week. We are hoping this will be a starting point for you to discuss and discover ways to reduce your own environmental impact. At the end of the week we will use the information from the log to find out how many tons of carbon dioxide emissions the Alameda community collectively saved.

### Carbon Footprint

Is a term which has been given to the impact we have on the environment. In the same way we leave footprints when we walk along the beach, every action we perform every day leaves an imprint on the earth's environment. Every time we consume energy, we release carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, and the amount of carbon dioxide that is released is counted as our carbon footprint. This is as unique as a fingerprint or footprint, because every person uses energy differently.

### Did you know?

Right now the United States releases about **40,000 pounds** of carbon dioxide per person each year. If we can reduce energy use enough to lower greenhouse gas emissions by about 2 percent per year, in 10 years we will "lose" about **7,000 pounds** of carbon dioxide emissions per person.

### Prizes, Prizes, Prizes!!!

At the end of the week all those who have turned in an Earth Week Challenge Log will be entered into a random drawing to receive a variety of prizes....so get your log in!

### What a difference you can make

#### *Schools, Businesses and Communities*

- Turn off computer monitors when not in use. A Lawrence Berkely Lab study in 1999 approximated that one computer and monitor left on overnight is responsible for power plants emitting nearly one ton of carbon dioxide per year! If every computer and monitor in the US were shut off overnight, **8 large powers stations could be shut down and 7 million fewer tons of carbon dioxide** would be emitted!
- Recycle all paper. Every ton of 30% post-consumer recycled paper saves 3,000 gallons of water – equivalent to about daily usage of 40 households – and 2,000 kwh of electricity. Carbon Dioxide reduction: **4,000 lbs per ton of paper recycled**

#### *Getting Around*

- Whenever possible, walk, bike, carpool or use mass transit. Carbon dioxide reduction **(for every gallon of gasoline you save): 20 pounds.**
- When you buy a car, choose one that gets good gas mileage. Carbon dioxide reduction **(if your new car gets 10 mpg more than your old one): about 2,500 pounds per year.**

### ***Reduce, Reuse, Recycle***

- Reduce waste: buy minimally packaged goods; choose reusable products over disposable ones; recycle. Carbon dioxide reduction (**if you cut down your garbage by 25 percent**): **1,000 pounds per year**.
- If your car has an air conditioner, make sure its coolant is recycled whenever you have it serviced. Equivalent carbon dioxide reduction: **thousands of pounds**.

### ***Small Investments That Pay Off***

- Buy energy efficient compact fluorescent bulbs for your most-used lights. Carbon dioxide reduction (by replacing one frequently used bulb): **about 500 pounds per year**.
  - Install low-flow shower heads to use less water. Take a 5-minute shower. Carbon dioxide reduction: **up to 300 pounds per year**.
  - Caulk and weatherstrip around doors and windows to plug air leaks. Carbon dioxide reduction: **up to 1,000 pounds per year**.
  - Wrap your water heater in an insulating jacket. Carbon dioxide reduction: **up to 1,000 pounds**

### ***Home Appliances***

- Run your dishwasher only with a full load. Use the energy-saving setting to dry the dishes. Don't use heat when drying. Carbon dioxide reduction: **200 pounds per year**.
- Wash clothes in warm or cold water, not hot. Carbon dioxide reduction: (for two loads a week): **up to 500 pounds per year**.
- Turn down your water heater thermostat; 120 degrees F. is usually hot enough. Carbon dioxide reduction (for each 10-degree adjustment): **500 pounds per year**.

### ***Home Heating and Cooling***

- Don't overheat or overcool rooms. Adjust your thermostat (lower in winter, higher in summer). Carbon dioxide reduction (for each 2-degree adjustment): **about 500 pounds per year**.
- Clean or replace air filters as recommended. Cleaning a dirty air conditioner filter can save 5 percent of the energy used. Carbon dioxide reduction: **about 75 pounds per year**.