

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

How to reduce your carbon footprint and cut excess carbon emissions

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Did you know that according to the World Health Organization, climate change causes 150,000 deaths every single year, and this number is rising? Well, if you did not, you know now.

The definition of climate change, according to the Oxford dictionary, is “a change in global or regional climate patterns, in particular a change apparent from the mid to late 20th century onwards and attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels.”

If climate change continues at the rate it is going right now, then the Earth will continue to rise in temperature, which will

cause devastation to all life on Earth. This does not have to happen, though. There are some ways that you, the reader, can help to lower your carbon footprint, and help to make a better world for the future.

Some ways to help lower your carbon footprint are:

- Reducing the amount of plastics used. Since the production of plastic emits lots of carbon emissions. Reducing the amount of plastics used will help lower the needs for plastics, and therefore will help lower, or even eliminate the amount of carbon emissions from plastics.
- Using cleaner modes of transportation, such as biking and walking. Motor vehicles, such as cars and motorcycles, are one of the biggest carbon

emitters used globally. By walking or biking to places more, the amount of carbon used from cars will be reduced, and will help to lower carbon emissions globally.

- If walking or biking places is not applicable, then using public transportation is another alternative. Although public transport does emit carbon emissions, using it will overall use less carbon than using your own car.
- Using less electricity. From unplugging appliances when you go out to turning off lights when they are unnecessary, using less electricity will help to lower your carbon footprint, and save a couple dollars, which is a win-win.
- Recycling as much as possible. Instead of getting one use

products, such as a plastic water bottle, try using a reusable bottle instead.

- Reducing the amount of meat consumed. Meat products, such as pork and beef, produce an abundance of carbon and methane, which both contribute to global warming. By eating less meat, your carbon footprint will decrease.
- In the winter, instead of turning up the heater, use extra blankets and thicker clothes. For the heater to work, fossil fuels have to be burned to warm up your home, so by using the heater less, your carbon footprint will decrease, and your gas bill will also go down.
- When shopping, thrift more. Since consumerism uses a lot of fossil fuels, along with not being

great for the environment, thrift shopping is another way to help reduce your carbon emissions. Along with helping out the environment, oftentimes thrift shopping is cheaper than buying new clothes and products.

The ways to lower your carbon emissions listed above are not the only ways that carbon emissions can be lowered, but they are some of the most accessible to many people. If every person globally does at least two of these, then globally, we would be able to make lots of progress towards lowering our carbon footprint, and reducing temperatures globally. Now that you have read this article, spread the word to others. Educating people is the best way to get the best results.

HEALTHY PLANET

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Methods for cleaning and protecting our ocean and rivers

Jocelyn Medina
JOE SERNA JR. CHARTER SCHOOL

Reflect on how you can clean and protect our rivers and oceans.

Protecting our oceans and rivers is important, not just for the animals that live there, but also for the people. It's important for us because the air that we breathe, the ocean produces over half of the world's oxygen and absorbs 50 times more carbon dioxide than our atmosphere.

Overall, the first method to protect our rivers and oceans is to eat sustainable seafood. There are a lot of ways to eat sustainable seafood, buy less plastic and bring a reusable bag.

Second of all, you have the right to vote on ocean and river issues. You may ask how you can do that. If there is an election on any ocean and river issue, don't be afraid to vote, and vote for the right to protect our rivers and oceans. One way to vote is by electing a public official who supports good ocean policies that can help us protect rivers and oceans.

Another way to protect our oceans is to use less water, so excess runoff and wastewater will not flow into the ocean.

There is another way that most people don't do because they are careless. The way to protect our rivers and oceans is to reduce vehicle pollution. Use fuel-efficient vehicles, carpool, or ride a bike.

Above all, another strategy to help and protect our rivers and oceans is to reduce pollution. One way to do that is to choose non-toxic chemicals and dispose of all chemicals properly.

What if you like fishing? Do it properly. Follow “catch and release” practice and keep more fish alive, and respect habitats.

Cut down on the plastic you use every day. Around 8 million to 9 million metric tons of plastic gets into our oceans every year, harming plant life, water quality,

FIND OUT MORE

• oceanservice.noaa.gov/ocean/help-our-ocean.html

• www.livekindly.co/easy-ways-you-can-protect-oceans

• TikTok: @lizilivingblue

• TikTok: @talkcleanmagazine

and marine animals around the globe.

Here is an example of how we are damaging our oceans: The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is the biggest patch of plastic in the ocean, located between Hawaii and California. Also, keep in mind the ocean covers 71% of the earth's surface but only 2% of that is protected.

There is a movement in some cities, countries and at certain restaurant chains to get rid of plastic straws, bags, utensils, and other smaller plastic items that can be easily swapped out for something more sustainable. People leave plastic bags in the ocean and sea turtles see the plastic bags and think there are jellyfish when they are really plastic bags, and then they get trapped and die.

TikTok account @lizilivingblue shows that Hawaii and President Biden have pledged to protect 30% of the oceans by 2030.

Think about it like this: Ocean health equals human health.

Another example of how we are damaging our oceans is that 90% of seabirds have ingested plastic, and 100,000 marine animals die per year due to plastic. Also, 100% of baby sea turtles have plastic in their stomachs. Only 9% of plastic is actually recycled.

In conclusion, let's all work together and help our oceans by doing all of these things.

How to reduce trash in the Mokelumne River

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Recycling your water bottles, Coke cans, Sprite cans, etc., and pretty much anything like that could help save the environment, because if you recycle, the plastic doesn't go into the rivers or oceans. If you recycle, then it will make sea animals in less danger of dying from choking on or being caught in plastic.

There have been millions of sea animals that have died from plastic that was not recycled and was thrown into the rivers. There are still not enough people and petitions to help save the fish in the Mokelumne River and the San Francisco Bay from

dying every year from plastic objects like water bottles and the plastic circulars that go on cans of sodas.

Although many people have warned others about the amount of plastic that is being put into the Mokelumne River, not everyone cares about the rivers and the plastic, which I think needs to change.

Picking up trash from the ground can help the fish that swim in the Mokelumne River survive. Since there is already lots and lots of plastic in the Mokelumne River, it makes it even more dangerous for the fish and other creatures that swim at the top of the rivers and close to shore because it is

easier for them to get injured or killed by the plastic since there closer to it.

The plastic that is on the ground can and does get shifted into the Mokelumne River and hurts the sea animals because it goes further and further out to everywhere in the Mokelumne River and eventually the San Francisco Bay.

If we pick up the garbage and plastic that is going into the Mokelumne River, it would be a safer area for fish to swim in. I feel as though more people should be involved in picking up trash and plastic from the ground because it will not only be safer for the fish but it will be cleaner for the ecosystem!

Let's keep Lodi Lake clean by recycling

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HERITAGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Let's recycle! Why? If we do not recycle the rivers are going to be polluted. It will be dirty and we do not want that. The rivers need to be clean because an-

imals like fish or turtles can be harmed. Plastic or trash can affect the animals. You may ask yourself how? Well, whenever a plastic enters an animal's habitat it could hurt the animals. What I will do to help is get recycling bags and pick up all the trash.

CARBON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

harmful gasses from the atmosphere and gives clean oxygen.

Secondly, the most effective method of capturing carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere is direct air capture. Direct air capture involves using machines to capture and remove CO2 from the atmosphere. After the carbon is removed from the atmosphere, it is transformed into a liquid form, and it gets transported underground. This liquid can be combined with hydrogen to create a carbon neutral fuel that is harmless to the environment.

Direct air capture would be located just out-

side of big cities that emit most of the carbon emissions. This method might be expensive, but the cost would be very worth it to help save our society.

Lastly, biomass waste, such as trash or garbage, agricultural residue, gaseous waste, and forest management can be converted to fuels while still capturing Co2. In this method, carbon dioxide is left behind while biomass is burned. The carbon dioxide that was left behind can be stored underground for later use, or mixed with a substance like concrete and placed on top of the ground.

Using this method, approximately 1.5 million tons of carbon can be removed from the atmosphere in a year. Utilizing

this method and methods similar to this one, energy generation and carbon removal could increase by 50 times. This method might not be as effective as the other two, but it would still be very beneficial if people used it.

In summary, our society is in grave danger, but it is not too late to take action. From doing something as simple as planting more trees, to donating money to a foundation that builds air capture systems, anyone can take immediate action.

If our society does not take action as soon as possible, the droughts will only get worse, and animals will continue to die. Although there is still time to react, people should start now.

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