

Save Energy around Your Home

Topic: Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Background Information

Electricity generated by fossil fuels emits greenhouse gases. Some families are switching to green energy to reduce their household carbon emissions. Call your electricity provider to ask if they offer green alternatives. If not, why not?

The table below shows greenhouse gas emissions from various household activities in the average Australian home.

Travel for shopping, personal business, recreation	23%
Travel to work	11%
Clothes drying and dishwashing	2%
Cooking	3%
Lights	5%
Wastes	5%
Water heating	16%
Home heating and cooling	11%
Fridge/ Freezer	9%
Electronic and other appliances	15%

Source: <http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/gwci/households.html>

You Will Need:

- access to the internet
- Recent information about what you can do to help reduce carbon emissions. Some excellent resources include:

[We are the Weather Makers](#) - Tim Flannery
[An Inconvenient Truth](#) - Al Gore.

What You Need to Do:

Draw a pie graph that represents the information in the above table.

Collect your most recent household electricity bills and make a note of the average amount of electricity your family uses per day. Your task is to try to reduce the amount of energy you use around the home every day.

With your family, class or small group, brainstorm ways in which you can reduce your energy usage around the home. Set a target daily average and give yourself a time by which you want to achieve your target. Now, try to convince your family to meet this challenge with you.

Read Al Gore's book – **An Inconvenient Truth**. Pages 306 – 310 are all about saving energy at home and it includes these headings:

- Choose energy-efficient lighting
- Choose energy-efficient appliances when making new purchases
- Properly operate and maintain your appliances
- Heat and cool your house efficiently
- Insulate your home
- Get a home energy audit
- Conserve hot water
- Reduce standby power waste
- Improve the efficiency of your home office
- Switch to green power

'We are the Weather Makers' by Tim Flannery will also give you a lot of great ideas to reduce your carbon emissions. Read the 'Over to You' section at the end of the book.

Chart your progress on a bar graph. Hopefully, over the coming months your graph will indicate less and less usage.

Extension

Industry, small businesses and government agencies contribute a great deal to greenhouse gas emissions. Find a company or agency that is brave enough to take on the challenge of reducing their greenhouse gas emissions and will share their progress with you.

Select a company and find out what they are doing to reduce their carbon emissions. This might involve reading their environmental policy, checking out their website, or interviewing people from the company.

'And remember, if you can cut your personal emissions by 70 per cent, so can schools, companies, farms and many other organisations.' Tim Flannery

S E T T H E M T H E C H A L L E N G E !

Curriculum Links

English: Speaking and Listening, Reading, Writing

Society & Environment: Investigation, Communication & Participation, Resources

Mathematics: Chance and Data