



GLOBAL WARMING ACTIVIST TOOLKIT

We've never faced an environmental threat quite like global warming. Fortunately the issue is finally getting the public attention it deserves. Whether it's a report on the evening news, a hearing in the capitol, or a conversation around the kitchen-table, people everywhere are talking about climate change.

However, as we all know, just talking about the threat of global warming -- or any environmental problem -- isn't enough. What we need is action. Action from individuals, and also from our elected officials. The only way that will happen is if we join together to show our leaders that the public supports bold solutions that solve the problem. This toolkit offers a sampling of activities that an individual can act upon to make a real difference in Environment California's work on global warming.

10 actions to help solve global warming:

- 1) **Write letters to your legislators** asking them to support solutions to global warming.
- 2) **Call Gov. Schwarzenegger** to urge him to cut global warming pollution from cars.
- 3) **Write your newspaper** in support of solutions to global warming.
- 4) **Sign up 10 friends to receive Environment California's e-mail alerts** so they can get involved.
- 5) **Host a movie night** with your friends and family to watch "An Inconvenient Truth" and then hand out the Global Warming Activist Toolkit.
- 6) **Create a 'phone tree'** with friends and neighbors so you can generate phone calls into a legislator's office before an important vote.
- 7) **Coordinate a meeting with your state assembly member** and ask them to champion bills to cut global warming pollution.
- 8) **Go Solar!** Join Environment California's work to create a "million solar roofs" in California by considering solar for your home or business, and by encouraging five friends to do the same.
- 9) **Get your city to pass a resolution** urging Congress to pass the Safe Climate Act.
- 10) **Host a house party fundraiser** for Environment California so we can do more to solve global warming.



Global Warming Action #1

Write letters to your legislators

Write a letter to your U.S. Representative:

California has taken the lead on stopping global warming. With passage of the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32), California is committed to cutting global warming pollution statewide.

Now it is time for the rest of the country to follow. Environment California is working with Representative Henry Waxman (Los Angeles) to build support for the Safe Climate Act, science-based legislation that would prevent the worst impacts of global warming by cutting U.S. emissions by 80% by mid-century. You can help by writing your member of Congress and urging him/her to cosponsor the Safe Climate Act.

To find your member of Congress, go to <http://www.house.gov/> and type your zip code in the upper-left corner. Write your letter and send it to a “district office” in California (it’ll get there quicker than the office in D.C.).

SAMPLE LETTER:

Dear member of Congress,

Global warming is the defining environmental challenge of our time, and the window to act is closing rapidly. Scientists have warned that without action to reduce global warming pollution below today’s levels within the next 10 years, we will be unable to avoid the most dangerous impacts of global warming.

I am writing to urge you to cosponsor the Safe Climate Act, legislation that would set science-based limits on global warming pollution to prevent the worst effects of global warming. The Safe Climate Act is a forward-looking bill that mirrors California’s own targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

If we act now, and act decisively, we can stop global warming and protect our children and future generations. Please support legislation like the Safe Climate Act, which will reduce global warming pollution by 80% by 2050.

Sincerely,

Write a letter to your state assembly member and senator:

Last year Environment California worked to pass a first-in-the nation law (AB 32) in California that requires a 25% reduction in global warming pollution statewide by 2020. These reductions can be achieved using clean energy technologies such as hybrid vehicles and solar power.

There are many important bills being considered by the California legislature that would reduce our state's dependence on fossil fuels and cut global warming pollution. You can help by voicing your support for these bills in letters to your state assembly member and senator.

To find your state assembly member and senator, go to <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html>. Write the letter and send it to either their Capitol office or district office.

SAMPLE LETTER:

Dear Senator,

From the threat of rising sea levels and shrinking snowpack, to extreme drought and increased wildfires, global warming poses tremendous risks to California's environment, economy and people.

Fortunately, many of the solutions we need are at our fingertips. From hybrid cars to solar power, we have win-win solutions to global warming that will simultaneously reduce our dependence on oil, reduce air pollution, and protect pristine places from oil drilling and mining.

I hope you will support and co-author these important bills to help solve global warming:

- *AB 1470: will promote solar hot water systems and other technologies to reduce demand for natural gas*
- *AB 493: will establish a program that provides rebates for people who buy cleaner cars while creating fees for dirtier ones*
- *SB 494: will require by 2020 that one-half of all new cars are "clean alternative fuel vehicles" like electric vehicles, hydrogen fuel cell vehicles, and flex-fuel vehicles that can run on renewable biofuels*

Sincerely,



Global Warming Action #2 Urge Governor Schwarzenegger to cut global warming pollution from cars

Here in California we have the ability—some would say the responsibility—to lead the world in stopping global warming. Last year, Gov. Schwarzenegger put California on the world stage when he supported a mandatory cap on global warming pollution. With bold leadership and immediate action, California can continue to lead the way in solving global warming.

Perhaps most important, we need to cut global warming pollution from the millions of cars in our state. Producing cleaner cars is half the solution, but the other half is to reduce the number of miles we all drive every day.

There's certainly a lot each of us can do on our own to reduce the amount we drive – by avoiding needless trips and using public transit – but none of it is as easy as it should be. Real progress will come when our elected officials are united behind the goal of promoting public transit, smart growth, and other policies that help reduce how much we drive. To make that happen, **we need Gov. Schwarzenegger to create a statewide plan to reduce the number of miles driven in California by 20% by 2020.**

You can help by calling his office and sharing your support.

Here's a sample message:

"Hi, my name is _____ and I'm from _____. I'm calling to urge Gov. Schwarzenegger to help stop global warming by supporting public transit, smart growth and other policies to reduce how much we drive. Specifically, I think we need a statewide plan to cut the number of miles driven in California by 20% by 2020."

You can call any of the following offices:

State Capitol Building
Phone: 916-445-2841

Riverside Office
Phone: 951-680-6860

Fresno Office
Phone: 559-445-5295

San Diego Office
Phone: 619-525-4641

Los Angeles Office
Phone: 213-897-0322

San Francisco Office
Phone: 415-703-2218



Global Warming Action #3

Write your newspaper about global warming

Writing a letter to the editor of your local newspaper is a powerful way to publicize your point of view about global warming. That's because the opinion pages are one of the most read parts of the newspaper, and something that every elected official pays close attention to.

What to do:

- 1) Find out the policies for submitting a letter to your newspaper. Most newspapers state their policies for submitting letters in on the opinion page.
- 2) Write your letter, and make sure you follow the newspaper's procedures exactly for submitting it.
- 3) Follow-up with the letter editor to be sure he/she received your letter, that it meets their requirements, and to ask when they are planning to print it.

Tips:

- Make one clear point in your letter and keep it simple.
- Be opinionated, but avoid exaggeration.
- If you can tie your letter to a recent article in the paper it is more likely to be printed.
- Use your personal experience. Express your concern about the issue in your own way. Example: "Over the last 30 years, the winters in my hometown have slowly changed..." or "Even my 10 year old daughter understands that driving less means less pollution."
- Short letters get printed. Clever letters get read.
- It should take no longer than an hour to write, edit, and submit your letter



Global Warming Action #4 Sign up 10 friends to receive Environment California's e-mail alerts

Taking effective action to stop global warming is just a click away.

Through Environment California's weekly e-mail action list-serve, thousands of Californians are given the chance to make a big difference by supporting real action on global warming, clean air, clean water and other important environmental issues.

Currently, 100,000 Californians receive Environment California's weekly e-mail alerts. But what if 200,000 had the chance to take a simple political action each week? Or 500,000? Or one million? We would be exponentially more effective.

You can help engage more citizens in Environment California's work to protect our environment by **signing up 10 friends, family and co-workers to receive our weekly e-mail alerts**. But don't stop there – after you find 10 friends go for 20!

What to do:

- 1) Send an e-mail to your friends, family and co-workers asking them if they would like to receive Environment California's e-mail alerts. Here's a simple sample:

"I am currently volunteering for Environment California, a statewide environmental group, and would like to add you to their weekly e-mail list. They do great work to fight global warming and protect the environment. Each e-mail updates you on what's happening on an important environmental issue, and then has a link to send an e-mail or make a phone call to a lawmaker. They are making a push to expand this e-mail list. If I can add you, let me know! Thanks."

- 2) For each person that says, "yes", go to our website, www.environmentcalifornia.org, and enter the e-mail address in the upper right-hand corner.
- 3) In addition, forward each e-mail alert that you receive to friends & family.



Global Warming Action #5 Host a movie night for “An Inconvenient Truth”

The two Oscars awarded to Al Gore’s documentary "An Inconvenient Truth" were a fitting tribute for a film that helped shift the national debate by educating millions of Americans about the science and dangers of global warming.

You can use the power of this film to educate your friends & family and get them to join us in solving global warming.

What to do:

- 1) Rent or buy “An Inconvenient Truth”.
- 2) Invite friends to watch the film.
- 3) Afterwards, pass out the Global Warming Activist Toolkit and ask them to take at least one action on the list.

Tips:

- Have fun!
- Have paper, pens and sample letters on-hand so it’s easy for people to right a letter to their elected officials or to a newspaper.
- Think big – if you want to really reach out to your community, you may want to host the event at the local library or movie theater.



Global Warming Action #6 Create a “phone tree”

Imagine this scenario:

Environment California’s top bill to cut global warming pollution is coming up for a vote in two days. It will take 21 votes to win, but right now only 18 legislators are committed to voting “yes.” 17 legislators have said they will vote “no,” and another five are on the fence. In order to win, Environment California will need to convince three additional legislators to support the bill.

What does Environment California do? They call you! That’s because you’re the captain of a “phone tree” in one of the districts where a legislator is still undecided but could be persuaded with support from her constituents. As the captain of the phone tree, you are in charge of calling ten friends in your community to ask them to call to their legislator.

You may be surprised that even ten calls will make a big difference in showing a legislator what her constituents think about an issue.

How do you create a phone tree? It’s simple:

- 1) Find at least ten friends who are willing to make calls to their elected officials when there are important votes on global warming.
- 2) Create a spreadsheet with each person’s name, address, phone number, and e-mail. Send a copy to Environment California ([jason \[at\] environmentalcalifornia.org](mailto:jason@environmentcalifornia.org)).
- 3) When an important vote is approaching, Environment California will contact you and give you the details. You will then “activate” the phone tree, confirming with each friend that they made the call.
- 4) Report the results (how many calls made, what the legislator’s office said when you called, etc.) to Environment California.
- 5) After the vote, let your friends know how your legislator voted. Then call and thank the legislator if she voted right.



Global Warming Action #7

Coordinate a meeting with your state assembly member

Who is your state assembly member? Does he/she know how you feel about global warming? The fact of the matter is that lawmakers want to know how their constituents feel about important issues like global warming.

One of the best things you can do to work for solutions to global warming like cleaner cars and renewable energy is to schedule a meeting with your local assembly member to find out what he/she is doing on the issue and voice your support for specific legislation.

What to do:

- 1) Find a couple friends who would like to come to the meeting with you
- 2) Call Environment California to get background information on your legislator
- 3) Find the contact information for your state assembly member's local office at <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html>. Call the district office that is closest to where you live and explain that you are a constituent who would like to meet with your assembly member "in district" to talk about global warming. You be asked to send the office a written letter requesting a meeting.
- 4) Prepare for the meeting. Feel free to contact Environment California to find out what the latest news is on various bills. You can reach Jason Barbose at [jason \[at\] environmentcalifornia.org](mailto:jason[at]environmentcalifornia.org) or at (916) 446-8062 x102.
- 5) Have your meeting. A good agenda would be to: (1) talk about your concern for global warming, (2) find out what your assembly member is doing on the issue, and (3) urge him/her to support specific legislation that will cut global warming pollution.
- 6) Report on your meeting to Environment California. Information and insight you gain from your meeting can be very helpful.



Global Warming Action #8 Go Solar!

The Million Solar Roofs Initiative is one of California's most ambitious public policy endeavors and an important solution to global warming.

The Million Solar Roofs Initiative aims to build solar power on one million homes and businesses by 2016, install 3,000 MW of small-scale solar power systems on buildings statewide, and build half of all new homes with solar panels by 2017.

Yet the success of the Million Solar Roofs initiative depends on consumers taking advantage of the state's solar incentives. So far, 25,000 Californians have gone solar. You too can be part of the solution to global warming by installing solar panels on your home or business.

What to do:

- 1) Visit Environment California's solar home resources page and download the "Consumer Guide to Solar Power" www.environmentcalifornia.org/energy/million-solar-roofs/solar-home-resources.
- 2) Share these resources with five friends who might also consider solar power.



Global Warming Action #9

Get your city to support the Safe Climate Act

Everyone has a role to play in solving global warming, and our cities can be leaders in the fight by supporting local solutions and advocating for broader action at the state and federal level.

Environment California is working with Rep. Henry Waxman (Los Angeles) to support the Safe Climate Act, a science-based approach to prevent the worst impacts of global warming. The Safe Climate Act requires the U.S. to reduce global warming pollution by 15% by 2020 and by 80% by 2050.

Your city can help by **passing a resolution urging Congress to pass the Safe Climate Act.**

What to do:

- 1) Find friends and organizations in your community who want to help.
- 2) Educate members of your City Council about global warming and the Safe Climate Act.
- 3) Get the issue on the agenda at a City Council meeting.

Materials:

- Sample resolution for your city (*on back*)
- Fact sheet – “Safe Climate Act: The U.S. Solution to Global Warming” (*on web*)

Sample City Council Resolution

WHEREAS, the United States is a party to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which has the objective of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent “dangerous anthropogenic interference” with the climate system; and

WHEREAS, to achieve this objective, the increase in global mean surface temperature should not exceed 2°C (3.6°F) above pre-industrial temperature; and

WHEREAS, the risks associated with a temperature increase above 2°C (3.6°F) are grave, including a 70 percent loss in Sierra snowpack, 75 percent increase in days conducive to smog pollution in California, and the disintegration of the Greenland ice sheet, which, if it were to melt completely, would raise global average sea level by approximately 23 feet, devastating many of the world’s coastal areas and population centers; and

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change projects that temperatures will rise between 1.4°C to 5.8°C (2.5°F to 10.4°F) by the end of the century, under a range of expected emissions trends; and

WHEREAS, serious global warming impacts have already been observed in the United States and worldwide, including increases in heat waves and other extreme weather events, rise in sea level, retreat of glaciers and polar ice, decline in mountain snowpack, increased drought and wildfires, stronger hurricanes, ocean acidification, extensive coral bleaching, migrations and shifts in the yearly cycles of plants and animals, and the spread of infectious diseases; and

WHEREAS, decisive action is needed to minimize the many dangers posed by global warming, and the timing of such action is critical, given that greenhouse gases can persist in the atmosphere for more than a century; and

WHEREAS, reductions in emissions from today’s levels must begin within a decade to preserve the ability to stabilize atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations at levels likely to protect against a temperature rise above 2°C (3.6°F); and

WHEREAS, with only 5 percent of the world population, the United States emits approximately 20 percent of the world’s total greenhouse gas emissions and must be a leader in addressing global warming; and

WHEREAS, existing energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy technologies can reduce global warming pollution, while saving consumers money, reducing our dependence on oil, enhancing national security, cleaning the air, and protecting pristine places from drilling and mining; and

WHEREAS, the state of California has already established targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the city of _____ supports the establishment of mandatory limits to reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050, as proposed in the Safe Climate Act.



Global Warming Action #10

Host a House Party for Environment California

Environment California doesn't take money from corporations. Or from the government. Instead, we rely on contributions from citizens who share our vision for a cleaner, healthier and better protected environment. A powerful and effective way to support our work is to organize a fundraiser at your home or in your community.

What to do:

- 1) **Let us know:** Call (916-446-8062) or email (info [at] environmentcalifornia.org) Environment California to let us know you want to host a fundraiser.
- 2) **Determine your goals:** What do you want to get out of the event? How many people do you want to attend? How much money do you want to raise? Is part of your goal educating your friends about environmental issues?
- 3) **Timeline:** Create a timeline for planning your event. Normally at least 2 months is needed.
- 4) **Theme, speakers & program:** Work with Environment California to figure out: (1) what issues you want the fundraiser to focus on, (2) where the fundraiser should be, (3) who from Environment California is able to come to your event, and (4) a simple agenda for the event.
- 5) **Finalize the day & time:** Weekday evenings typically are best but a weekend afternoon can work too.
- 6) **Find help:** You may want to find a couple friends to be a part of a "host committee" that can help you plan the event.
- 7) **Create an invite list:** You'll want to create a spreadsheet with everyone you want to invite. In addition to your own family, friends and co-workers, you may want to ask others for people to invite. Typically you should invite twice as many people as you would like to come.
- 8) **Materials:** In the very least you will need invitations, a program, and other materials to hand out at the event. Environment California can help with materials or you can do them yourself.
- 9) **Donations:** Your invitations should ask for donations. You can work with Environment California to determine the best amount to ask for. Ideally you want people to send their donation with the RSVP so that you don't have to worry about money at the event.
- 10) **Have fun:** A house party should be fun. Don't forget to have a good time at your fundraiser.