

## What Can I Do on Climate Change?

Everyone can play a role in contributing to Rockville's Climate Action Plan. It requires both system level changes and individual actions to address climate change. Each person, household, business, or organization has a unique carbon footprint and set of opportunities. The actions each of us can take are different, but the goals are the same: Conserve energy, support renewable energy sources, consider your transportation options, reduce waste, look for ways to enjoy and protect nature, volunteer, and be prepared for changing weather.

Start by calculating your carbon footprint and learn easy first steps by visiting the EPA's Carbon Footprint Calculator (<https://www3.epa.gov/carbon-footprint-calculator/>) or the quick **ENERGY STAR®** Home Energy Yardstick (<https://www.energystar.gov/campaign/home-energy-yardstick>).

Establish a personal or household greenhouse gas reduction goal. Consider a few ideas below to reduce your carbon footprint and join with others in your community to do the same. Even small steps can make a difference!

Subscribe to the City's Environment & Sustainability email newsletter at <http://eepurl.com/dtJySD> to receive seasonal sustainability tips, reminders, and program updates.



### Getting Around

**Walk more** for your health and the environment. You can even **Plog** (pick up litter) while you are walking to help keep our neighborhoods clean.

**Take a bike** or scooter to your destination to reduce car emissions and get some exercise. **More resources:** [www.rockvillemd.gov/319/Bicycles](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/319/Bicycles)

**Take Public Transit** to reduce air pollution and be more fuel efficient.

Visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/commute](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/commute) to learn more about the public transit, car sharing, bike programs, and other ways to reduce your car emissions.

**Consider** switching your vehicle or fleet to an electric or hybrid car. Learn about zero emission vehicles and join the pledge to make your next car an electric vehicle:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/green/zev/index.html>.

- Existing incentives for electric vehicles for individuals and fleets are describe here: <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/air/mobilesources/pages/zev.aspx>.
- The Maryland Solar Co-op includes an option to purchase a charger: <https://coops.solarunitedneighbors.org/coops/md-capital-area-2022-solar-and-ev-co-op/>.

**Drive smart and drive less** by reducing idling, servicing your car, combining errands, car sharing, vacationing closer to home, or teleworking one or more days a week.

**Take one less flight a year**, purchase carbon offsets, or take “staycations” to visit locations closer to home, such as state or national parks, to save money, reduce stress, and significantly reduce your carbon footprint.

## Energy Efficiency<sup>1</sup>



**Switch to LED lighting.** LED lights use up to 85% less energy and last up to 25 times longer than incandescent lights.

**Monitor your thermostat** and set your temperatures slightly higher in the summer and lower in winter. Upgrading to a programmable or smart thermostat can help you monitor your energy usage and save money.

**Look for the ENERGY STAR® symbol when buying new appliances.** At the end of your appliance's useful life, **transition to electric appliances** including heat pumps for heating/cooling and hot water heaters, and electric stoves in anticipation of the electric grid becoming greener.

- Pepco offers a \$700 rebate on qualifying hybrid heat pump water heater <https://homeenergysavings.pepco.com/appliance-rebate-program/overview/electric-heat-pump-water-heater> Shop during Maryland's tax-free ENERGY STAR weekend, typically held on Presidents Day weekend, for a sales tax break.

**For homeowners: Schedule an energy assessment** to receive ideas for home comfort upgrades to make your home more energy efficient. See <https://montgomeryenergyconnection.org/> for energy resources.

- Pepco offers free home energy assessments, appliance and lighting rebates, and up to \$7,500 rebate for energy efficiency upgrades under the Home Performance with Energy Star program. <https://www.pepco.com/WaysToSave/ForYourHome/Pages/Maryland.aspx#>.
- Montgomery County offers an annual \$250 tax credit for home improvements including air sealing, insulation, windows, doors, heating and cooling equipment, and more. Requires a [Renewable Energy Tax Credit Application](#).

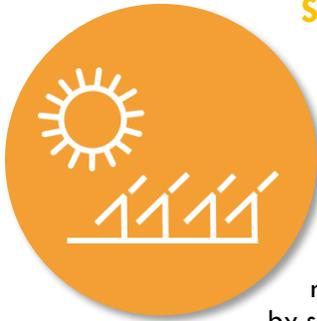
**Wash smart and save energy** by taking shorter showers, washing laundry with cold water, using a dryer ball, and running the dishwasher only when full. Use larger appliances like washing machines at off-peak hours to lower the energy demand.

**Upgrade your wood burning stove:** Maryland offers up to \$700 under the Clean Burning Wood and Pellet Rebate Program <https://energy.maryland.gov/Residential/Pages/incentives/woodstoves.aspx>

**Find financing and funding resources** for smart energy investments.

- **Energy assistance** <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/377/Financial-Assistance> and home repair and weatherization programs <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/196/Home-Repair-Loan-Assistance> are available for eligible low income Rockville residents.
- **The Montgomery County Green Bank** offers energy efficiency and renewable energy system financing for residential and commercial properties <https://mcgreenbank.org/>.
- **The Property Assessed Clean Energy** financing option is available for commercial properties. <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/green/energy/pace.html>
- **For multifamily properties:** See Maryland's Multifamily Energy Efficiency and Housing Affordability grant program <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/HousingDevelopment/Pages/EnergyEfficiencyWeatherization.aspx>
- **Pepco's Energy Savings for Business** program offers a range of rebates and incentives for small, medium, and large businesses, non-profits, and institutions. <https://homeenergysavings.pepco.com/business/overview>

<sup>1</sup> For a comprehensive list of rebates and incentives for energy efficiency and renewable energy, search by state at [dsireusa.org](http://dsireusa.org)



## Sustainable Energy

**Switch to clean or renewable energy sources.** You can choose your energy supplier in Maryland, including renewable energy sources such as wind and solar. Ensure that you choose a verified clean energy producer by using Green-e, the trusted global leader in clean energy certification. For more information, see <https://www.psc.state.md.us/electricchoice/green-options/>

**Go solar** by joining a solar-coop to install rooftop solar. If your home isn't right for solar, consider community, or shared, solar to receive the same benefits by subscribing to a large commercial project in your utility area.

- Maryland Solar United Neighbors has many solar resources: <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/> including available community solar projects and the Maryland Solar Co-op <https://coops.solarunitedneighbors.org/coops/md-capital-area-2022-solar-and-ev-co-op/>
- Low income financing is available through the Green Bank: <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/join-the-md-capital-area-2022-solar-and-ev-charger-co-op/?co-op=MD%20Capital%20Area%202022%20Solar%20and%20EV%20Co-op>

**Consider geothermal energy** which uses the constant temperatures underground for heating and cooling needs <https://energy.maryland.gov/Pages/Info/renewable/geothermal.aspx>

**Find more renewable resources:** Visit <https://montgomeryenergyconnection.org/> to learn more about how to choose a renewable energy supplier and find solar programs and financing options. Maryland's Residential Clean Energy Rebate Program offers up to \$1,000 rebate for solar panels or shingles, \$500 for solar water heating, \$3,000 for new geothermal, and \$500 for geothermal replacement. <https://energy.maryland.gov/residential/pages/incentives/cleanenergygrants.aspx>



## Sustainable Gardening and Lawns

**Plant native plants and trees** for a biodiverse and resilient ecosystem that absorbs carbon, provides shade, reduces air and water pollution, and provides habitat for native wildlife. Remove non-native invasive plants that crowd out native plants and reduce biodiversity. Plant a mixture of species, including food-bearing (e.g., fruit and nuts) trees and shrubs. Create spaces where you can 'leave your leaves' <https://www.nwf.org/Magazines/National-Wildlife/2015/OctNov/Gardening/Leave-the-Leaves>.

**Install RainScapes projects** such as rain gardens, conservation landscapes, rain barrels, permeable pavers, and pavement removal. Save money by applying for RainScapes Rebates at [www.rockvillemd.gov/rainscapes](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/rainscapes).

**Practice sustainable lawn and garden care** by reducing synthetic pesticide and fertilizer use, practicing organic lawn care, reducing the size of your lawn, electrifying lawnmowers and leafblowers if feasible, and composting yard trim. Learn more at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/lawns/>.

**Shop at the Farmers Market.** The farm-fresh fruits, vegetables, plants, cut flowers, preserves, honey, herbs, baked goods and other items that you find at the Rockville Farmers Market are fresher and travel a shorter distance than similar grocery store products. You can find more information at <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/664/Farmers-Market>.

**Join a CSA,** or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), to get a once-a-week or biweekly box full of local fruits and veggies that are in season delivered to your door or that you pick up. Learn more at <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices/farm-to-table.html>.



## Reduce Waste and Consumption

**Reduce and reuse** by avoiding single use materials, donating, shopping at second-hand stores, yard sales, and using neighborhood free or buy/sell/trade groups.

**Recycle right** by learning what items can be recycled at [www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-refuse](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-refuse). When in doubt, throw it out. Make sure hazardous waste, electronics and metal are disposed of properly.

**Gift differently** by giving experiences, buying local, volunteering or donating in someone's name, and minimizing wrapping waste.

**Reduce food waste and save money** by meal planning, only buying the ingredients you need, and using reusable meal containers. Learn more about food composting at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/sws/foodwaste/>.

**Practice Meatless Mondays.** Every Monday, choose a vegetarian meal over a meal that includes meat. A complete plant-based diet is not for everyone, but a small reduction in meat consumption one day a week can be a healthy choice that's also good for the environment.



## Volunteer

**Help Rockville's environment** by joining stream and trail cleanups, non-native invasive removals, and other nature-based volunteer opportunities.

**Join a city board or commission** to lend your expertise, thoughts, ideas, and opinions to shape Rockville's future.

**Help a neighbor, senior or other vulnerable community members by joining** or starting a "Rockville Village" to foster social connections and coordinate volunteer help. Learn more at [www.rockvillemd.gov/villages](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/villages).

**Volunteer or donate to local assistance programs and social and environmental justice efforts.** Underserved communities are disproportionately affected by climate change. For a list of City assistance programs, visit <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/385/Donation-Sponsorship-Programs>.

Visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer) to find volunteer opportunities with the city.



## Prepare

**Purchase flood insurance and flood-proof your home.** Visit the National Flood Insurance Program at <https://www.floodsmart.gov/> to evaluate your risk and then, depending on what you learn, buy insurance, and make home improvements.

**Build an emergency preparedness kit** to prepare for climate disasters by having basic household items on hand, such as nonperishable food, water, a battery-operated radio, a flashlight, first aid materials, extra batteries, and a backup of critical files.

**Stay informed and reduce risks** from high heat days, storms, insect borne illnesses and harmful algae blooms. Register with the Alert Montgomery System for immediate emergency notifications. Follow City of Rockville and Montgomery County on social media for non-emergency updates.

**Build community connections** to help vulnerable neighbors, support community shelters and cooling centers, and ensure pets are hydrated and cared for.

**Visit** [www.rockvillemd.gov/272/Emergency-Preparedness](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/272/Emergency-Preparedness) for emergency preparedness tips.