



## What is Climate Change?

Climate change refers to the phenomenon that is causing the earth to become warmer. This means our climate is changing, leading to more frequent and extreme weather conditions. This may sound like something vague and futuristic but in fact **climate change is a reality**. Today, the earth is warmer than it has been in two thousand years.

CO<sub>2</sub>



## What Causes it?

We do. Most scientists now agree that human activity is largely responsible for climate change and the choices we make today will decide the future of our climate.

- Most of the energy we use to heat our homes, for electricity and transport comes from fossil fuels such as oil, gas and coal.
- When fossil fuels are burned, they release carbon dioxide which is the main greenhouse gas.
- Greenhouse gases cause the earth to heat up by trapping the sun's heat in the earth's atmosphere – acting like a greenhouse.



## What will Climate Change mean for Ireland?

- Summer droughts, resulting in irrigation problems and competition for water
- Wetter winters leading to soil damage
- More coastal erosion and flooding
- Changes in farming practices and crops grown in Ireland
- Changes in fish stock
- New pests and diseases

## How Can We Combat Climate Change?

*It's such a big issue, it might seem hard to believe that there's anything we can do, however the good news is that by working together there is. Energy is vital to our daily lives but there are many ways that we can be more sustainable in how we use it. By using less energy, not only will you be helping to combat climate change, you will save money and also make your home more comfortable.*

Here are **Ten Things YOU can do** to start combating climate change.



**Turn your TV off rather than leave it on stand-by** – equipment on stand-by uses up to 20% of the energy it would use when fully on



**Walk or cycle instead of driving short journeys** – it costs nothing and is good for you



**Turn your heating down** – lowering your thermostat by 1° celsius will take 10% off your heating bill



**Buy 'A' rated kitchen appliances** – they cost less to run and over time will give you considerable savings on your electricity bill



**Use energy efficient light bulbs (CFLs) instead of traditional bulbs** – they use 1/5<sup>th</sup> energy and last up to 10 times as long



**Insulate your attic** – attic insulation will keep the heat in your home for longer and pay for itself in 2-3 years



**Fit a lagging jacket** – lagging your hot water cylinder will keep the water hotter for longer and pay for itself in 2-3 months



**Don't overfill your kettle** – only boil as much water as you need



**Fit thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) to your radiators** – TRVs allow you to control the temperature of your rooms individually



**Support renewable energy initiatives in your community** – renewable energy doesn't produce greenhouse gases

Our challenge to you is to pick **three items** from the list and implement them over a 6 month period.

## Energy Calculator

Are you a high energy or a low energy user? Use our simple calculator to find out.



### Heating

- Do you use a thermostat to control your home heating to a comfortable level?
- Do you have adequate insulation in your walls and attic to properly conserve your home's valuable heat?
- Do you have timer controls on your hot water (immersion) heater?

Yes No

### Electricity

- Do you take steps to minimise electricity wastage in your home?
- When purchasing appliances do you use the energy labels to help you choose the most efficient appliance possible?
- Do you use energy efficient lamps (CFLs) wherever you can in place of conventional bulbs?

### Motoring

- Do you try to minimise your annual car mileage by walking, cycling or using public transport where possible?
- Is the size and engine capacity of your car appropriate to meet your needs rather than being over-sized?
- Do you have a diesel engined car?

Total

**SCORING:**

For each **Yes** answer, give yourself one point.

**Score 0-3:**  
lift this flap

**Score 4-6:**  
lift this flap

**Score 7-9:**  
lift this flap

logon to [www.combatclimatechange.ie](http://www.combatclimatechange.ie) to find out more

**Energy Guzzler**  
You are a heavy energy user so there are lots of things you can do!

**Energy User**  
You use an average amount of energy but there is still plenty of room for improvement!

**Energy Consaver**  
Well done, you are already quite energy efficient but there are still some areas you could improve in!