

Personal Check List In Support of a Sustainable Future

If all the world's people were to use energy at the per capita rate of Americans, given the existing, but declining supply of global resources, approximately six Earths would be needed to fill that demand. To reduce our unsustainable use of resources, the most critical being oil and natural gas, please use this checklist if you want to help make a personal contribution to a sustainable future.

Personal Energy Conservation

- I refrain from using drive-thru lanes for services, like food purchases and banking; when possible I always park my vehicle with engine turned off to conduct my purchases and business inside.
- During long waits in traffic, I turn off my vehicle's engine when not actually driving to avoid unnecessary idling fuel consumption.
- I own a bicycle. . . which is equipped with baskets for grocery shopping
- I walk or use a bicycle for shopping and library trips near my home.
- I make shopping lists to minimize single-item-shopping trips to reduce unnecessary travel and fuel consumption.
- I buy and use energy efficient appliances.
- I use a pressure cooker and/or microwave to cook to reduce energy consumption.
- I have an energy efficient furnace, or . . .
- I am considering the purchase of an energy efficient furnace.
- I do not use air conditioning . . . or
 - I have minimized my use of home air conditioning with a 78 degree (or higher) setting.
- I set my thermostat at 68 degrees (or lower) in the winter.
- I use fans in lieu of air conditioning to provide energy efficient comfort in the summer.
- I use a set-back thermometer in my home to reduce heating and cooling demands during those times I am not at home.
- I have a home or am considering the purchase or construction of a home with much higher insulation R-values.
- I have conducted an energy efficiency survey of my home to assure the highest practical insulation R-values for windows, walls, floors, and attic spaces.
- Where home energy survey figures are low, I plan to increase insulation, weather stripping, and/or replace windows.
- I use shades, blinds, or curtains to increase the energy efficiency of windows; I open south facing window coverings on sunny winter days, and close them during hot summer days.
- I plant a garden to grow some of my own vegetables thus reducing the need for transportation fuel to haul vegetables from growers a long distance away.
- I buy my produce from local farmers or from vendors who purchase produce from local farmers to cut the cost of long distance transportation.
- I am a member of a food cooperative which purchases food from local farmer-producers to conserve fuel and bolster the local economy.
- I buy or use locally manufactured products and services, whenever possible, to reduce transportation costs and to keep money in the local economy to bolster local prosperity.
- I walk . . . or use bus or other mass transit to get to work.
- I bicycle to work, or . . . I am appealing to my employer to provide secure bicycle parking, shower and locker facilities to make bicycle commuting practical for me.

- In the absence of bicycle racks at businesses where I shop (e.g. grocery stores, pharmacies, shopping centers, banks) I have requested that these merchants provide racks for securely locking my bicycle while doing business at their locations.
- I car pool.
 - to work; to shop, or . . .
- I am involved with or . . . interested in setting up a car pool network to conserve fuel.

Public Action/Intervention

I have contacted my city-county councilor urging:

- Town meeting** style neighborhood discussions of energy efficiency issues and how public tax dollars should be prioritized to meet energy related budgetary problems (i.e. public safety, school bussing, water and sewage pumping, street repair/maintenance, and trash pick up) caused by increasing fuel costs arising from declining (post-Peak Oil) global oil supplies and increased demand for fuel.
- Official public advocacy campaign** urging energy conservation and efficiency, and a discussion of how to address the issues of declining energy to reduce economic hardship in times to come.
- Building code** changes to support use of high-insulation-efficiency, low-cost construction materials like Cobb and straw-bale construction and to promote energy efficient construction designs, like passive solar heating.
- Zoning law** changes to discourage traditional tract housing to be replaced by high density neighborhood private separate co-housing units incorporating common park-like areas of woods and fields for sustainable gardening/farming food production and recreation to meet food/nutritional needs with minimal use of transport fuel. Urge consideration of design integration of walkable distances from residences to work and shopping.
- Mass transit** to counter rising fuel prices, including efficient light rail and park-and-ride solutions for cars and for bicycles that will incorporate construction at stations of bicycle storage lockers (i.e., like those used in Washington, D.C.).
- Home heating** efficiency improvement through support from public utilities for expanded home weatherization to increase energy efficiency and reduced fuel use.
- Bicycle commuting** support through creation of dedicated bicycle traffic lanes for safer shopping and commuting.

Other public interventions I support:

- Speed limit reductions:** I have contacted my state representative and state senator to voice my support for reduced speed limits to conserve fuel. (The new 70 mph limit should be lowered to 55 mph)
- Letters to the Editor:** I have written an energy related letter to the editor in the past three months, six months, one year.

I have contacted my U.S. representative and U.S. Senators urging:

- Higher vehicle fuel efficiency CAFÉ standards**
- Wind-turbine** massive infrastructure expansion for least expensive levelized cost (\$0.03/ kWh) of electricity generation as **an alternative to (non-renewable) nuclear energy** expansion which is the most expensive (\$0.11 - \$0.14/kWh).

To learn more about the advancing threat of Peak Oil, schedule a screening for your group or gathering of *The End of Suburbia: Oil Depletion and the Collapse of the American Dream*. Call 317-882-5301 for details.

Provided courtesy of Peak Oil Indiana <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PeakOilIndiana/>, Indiana's Peak Oil Information Center.