



City of Bellevue

# Smaller Footprint Pledge

A Resource Conservation  
Commitment For A  
Healthy Community





## **Are You a Carbon Yeti?**

### **What is a Carbon Yeti?**

AKA: Bigfoot. Large hairy creature; oblivious of its own environmental impact; wasteful of the planet's resources; has a LARGE carbon footprint.

### **Your Carbon Footprint Defined**

Your carbon footprint is the amount of carbon dioxide you create from everyday activities. Carbon dioxide, the most plentiful greenhouse gas, traps the sun's heat and leads to global climate change.

### **Why should we worry about global climate change?**

Over the past 50 years, the average global temperature has increased at the fastest rate in recorded history. Scientists agree that certain consequences are likely to occur if current trends continue. These include reduced snow pack and drinking water shortages, flooding, forest fires, interrupted electricity supply, and detrimental impacts to marine ecosystems (including salmon) to name a few. These impacts will likely be felt worldwide and locally.

# Welcome!

You are invited to participate in the Smaller Footprint Pledge.

A community action program takes individual commitment. Each person or family can be part of the solution to reduce global climate change.

You may already include many of the practices listed in this book in your daily routine; perhaps you'll find a few new ideas to try. Everyday choices affect your personal carbon footprint and the future availability of our planet's natural resources. Working together we can make a difference.

You will be pledging to reduce your personal impact on climate change. Actions you choose to pledge in this booklet will reduce the carbon dioxide produced during your daily activities.

To take the Pledge, fill out the detachable card on the next page and mail it to us. We will send you a beautiful sun catcher\* made of local recycled glass as our way of saying, "thank you."

\*Limited to one per household in the Bellevue service area only, while supplies last.

**Together we can  
make a difference.  
Take the Pledge  
TODAY!**

## Take the Pledge!

With less than 5% of the world's population, the United States is the single-largest source of carbon from fossil fuels, emitting 24% of the world's total.

As you read through this booklet, you'll see how easy it is to take action and reduce your carbon footprint to minimize global climate change.

To take the Pledge, fill out the detachable card as you read through this booklet and send it back to us.



## Smaller Footprint Pledge Card

Please check (✓) the activities on the pledge card you are currently practicing and circle the new activities you would like to adopt with the corresponding pledge list. (Example ✓ A B C **ⓓ** E F)

I pledge to:

- |                             |             |                                  |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>① In the Kitchen</b>     | A B C D E F | <b>⑥ In the Yard</b>             | A B C D E   |
| <b>② In the Living Room</b> | A B C D E   | <b>⑦ In the Garage</b>           | A B C D E F |
| <b>③ In the Home Office</b> | A B C D E   | <b>⑧ Personal Transportation</b> | A B C D E   |
| <b>④ In the Bathroom</b>    | A B C D E F | <b>⑨ Get Involved</b>            | A B C D E   |
| <b>⑤ Home Care</b>          | A B C D E F |                                  |             |

Name\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print legibly

Address\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Required to receive sun catcher

- 1 In each section, check the activities you are currently practicing next to the corresponding letter on the card.
- 2 Decide which new actions you would like to adopt and circle those on the card.
- 3 Fill out your contact information and return it to the City of Bellevue by pre-paid US mail or you can drop it off at the Service First desk located on the first floor of City Hall at 450 110th Avenue NE.

After you take the Pledge, we will send you this beautiful sun catcher\* made of local recycled glass as a thank you for taking steps to reduce your carbon footprint.

\*Limited to one per household in the Bellevue service area only, while supplies last.



## 1. In the Kitchen

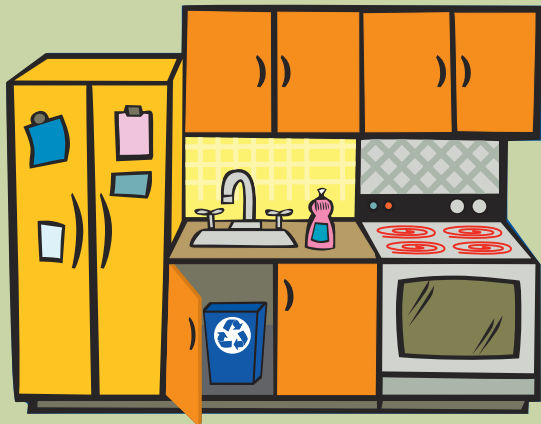
Even with state of the art appliances and gadgets, the kitchen is a source of excess carbon emissions.

- ◆ The majority of household recycling happens in the kitchen.
- ◆ Half of what is currently thrown away in King County is recyclable.
- ◆ Food scraps and food-soiled paper make up more than 25% of residential garbage which Bellevue residents can recycle with their yard waste.
- ◆ 80% of the 25 billion single-serving plastic water bottles Americans use each year end up in landfills.
- ◆ Americans use over 380 billion plastic bags every year and the average bag is used for five minutes.
- ◆ Recycling one ton of aluminum results in 13 tons of carbon dioxide NOT being released into the air.
- ◆ Dishwashers use 20 gallons of water each cycle and garbage disposals average 2 gallons each minute. All the extra water use means more water to treat, which uses more energy.



## In the kitchen I pledge to...

- A. Recycle food waste scraps in my green yard waste container rather than using the in-sink garbage disposal, saving water and energy.
- B. Run only full loads of dishes in my dishwasher to save water.
- C. Drink tap water instead of bottled. **(Save 52 lbs of carbon dioxide per year or 2 lbs per gallon jug.)**
- D. Carry my purchases in reusable bags.
- E. Reduce my garbage 10% by recycling.  
**(Save 1,200 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- F. Clean my refrigerator's coils, defrost it regularly and keep the top clear of clutter. **(Save over 700 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**



**Fact:** Washington's recycling efforts for 2005 reduced greenhouse gas emissions by almost 3.2 million tons or over 1000 pounds per person. This is equivalent to removing 2.5 million passenger cars from the roadway each year—over half of the passenger cars in Washington!  
(Source: Department of Ecology)



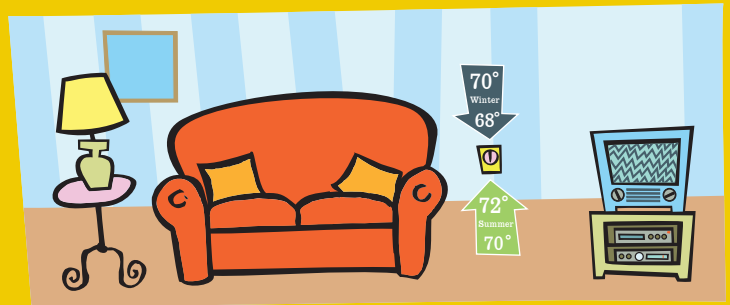
## 2. In the Living Room

- ◆ 20% of the electricity consumed in the United States is for lighting.
- ◆ A small amount of mercury is sealed within the glass tubing of compact fluorescent light bulbs. Do not throw them out with regular household trash. Take them to the Factoria Transfer Station's Household Hazardous Waste Facility or the WasteMobile.
- ◆ Almost half of the average home's energy consumption is used for heating. Another 17% is used for water heating, 6% for cooling rooms, and 5% for refrigeration.
- ◆ Powering TV sets, DVD players, cable boxes and other home entertainment devices still use energy while they are off because of clocks and easy-on features like "standby" mode.

### Fact:

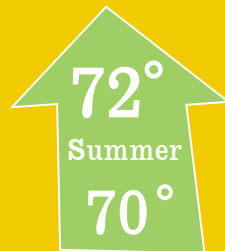
The incandescent light bulb is so inefficient that about 90% of the energy it consumes is given off as heat, while only 10% is converted to light.

(Source: US Department of Energy)



## In the living room I pledge to...

- A. Replace three frequently used incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent (CFL) bulbs. **(Save 300 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)** I will take spent CFLs to the Factoria Transfer Station's Household Hazardous Waste Facility or the WasteMobile.
- B. Move my thermostat in the winter down from 70 degrees to 68 degrees and move it up from 70 degrees to 72 degrees in the summer. **(Save 2,000 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- C. Plug my living room electronics into a power strip and turn it off when I'm not using them. **(Save 240 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- D. Use passive solar to capture heat in my home by opening curtains during the day and closing them at dusk, except in summer, when I will close the curtains during the hottest hours of the day. **(Besides carbon, you'll save 25% to 75% on your heating and cooling bills. Save 2,700 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- E. Run ceiling fans in my home instead of air-conditioning. **(Save up to 2,700 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**



### 3. In the Home Office

- ◆ Computers can be recycled free through Bellevue's single-family curbside recycling program or at the twice-yearly Special Collection Events for a small fee.
- ◆ Producing recycled paper requires about 60% of the energy used to make paper from virgin wood pulp.
- ◆ The "materials intensity" of computer manufacturing is 10 times higher than that of automobiles or refrigerators.
- ◆ Most electronics draw power even when they are "off," including empty chargers in standby mode.
- ◆ Laptop computers use up to 80% less energy than desktop computers.



## In the home office I pledge to...

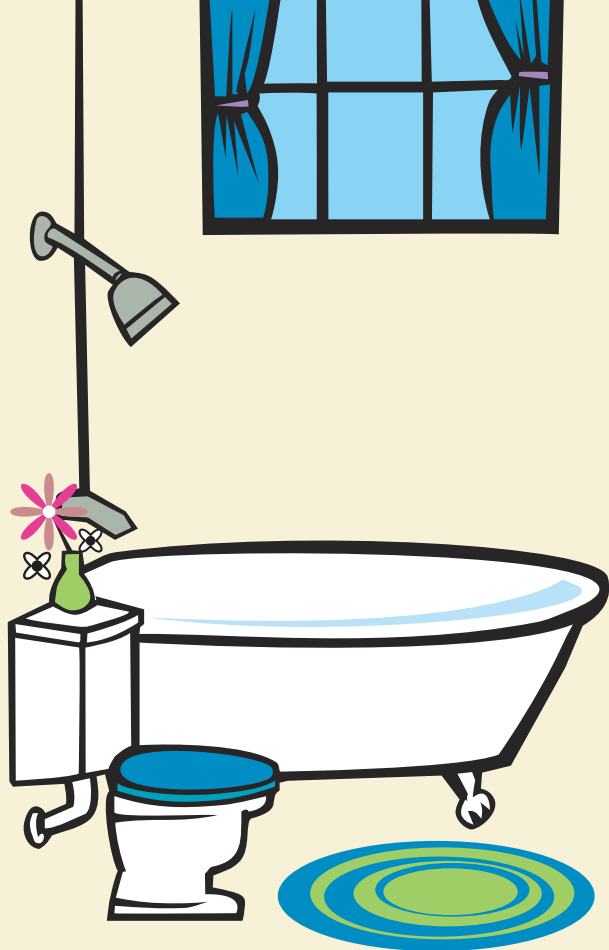
- A. Recycle my home computer when it becomes obsolete.
- B. Reduce the amount of paper that gets thrown away or recycled by triple checking documents before printing and when I print drafts, I will try printing on the other side of used paper to conserve resources.
- C. Use a power strip for my computer, monitor, fax, copier, iPod and cell-phone chargers and any other electronic equipment; then switch it off when they are not in use. **(Save 2,000 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- D. Turn off any incandescent lights when I leave a room even for a few minutes, or if I'm using compact fluorescents turn them off if I'm leaving for more than 15 minutes. **(Save 89 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- E. Use a laptop instead of a desktop computer whenever possible.  
Consider making my next computer upgrade a laptop.  
**(Save 400 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**

**Fact:** 75% of energy consumed in the home is standby power used to keep electronics running when "off."  
(Source: US Department of Energy)

## 4. In the Bathroom

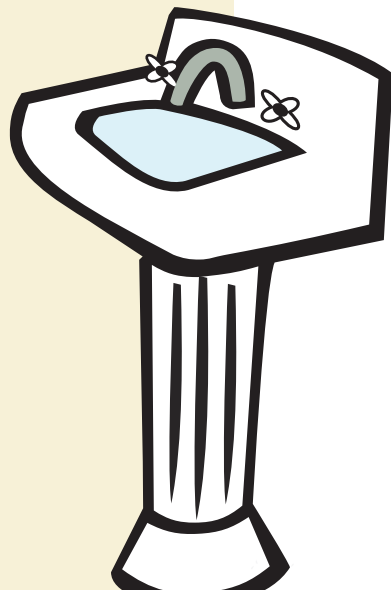
- ◆ In the United States, 27% of our water is used in bathing.
- ◆ The average North American consumes over 105 gallons of water a day compared to the average European's consumption of almost 53 gallons. The average person living in sub-Saharan Africa consumes only 2.4 – 5.3 gallons per day.
- ◆ A leaky toilet can waste over 100 gallons of water a day.

**Fact:** Showers account for 2/3 of all water heating costs.



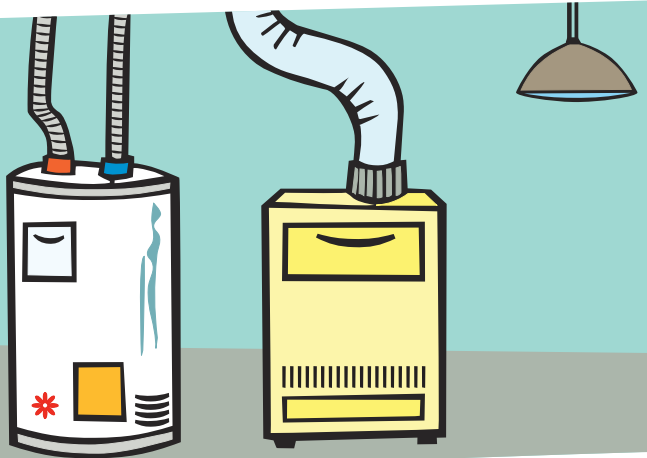
## In the bathroom I pledge to...

- A. Install a water efficient showerhead so I use less hot water. **(Save 350 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- B. Take 2 minutes off my shower time. **(Save 342 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- C. Shave in the sink, not the shower.  
**(Save 50 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- D. Repair leaky faucets knowing that they could leak up to 100 gallons of water per day.
- E. Check my toilet(s) for leaks by putting 5-10 drops of food coloring into the toilet tank. If color appears in the bowl, I will know there is a leak that I need to repair.
- F. Hang my towel to dry and use it more than once.



## 5. Home Care

- ◆ Go green when you clean. Many household cleaning products contain various chemicals and toxins detrimental to the environment and to your family's health. Read the labels!
- ◆ The typical U.S. home uses about 10,000 kilowatt-hours a year. Puget Sound Energy customers can pay an extra \$0.0125 per kWh to purchase 100% green power. That totals \$125 per year extra or about \$10.42 per month.
- ◆ From 1990 to 1999 the U.S. increased its consumption of electricity by 21.5%.



**Fact:** A study of Seattle area children found common household pesticides like Dursban and diazanon in the urine of 109 out of 110 children tested. The only child whose urine was free of pesticides had parents who did not use them and bought organic produce. (Source: Center for Child Environmental Health Risks Research, University of Washington, 2001)

## For home care I pledge to...

- A. Take my toxic household and yard products to the Factoria Transfer Station's Household Hazardous Waste Facility or the WasteMobile and purchase safer products in the future.
- B. Help my family with a project to weatherize my home by caulking and weather stripping our doorways and windows.  
**(Save 1,700 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- C. Keep my water heater thermostat no higher than 120 degrees.  
**(Save 550 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- D. Change my furnace filter regularly (every 1-3 months). **(Save up to 350 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- E. Insulate my water heater.  
**(Save 1,000 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- F. Look into buying green power.  
**(Save up to 22,000 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**

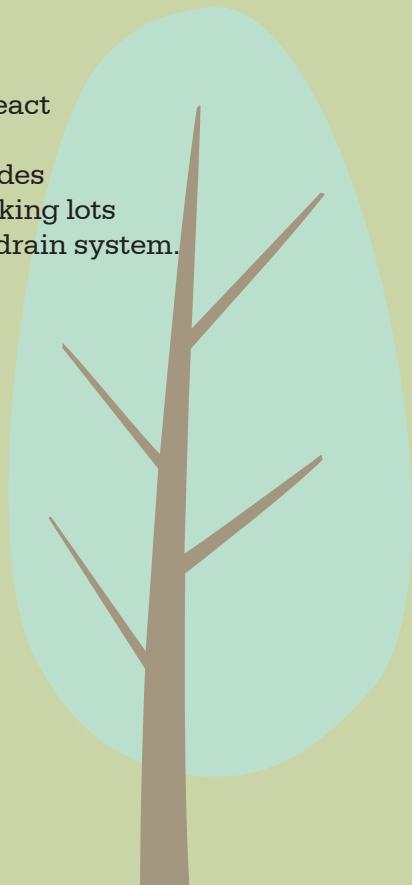




## 6. In the Yard

- ◆ Mow after 6 pm because gas vapors have less time to react with the sunlight.
- ◆ When it rains, pollutants such as oil, metals and pesticides are washed off lawns, roofs, driveways, streets and parking lots and enter our waterways untreated through the storm drain system.
- ◆ Every day more solar energy falls to the Earth than the total amount of energy the planet's inhabitants would consume in 27 years. Solar energy is a super-abundant resource.
- ◆ The air pollution from cutting grass for an hour with a gasoline-powered lawn mower is about the same as that from a 100-mile automobile ride.

**Fact:** Local King County stream samples turned up 23 common weed and bug killers at levels harmful to salmon and wildlife. Weed and feed chemicals found in local streams include 2,4-D, MCPP and dicamba. Over use of these products is bad for soil, fish and your family's health.



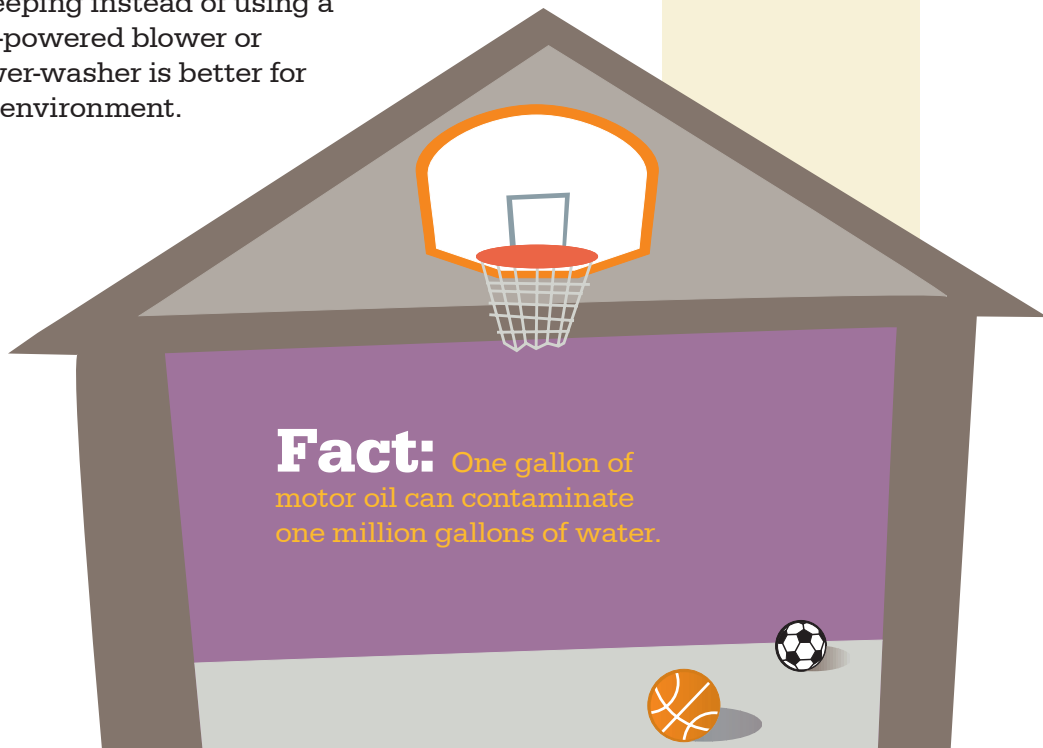
## In the yard I pledge to...

- A. Leave grass clippings on my lawn for free fertilizer and a healthier yard.
- B. Think twice about using pesticides, quick-release fertilizers and weed and feed products. They can damage the soil, lawn health, and pollute our waterways.
- C. Use a push mower instead of a gasoline or electric mower. **(Save up to 80 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- D. Carry a bag when on walks with my dog, pick up after them, and dispose of the waste in the trash to protect local streams, lakes and wetlands.
- E. Practice smart watering for healthier plants and to save limited summer water resources.



## 7. In the Garage

- ◆ A vehicle roof rack can reduce fuel efficiency by 5%.
- ◆ Sweeping instead of using a gas-powered blower or power-washer is better for our environment.



**Fact:** One gallon of  
motor oil can contaminate  
one million gallons of water.

## In the garage I pledge to...

- A. Check and inflate my tires monthly.  
**(Save 250 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- B. Check my car's air filter monthly and replace every 2,200 miles.  
**(Save 800 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- C. Remove my roof rack (if I have one) when I'm not using it.  
**(Save 250 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- D. Recycle my used oil and filters at one of many auto parts stores or service stations that accept them in Bellevue if I change my own motor oil.
- E. Maintain my car with regular tune-ups and fix fluid leaks promptly.
- F. NEVER dump motor oil, antifreeze, pesticides or any toxic materials down storm drains or on the ground.  
**Nothing but rain down the storm drain!**





## 8. Personal Transportation

- ◆ You can reduce your carbon footprint by 5,300 lbs of carbon dioxide per year if you buy a hybrid next time you purchase a vehicle.
- ◆ You can reduce your carbon footprint by 10 lbs for every minute you do not let your car idle in traffic.
- ◆ Washing cars on pavement sends dirty, soapy rinse water, which is deadly to aquatic life, down the storm drain and directly into Bellevue's streams, lakes and wetlands.

## For personal transportation, I pledge to...

- A. Reduce my weekly car travel by biking, walking, skateboarding, busing or carpooling. **(Save 1 lb of carbon dioxide for every mile you don't drive.)**
- B. Wash my car at a commercial car wash where waste water is treated and recycled. If I wash my car at home, I will wash it on the grass or gravel and choose a phosphorus-free soap.
- C. Use my air-conditioning sparingly, or not at all. **(Save 100 lbs of carbon dioxide per year if you use it sparingly or 600 lbs of carbon dioxide per year if you never use it.)**
- D. Accelerate gradually. **(Save 100 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- E. Use cruise control on the highway. **(Save 100 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**



## 9. Make an Even Bigger Difference

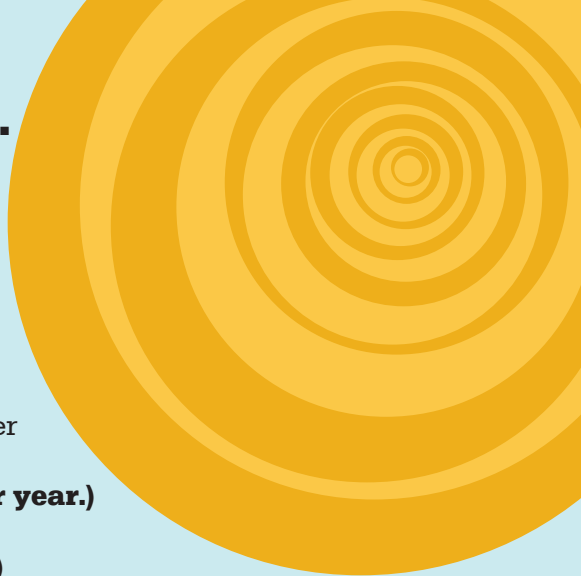
If you wish to make an even bigger difference...

- ◆ Pick an initiative and lobby in your community. Recruiting just 500 people to recycle their newspapers every day would have a significant impact.  
**(Save 92,000 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- ◆ Volunteer on a community council or for an advocacy group fighting global climate change. Conduct a campaign to convert 3,000 homes in your town to CFL light bulbs. **(Save 360,000 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- ◆ If 25,000 Bellevue households switched to 10% renewable energy, the savings would be huge. **(Save 68 million lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- ◆ You can conserve resources, save energy and prevent waste by buying products that are energy efficient; are used or reusable; are made with recycled content or are recyclable; or have no packaging or reduced packaging.

**Fact:** One person can make a difference and inspire others to as well.

## To get involved I pledge to...

- A. Join my school's environmental club or create one if there isn't one already.
- B. Convince one friend or neighborhood family to take one of the actions in this pledgebook.
- C. Write letters to the editor and express my opinion in community meetings in support of action on global climate change.
- D. Give away clothes, household goods, and other items I don't need to friends, neighbors, or charities. **(Save 81 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**
- E. Organize a clothing swap with 10 friends.  
**(Save 1,000 lbs of carbon dioxide per year.)**





# Useful Resources

## **City of Bellevue**

[www.bellevuewa.gov](http://www.bellevuewa.gov)

## **The Local Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County**

[www.govlink.org/hazwaste/index.cfm](http://www.govlink.org/hazwaste/index.cfm)

## **Washington State Department of Ecology**

[www.ecy.wa.gov](http://www.ecy.wa.gov)

## **Environmental Protection Agency**

[www.epa.gov/climatechange](http://www.epa.gov/climatechange)

## **Puget Sound Energy**

[www.pse.com](http://www.pse.com)

## **Washington State Recycling Association**

[www.wsra.net](http://www.wsra.net)

## **Cascade Water Alliance**

[www.cascadewater.org](http://www.cascadewater.org)

## **The Climate Impacts Group**

[cses.washington.edu/cig](http://cses.washington.edu/cig)

## **EPA's Let's Go Green Shopping**

[www.epa.gov/epaoswer/education/pdfs/shopping.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/education/pdfs/shopping.pdf)

## **World Resources Institute**

[www.wri.org](http://www.wri.org)

This Pledge Project is supported by the City of Bellevue and made possible through funding by the Local Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County.

# Glossary

**Carbon Yeti** – AKA Bigfoot; Large hairy creature; oblivious of its own environmental impact; wasteful of the planet's resources; has a large carbon footprint.

**Carbon Footprint** – Your carbon footprint is the amount of carbon dioxide you create from everyday activities. Carbon dioxide, the most plentiful greenhouse gas, traps the sun's heat and leads to global climate change.

**Recycling** – Collecting and reprocessing a resource so it can be used again.

**Climate Change** – Any significant change in measures of climate (such as temperature, precipitation, or wind) lasting for an extended period (decades or longer).

**Green Power** – Energy derived from nontraditional sources (solar, hydroelectric, wind, compressed natural gas).

**Carbon Dioxide** – A naturally occurring gas, and also a by-product of burning fossil fuels and biomass, as well as land-use changes and other industrial processes. The principle greenhouse gas affecting global climate change. It is the reference gas against which other greenhouse gases are measured.



## King County

Funded by the Local Hazardous  
Waste Management Program  
in King County

For conservation questions,  
call 425-452-6932 or email  
[utilities@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:utilities@bellevuewa.gov)

This information is available in  
alternate formats on request at  
425-452-6800 (voice) or 711 (relay).

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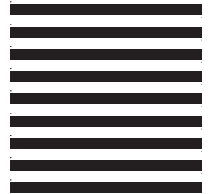
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