

Ashland Community Takes Climate Action May 2021

To build our resiliency as a community, we need a cultural shift that takes bold steps to both reduce greenhouse gas emissions to minimize further changes in the climate, and to implement the means to adapt to the changes in the climate.

Climate change is already affecting us, which includes the impacts on public health and the quality of life for Ashland's residents and visitors. Climate change impacts are projected to become much more severe in the coming decades including the dangers of wildfires and smoke, extreme weather events, flooding, temperatures, and snowpack declines. These impacts are especially seen on the livelihood of sensitive and exposed populations. They are also felt by the agriculture, outdoor recreation, and tourism economies, and by natural resources.

Ashland's Climate and Energy Action Plan, developed with the community and published in 2017, sets out a wide range of goals and targets for reducing Ashland's greenhouse gas emissions by 8% per year through 2050, and for the community to prepare for unavoidable impacts. The City of Ashland Climate and Energy Programs has launched a new climate website that includes information on these goals and targets and a resources directory. Here you can find information on the variety of incentive programs made to encourage residents to take climate action. There are incentives available for transportation, weatherization, appliances, renewable energy, and more! In addition to incentives, the City also offers a free indoor water analysis, irrigation evaluation, and home energy review. These evaluations provide households with a plan for better water and energy efficiency.

The webpages also feature the **Adapt Your Home** campaign. This campaign was created to raise awareness to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at home. From the 2015 greenhouse gas inventory analysis, 83% of Ashland's total emissions come from the residential sector. The Adapt Your Home concept is broken into four pillars; Prepare, Switch, Rethink, and Renew. Each pillar has its own webpage with a variety of action items, ranging from low to no cost, to larger investments. These pillars are meant to provide a menu of options as every household has their own path to taking climate action.

- Prepare - We can't control when emergencies happen, but it is important to prepare for them.
- Switch - Reduce your greenhouse gas emissions and lower your carbon footprint by switching off fossil fuels.
- Rethink - By rethinking our consumption habits, we can reduce our emissions and the strain on our natural resources.
- Renew - Supporting renewable energy reduces fossil fuel reliance and helps support a green economy.

To find out more about each pillar and the actions you can take, visit the website at ashland.or.us/climate and @AshlandClimateandEnergy on Facebook. By coming together as a community to reduce our emissions at home, we can all be a part of the solution to climate change!

Becs Walker, Chair, Conservation and Climate Outreach Commission

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