



## ***What is the Climate Action Plan?***

*The 2009 Climate Action Plan is a 40 year roadmap to a clean energy future for Multnomah County and the City of Portland.*

***Imagine a future based on clean, renewable and reliable energy that promotes a healthy environment, our local economy, and quality of life.***

The purpose of the Climate Action Plan is to establish goals and actions for our community to transition from a dirty, fossil-fuel economy to a way of life powered by clean, renewable energy. Not only will this transition be an investment in cost savings over time, but it will reduce greenhouse gas emissions which threaten our planet, reduce pollution which impacts our health, build community resiliency and self-sufficiency, and it will promote our local economy by keeping our dollars local and creating jobs.

### ***Why is the Climate Action Plan important?***

Climate change is the defining challenge of the 21st century. The world's leading scientists report that carbon emissions from human activities have begun to destabilize the Earth's climate. Billions of people will experience these changes through threats to public health, national and local economies, and supplies of food, water and power.

The physical impacts of a changing climate are matched by social challenges and compounded by rising energy prices. Low-income and vulnerable citizens face disproportionate impacts of climate change — exposure to heat stroke in their homes, for example — while having fewer resources to respond to these changes. Climate change and rising energy prices have the potential to exacerbate social inequities and present risks to national security. In addition, the rivers, streams, wetlands, and vegetation across the Portland region's watersheds will be affected by climate change. Changes in weather and moisture patterns will affect streamflow, groundwater recharge and flooding, and may increase risks of wildfire, drought, and invasive plant and animal species.

Climate change, social inequity, rising energy prices, and degraded natural systems — require an integrated response that goes far beyond reducing carbon emissions. Climate protection must be inextricably linked with actions to create and maintain jobs, improve community livability and public health, address social equity and foster strong, resilient natural systems.

### ***A Snapshot of the Plan***

On October 29, 2009, Multnomah County and the City of Portland jointly adopted the 2009 Climate Action Plan. The Plan is the result of a two year planning process conducted in collaboration with key stakeholders and experts, county departments and city bureaus, and with significant input from our community.

The adopted goals are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 40% below current levels by 2030 and 80% by 2050. The Plan is divided into 8 sections and focuses on actions to be taken every three years. Every three years the Plan will be updated with new actions.

1. Buildings and Energy
2. Urban Form and Mobility
3. Consumption and Solid Waste
4. Urban Forestry and Natural Systems
5. Food and Agriculture
6. Community Engagement
7. Climate Change Preparation
8. Local Government Operations

### ***How will Multnomah County implement the Climate Action Plan?***

There are two methods of implementing the Plan:

- Implement specific actions identified in the Plan (e.g. there are 60 identified actions for the county to implement in the 2009-12 three year cycle)
- Use a climate filter or lens in overall county decision-making, operations and the delivery of services to reduce climate emissions and reduce climate vulnerabilities. For example, as the county makes decisions or delivers services the question should be asked “how does this decision impact greenhouse gas emissions and can that impact be minimized?”

The county’s Office of Sustainability will act as the Climate Action Plan program manager and will coordinate overall implementation and Plan update efforts at the county. The Climate Action Plan Implementation Team (CAP I-Team), made up of county department representatives, will act as project managers within their departments to implement specific action items. For every three year update of the Climate Action Plan an implementation workplan will be developed by the Office of Sustainability and the CAP I-Team, and in consultation with the Chair’s Office.

Every year, the Office of Sustainability reports the county’s progress on reducing greenhouse gas emissions from its own government operations, and periodically the Office of Sustainability and a designated CAP I-Team will be reporting to the Board on the reduction in community-wide emission reductions and the county’s progress in implementing the first three year actions. The first three year reporting cycle deadline is June 30, 2012.

### ***I understand the importance of the Climate Action Plan, but I need help implementing the Plan...***

Great, we are glad that you recognize the priority of implementing the Plan and there is assistance available to you. The Office of Sustainability is here to help you with your questions, with technical assistance, and with co-developing efficient and cost effective solutions to implementing the Plan. Please contact Tim Lynch, Climate and Energy Specialist, at 503-988-4094 or [tim.j.lynch@multco.us](mailto:tim.j.lynch@multco.us) with your questions or to schedule a consultation.