

Chicago Conservation Corps Speakers Bureau
Green Living



Goals:

1. Understand big picture issues like greenhouse gas emissions and climate impacts.
2. Make connections between natural resources, lifestyle and incorporating eco-friendly practices.
3. Provide resources and examples of actions and products that reduce carbon outputs.

Materials: Bag of green materials: CFL, power strip, green cleaner, reusable bag, reusable water bottle, reusable plate and napkin, faucet aerator, low-flow showerhead and *CTA Transit Maps*. Print material: *The Chicago Climate Action Plan, Green Condo/Apartment Checklist*

KEY TERMS:

Greenhouse Gases Emissions Carbon Dioxide Conservation Efficiency

Step 1: Introductions

Time: 10 mins.

TIP: *Remember to always introduce yourself, smile and make eye contact*

1. **Introduce yourself and the goals of the presentation.**
2. **Develop a leading question.** This will help you get a sense for your audience and peak their interest.
Review the *Myth Busters* and *FAQ's* for assistance.

Leading question examples:

- How much waste is produced in Chicago annually (on average)? *7,299,174 tons*
- Buildings are responsible for ___ of all emissions in Chicago? *70%*
- If all Chicagoans installed one CFL in their home, the amount of energy saved would be able to power the lights of _____ homes? *400,000*

3. **Group introductions:** Use these questions as an opportunity for group introductions.

Step 2: Overview

Time: 10 mins.

TIP: *Keep your presentation simple. Do not feel as though you have to be a Climate Change expert.*

THEME: **If we do not change our lifestyle habits, there will be big environmental consequences.**

Big Picture Overview:

- Energy in the U.S. and around the world is primarily created by burning fossil fuels like coal and oil.
- Burning fossil fuels, landfills, industry, transportation and agriculture create emissions, which are released into the atmosphere forming pollutants.
- These pollutants are known as human emissions of Greenhouse Gases (GHG), which are gases that trap heat inside the atmosphere.
- GHG's include: **carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone.**
- Fossil fuels, deforestation and development have increased human made GHG's in the atmosphere, in particular: carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane.
- When found naturally, these very same GHG's have a positive impact on climate by absorbing radiation and regulating climate.
- Impacts of Climate Change: polar ice caps melting at increased rates and extreme weather conditions.

Quick Facts

- In the last 50 years, CO₂ levels have risen by 25% and methane levels have doubled.
- The rate of warming over the last 50 years is almost double the rate of warming over the last 100 years.
- 2010 was the warmest year on record, worldwide.

Chicago Specific Overview

- Midwest climate change impacts include:
 - Increased heat waves and reduced air quality—Ozone Action Days.
 - Increased precipitation, greater evaporation increasing the risk of droughts and flooding.
 - Temperatures in the region are already shifting. Without action, temperatures will be similar to that of Alabama.
 - Increased threat to native plants and habitats from invasive plants moving into warmer regions.
- If Chicago remains on its current emissions path, GHG emissions would increase by 35%.
- **Chicago Climate Action Plan** aims to reduce GHG emissions to 25% below 1990 emissions levels by 2020 and 80% by 2050.
- In Chicago, 70% of emissions are produced by buildings. Chicago’s goal is to reduce this to 30%.

(Sources: The Chicago Climate Action Plan, U.S. Global Change Research Program)

It Starts With You

- We can make an impact, but it can’t be done without YOU and all Chicagoans taking a hard look at their lifestyles and making small changes that make a big difference.
- **Conservation**: a careful preservation and protection of something, *especially* planned management of a natural resource to prevent exploitation, destruction, or neglect. (Webster)
- **Sustainability**: satisfaction of basic economic, social, and security needs now and in the future without undermining the natural resource base and environmental quality on which life depends. (US EPA)

Questions?

Time: 5 mins.

Step 3: Tackling Environmental Challenges with Grassroots Solutions.

Time: 20 mins.

TIP: *Encourage people to use the information from the presentation and their personal experience to come up with realistic solutions that can be incorporated into their lives.*

Activity

- Break up the audience into four groups.
- Distribute one photo depicting Chicago locations to each group.
- Ask the group to discuss the following questions in their group and prepare a collective response.

<p>Chicago Parks (Focus on land/waste)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Identify the natural resource (s).-Recall a memory of this place or one similar that connects you to this photo.-Identify the environmental challenges commonly associated with green space.-List the conservation actions and solutions.	<p>Lake Michigan (Focus on water)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Identify the natural resource (s).-Recall a memory of this place or one similar that connects you to this photo.-Identify the environmental challenges commonly associated with fresh water.- List the conservation actions and solutions.
<p>Neighborhood Housing (Focus on energy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Identify the natural resource (s).-Recall a memory of this place or one similar that connects you to this photo.-Identify the environmental challenges commonly associated with buildings.- List the conservation actions and solutions.	<p>Food (Focus on land, waste, emissions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Identify the natural resource (s).-Recall a memory of this place or one similar that connects you to this photo.-Identify the environmental challenges commonly associated with food production/consumption.- List the conservation actions and solutions.

Step 4: Additional Actions**Time: 10 mins.**

- Review the items in the *Conservation Kit* and how they can be resources for the challenges described in the activity.
- Conservation Kit Quick Facts:
 - **CFL**: reduces energy use by 75% and last up to 10 times longer than an incandescent, (City of Chicago).
 - **Power strip**: can conserve energy use by 10% by reducing energy used through phantom load, (Energy Star).
 - **Green cleaners**: improve air quality by removing Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) commonly found in household cleaners, (Clean Air Council).
 - **Reusable bag and water bottle**: Americans use approximately 1 billion shopping bags, creating 300,000 tons of landfill waste annually, (Clean Air Council).
 - **Faucet Aerator and Showerhead**: can reduce your home water consumption as much as 50%, and reduce your energy cost of heating the water also by as much as 50%.
 - **CTA Bike and Transit Maps**: switching can prevent the emissions of least 30% of GHG's currently emitted.
- **Take the Pledge**: Distribute pledges that ask participants to incorporate one green action into their lives, each month for the next 12 months. Help them make a plan by providing action examples that for each month of the year.

Step 5: Questions and Wrap Up**Time: 10 mins.**

TIP: *Sum up the presentation with the theme- If we do not change our lifestyle habits, there will be big environmental consequences*

Additional Resources**City of Chicago Publications**

The Chicago Climate Action Plan- booklet

The Chicago Climate Action Plan Dashboard -one pager

Impacts of Climate Change- one pager

Green Apartment/Condo Checklist-one pager

Saving with Smart Bulbs-postcard

Save the Source-brochure

Local Resources

Center for Neighborhood Technology: info@cnt.org, (773) 278-4446

I-Go Car Sharing: info@igocars.org, (773) 278-4446

The Chicago Center for Green Technology: greentech@cityofchicago.org, 312-746-9642

CEDA: 800-571-2332

Chicago Conservation Corps: conservation@cityofchicago.org, 312-743-9283

National Resources

USEPA www.epa.gov

US Global Change Research Program www.globalchange.gov

National Oceanic and Atmosphere Association www.education.noaa.gov

A Climate for Change. Katharine Heyhoe, 2009