

Climate Change



City of
Whittlesea

information sheet



What is climate change?

Climate change refers to a long-term shift in Earth's temperature and weather patterns over many decades.

Our climate fluctuates naturally; however, human activities which burn fossil fuels, such as transport, generating electricity and making products, have warmed the earth by 1°C since the industrial revolution. This occurs because burning coal, gas, and oil releases greenhouse gases. These gases trap heat in our atmosphere, which increases the Earth's temperature.

Why do we need to take action on climate change?



The current rate of warming is causing damage to our health, wellbeing, and our environment. To slow and reverse climate change humans need to reduce these emissions and find ways to absorb greenhouse gases - like planting trees. Changes made today may slow and prevent damage for our grandchildren, but the emissions already released into our atmosphere mean we must prepare for the climate impacts already happening, and those to come.

What climate risks should we prepare for in our City?



In recent decades Victoria has become hotter and drier, with more frequent extremely hot days, more fire danger days in spring, and less rainfall in cooler seasons. The City of Whittlesea is most vulnerable to heatwaves, bushfires/grassfires, floods, storms and drought. Preparing for these risks is the best way to protect yourself and those you love.

What can you do as an individual to prepare for climate risks?

You can get climate ready by knowing the climate risks for your area, and making changes that reduce the dangers to you. Here are some actions to get you started:

1 Develop an **emergency plan** for extreme weather events such as heatwave, fire, and flood

2 Check you have **adequate insurance** for your home, contents, income and business

3 Build a **support network** in your community to share advice, resources and emotional support

Where are the City of Whittlesea's emissions coming from?

The largest source of our emissions is electricity consumed by local industry, business and residents, making up 48% of total emissions. On-road transportation makes up 28% and Council as an organisation makes up 1%. Council is on track to achieve its goal of Zero Net Emissions (as an organisation) by 2022. Everyone has a role in reducing our City's emissions.

How much and how fast do we need to cut our emissions?

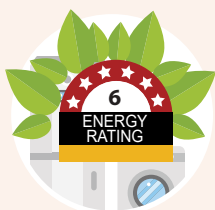
The 'carbon budget' concept is what climate science has determined is necessary to limit global temperature rise within 2°C to prevent catastrophic climate change. Our investigations have revealed that our City would need to reduce its carbon emissions by 4% each year to stay within 'budget' and achieve zero emissions by 2044. If our city continues on with its current emissions, the 'carbon budget' would run out by 2031.

What can you do to help reduce Whittlesea's carbon emissions?

Reduce your carbon emissions by making small changes to your daily life, such as:



Switch to renewable energy, and consider installing solar panels on your roof



Improve your energy efficiency i.e. buy appliances with a good Energy Rating



Cut home energy use i.e. only turn on heating/cooling in rooms you're using



Drive less by choosing public transport, cycling and walking where possible - switch to an electric car if your budget allows



Eat locally sourced, in-season fruits and vegetables and choose plant-based meals over animal products

How can Council support community climate actions?

Council is reducing emissions by upgrading streetlights, installing solar systems across Council buildings, and adopting environmentally sustainable design guidelines for new buildings. By providing and improving community assets and infrastructure, Council contributes to building our community's resilience to climate change impacts. Council also partners with other agencies on programs which support community action, and advocates for climate action at a state, national and international level.