

# RESIDENTIAL CLIMATE ACTION CHECKLIST



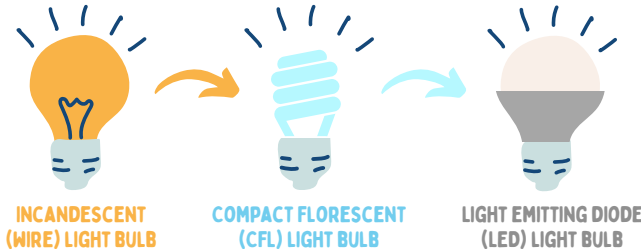
You can take action every day with small changes at home. Here are some suggestions of how you can make a difference:

## ENERGY SAVINGS:

- Replace old, incandescent or compact florescent light (CFL) bulbs with LED bulbs that use less energy, last longer, and are mercury-free.

- Turn off devices such as fans and computers when you're not home.

- Turn off unnecessary outdoor lights at night.



- In the summer (June 1 - September 30), avoid charging devices or using appliances during peak energy demand hours (2pm - 7pm) to pay a cheaper rate for electricity.

- Opt for more layers of clothes or blankets instead of space heaters. A 1,500-watt heater costs roughly 20-25 cents per hour to operate.

- Save energy by replacing your HVAC air filter every 3-4 months.

- Turn on your shower when you are actually ready to get in.

- Make a 7 - 15 minute playlist to keep track of time for short showers to save water, energy, and money.



- Install a smart, programmable thermostat that can automatically adjust your home's temperature to fit your daily schedule.

- Recieve a free energy analysis for recommended upgrades for your home from **Consumer's Energy**.

Scan this link to schedule your analysis:



- Wash your clothes with the coldest water setting possible.

- Air-dry bulky items like sweaters, jeans, and towels or use your dryer's "no-heat" mode to save energy.

- Try the **Michigan Home Energy Rebates Program (MiHER)** which can help you upgrade your natural gas appliances, or improve your home's insulation, heating, ventilation, or air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

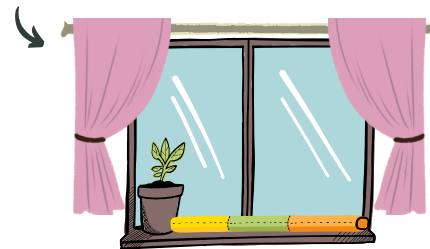


- Set your ceiling fan direction to **counterclockwise** in the **summer** to create a downdraft. Set the direction to **clockwise** in the **winter** for an updraft to circulate the warm air and save money on heating.

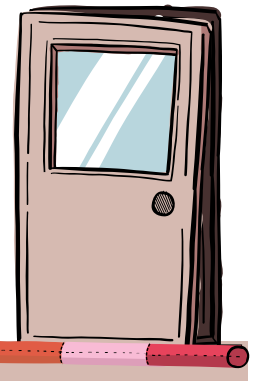
- During the day, use **bright winter sunlight** to warm your house.

- In the **summer**, adjust your thermostat to **72°F** when you are home and set it warmer when away.

- Use heavy curtains or window shades to block the **hot summer sunlight** to keep your house cool while saving money & energy.



- Cover your window sills and door gaps with fabric draft-stoppers to keep your air inside.



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## SAFE & EFFICIENT HOMES

- Get your house checked for lead if it was built before the year 1978 and especially if young children (0 - 5 years old) live there or visit.

Visit [Kent County's Getting Ahead of Lead](#) for resources:



- Create an emergency preparedness plan with your family to keep safe during severe weather, power outages, or other emergencies.

- Put together a kit with water, food, and essential supplies for two weeks and replace perishable items annually. Visit [Ready.gov](#) for a list of basic emergency supplies to can include in your kit.



- Buy a portable air cleaner with a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter.

- Properly insulating your home not only reduces heating and cooling costs, but also improves comfort. Visit [Energy.gov](#) to learn more:



- Upgrade your home's heating and cooling system with a heat pump.

- Install low-flow shower heads, toilets, and sink aerators to save water.

- Check out [Michigan Saves](#), a green bank, to finance renovations for renewable energy projects or efficiency upgrades.



- Swap your natural gas appliances for electric, when possible, to improve your indoor air quality and consume less fossil fuels. Choose efficient appliances with an **ENERGY STAR** certification to save money and energy.

- Share this information with your neighbors, family, and friends.

- Consider flood insurance if you live near a body of water. You can visit [FloodSmart.gov](#) for information about flood insurance:



## CLEAN TRANSIT:

- Use the free DASH bus in downtown Grand Rapids.

- Buy a reloadable Wave Card to easily ride the Rapid bus and stay under the \$5.25 daily cap. Each card is only \$3 and are sold at Central Station and most Walgreens and Speedways in Grand Rapids.

- Download the **Transit app** on your phone to see the closest bus routes and frequencies.



- Buy a safe bike helmet with multidirectional impact protection system (MIPS®) technology to keep your brain safe while biking on the road.

- Learn about the safe bike routes near you.

Scan this link to view maps from the [Greater Grand Rapids Bicycle Coalition](#):



- Offer a ride to a friend, coworker, or neighbor to reduce the number of single-destination and single-person trips.

- Turn off your car if you're waiting more than five minutes to pick someone up. Especially at schools, hospitals, or around people who are sensitive to air pollution.

- Rent an electric car for \$5/hour from the **DART Carshare program by Mobile GR**.



- Consider purchasing an e-bike or e-scooter.

- Consider purchasing a plug-in hybrid or electric vehicle.

- Maintain your vehicle so it drives efficiently & clean.

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## HEALTHY FOOD:

- Shop at local farmers' markets for vegetables and fruits, meat, dairy products, breads, and more. **West Michigan Farm Markets.org** has an interactive map of markets in ten counties that accept MI Bridge cards:



- Eat less meat and dairy. You can replace protein from animal products with nuts, beans, seeds, legumes, grains, or other meat replacements such as tofu (soy), seitan (wheat), or textured vegetable protein (soy).

- Eat foods that are grown locally and are in-season. Check what types of produce are available at markets in Michigan by visiting this online **Seasonal Food Guide**:



- Prioritize restaurants that feature local or seasonal ingredients and responsibly package their food by avoiding single-use containers.

- Try growing some of your own vegetables or herbs.

**View community gardens in the city with this map:**



- Start a compost bin to prevent food from being sent to a landfill. The bin must be fully enclosed & maintained regularly to prevent foul odors and nuisance animals like rats, squirrels, raccoons, and insects.

**Learn more from the Institute for Local Self-Reliance:**



- City residents can pick up one cubic yard of mulch, for FREE, each year at 2001 Butterworth Street SW. Pick up is available every Saturday, April - June.

**View pick up hours and prices of additional material:**



- Read through the **City's Urban Agriculture Guide** for wise practices for growing food in the city.



- Share leftover meals with your friends and neighbors.

- Donate extra, unopened food to community food banks.

- Opt-in for curbside recycling. **The City of Grand Rapids offers free curbside recycling services for residents.**



- Dispose of batteries with mercury, lithium, or cadmium at Kent County's SafeChem sites. Alkaline batteries can be landfilled.

- Refuse** disposable goods, such as plastic bags, to prevent waste.

**Reduce** the amount of single-use items that you consume.

**Reuse** durable goods, like cloth bags, to replace consumable items.

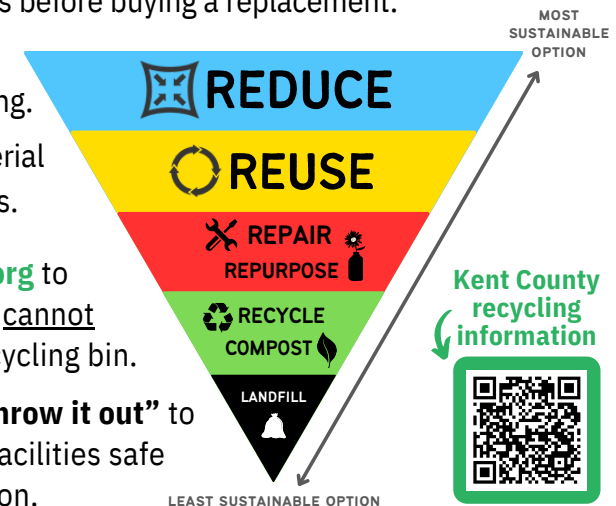
**Repair** easily fixed goods before buying a replacement.

**Repurpose** goods for a new use before discarding.

**Recycle** only clean material that Kent County accepts.

- Visit **ReimagineTrash.org** to learn what you can and cannot put in your curbside recycling bin.

But, **"when in doubt, throw it out"** to keep the Kent County Facilities safe and free of contamination.



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## THRIVING ENVIRONMENT:

- Bag your lawn clippings, branches, or other yard waste for curbside yard waste collection. This service is available the 1<sup>st</sup> full week in April until the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday in December.



Scan this link to learn about yard waste services:

- Use a car wash service, or wash your vehicle in your yard, to prevent harmful soap from draining to the street and into rivers and lakes.
- Properly store chemicals, fertilizers, oil, and paint in a cool, dry place.
- Bag and throw away your outdoor pets' waste to stop harmful bacteria like E. coli from washing into nearby rivers and lakes when it rains.
- Use winter deicing salt sustainably by following these tips:
  - **Shovel** snow first to reduce the amount of salt you need.
  - Don't pour, but **scatter** a cup to evenly spread the salt.
  - **Switch to sand** or a cold weather deicer if needed. If it is colder than 15° F, regular salt (NaCl) does not melt ice.
  - **Sweep** up excess salt once the weather warms up. Even if it's mixed with dirt, the salt can still be used for the next winter.

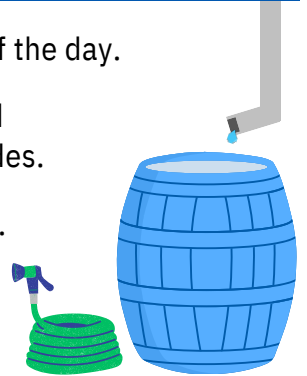
- Care for your street tree by watering, weeding, and mulching.
- Support the urban forest by volunteering to plant trees with **Friends of Grand Rapids Parks** and the **City of Grand Rapids Forestry Division**.

City of Grand Rapids Forestry Resources



- Plant trees on your property and request trees for your right of way (the area between the sidewalk and road).

- Water early in the morning before the heat of the day.
- Use vinegar and hot water to treat unwanted weeds rather than harmful chemical pesticides.
- Choose native plants for your garden or yard.
- Volunteer to remove invasive plant species.
- Organize a neighborhood trash cleanup.
- Connect a rain barrel to your gutter system to save money on water and slow down the movement of pollution into rivers.
- Clear your neighborhood storm drain of leaves, snow, and ice to reduce flooding in our streets. **Visit Adopt-a-Drain to locate the closest storm drain to you:**
- Do not burn any material besides firewood. Burning yard waste, tires, construction debris, and plastic is harmful and illegal.
- Sign up for local air quality alerts from **JustAir.app**
- Swap gas-powered lawn tools for electric alternatives.
- Purchase bulk waste tags from the City** to dispose of large trash like appliances, furniture, mattresses, and other items too large for your curbside bins.



Visit us online



Office of Sustainability