

THE DAVIS LOW CARBON DIET

Background

Purpose: Reduce the community's carbon footprint

Target Behavior: Each participating household will reduce their carbon dioxide emissions by 5,000 pounds

Target Audience: Davis Residents, Council, Community Organizations, Local Businesses.

Background: Most people are aware of the consequences associated with global warming. However, the fight against global warming requires more than one behavioral change and can be an overwhelming process. Also, in order to prevent further climate change it takes more than one individual, which may seem intimidating when surrounded by unwilling participants.

In October 2008, the City of Davis implemented a carbon diet plan that involved gathering 100 households into small teams to lose 5,000 lbs in 30 days. Over 100 households answered the challenge, with participation ranging from average Davis households to City Council members, City staff, UC Davis campus administrators, scientists, students, and business owners. The short duration of the program made it easier for households to commit their time.

Upon conclusion of the program, households reported the amount of carbon emissions they were able to lose through an anonymous online reporting tool. Of the 47 survey responses received, **253,723** annual pounds of carbon have been reported to be saved as a result of this program. This calculates to an average of **5,398 pounds saved per household**.

Program Objective: The program will consist of a target of 1,000 households in the community, chosen to reflect many different aspects of Davis.

Program Description: The program will target community groups and clubs that individuals identify with, who may have an interest in carbon reduction and/or sustainability. Initially, we are targeting three categories, Education/Schools/PTA, Faith-Based groups, and Civic/Environmental groups.

An initial outreach will be conducted to seek individuals from these categories who will take a lead in assisting the City with the program, either by facilitating eco-teams at their school, church or environmental group, or by suggesting candidates who would be willing and able to take an active role. Once Eco-team facilitators are designated, they will facilitate recruitment and assist individual households in meeting their goals.

Each Eco-team will be provided a packet of materials to help them conduct regular meetings during the 30 day period, and devise their individual 30 day workplans. The packet will consist of:

- Overall strategy (this document)
- FAQ Sheet
- Actions and corresponding carbon reduction amounts
- Supplemental actions (that are not covered in the LCD Workbook)
- A commitment document
- Results from the October pilot program

Organizing Strategy: The City will take a leadership role in public outreach, identifying team leaders, providing administrative and technical support, and facilitating collection and tabulation of survey data.

Time Period: Length of program is 30 days from each Eco-team's start.

Public Outreach: Initial outreach will be done through:

- Newspaper articles and “briefly” items in the newspaper
- An email group through the City
- Pages on the City website

Eco-team leaders will be responsible for outreach to their own clubs or organizations.