



Tacoma's Climate Action Plan: Progress Report 2010

In 2008, Tacoma adopted a Climate Action Plan developed by community members to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while improving our quality of life. As a city, we must act now to address climate change and its negative effects – drinking water shortages, costly infrastructure upgrades, sea level rise in Commencement Bay and harmful ecosystem effects. To do so, the plan identified ambitious goals, long-range strategies and a two-year action plan to reduce carbon emissions.

This report summarizes Tacoma's progress to curb emissions, save money and improve our city from reducing city fuel use to growing community gardens.



To learn more and join the effort, visit www.cityoftacoma.org/sustainability.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Strickland, Mayor



“A blueprint to grow our local economy, sustainably for the long term, to make Tacoma more livable and more attractive, and allow our citizens to be healthier and have the potential to save significantly on energy costs.”

—Tacoma's Climate Action Plan, 2008





City Leading by Example

Changes in municipal operations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, save money and set an example for residents and businesses.

To do its part and to inspire residents and businesses, Tacoma's city government must set the standard with policy changes and actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Benefits | Air quality | City costs | Energy efficiency | Farm and forest preservation | Health | Jobs | Quality of life | Water use

What We've Done

Tacoma is saving energy and money through smart investments. City government has:

- Replaced high-wattage lights with LED fixtures in police headquarters to cut 3 tons of carbon emissions and save nearly \$5,000 in energy costs per year.
- Converted 86% of Tacoma's traffic signals to LED units to cut nearly 60 tons of carbon and save almost \$73,000 per year.

Employees in the Tacoma Municipal Building are also doing their part – 35% get to work using a smart commute option like transit or carpools.

Next Steps

- Complete energy retrofits at municipal facilities.
- Include sustainability in purchasing specifications and contracts.
- Expand recycling in city-owned buildings to batteries, electronic waste, foam packaging, and toner cartridges.

Reducing City Fuel Use

In 2003, Tacoma Power purchased the city's first hybrid electric car. Today, Tacoma owns 63 hybrid and five plug-in electric vehicles. More than half were added after the Climate Action Plan was published.

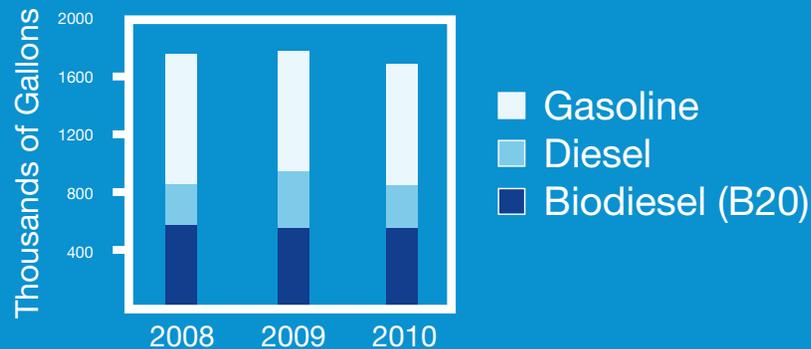


Efficient and alternative-fuel vehicles cut fuel costs and carbon emissions for city government.

- Since 2008, municipal fuel use has dropped by 6%.
- Tacoma uses a biodiesel blend (B20) for two-thirds of the fuel in municipal diesel vehicles.

Tacoma will continue adding hybrid and plug-in electric vehicles and will train city staff on driving techniques to save fuel.

Tacoma's City Fleet Fuel Use, 2008-2010





Moving People and Goods More Efficiently

Reducing vehicle miles traveled – especially in single-occupant vehicles – and increasing fuel efficiency

Transportation produces more than half of Tacoma’s greenhouse gas emissions. Personal driving accounts for about 65% of transportation emissions, and another 25% comes from trucks hauling freight.

Benefits Air quality | Fuel costs | Health | Quality of life

What We’ve Done

In the past two years, the City of Tacoma has:

- Installed 80 new bike racks.
- Scrapped high-polluting diesel trucks in the Port of Tacoma.
- Implemented paid street parking downtown, which encourages transit use and carpooling.
- Changed the municipal code to give developers the flexibility to build less parking downtown and in mixed-use centers.

Next Steps

- By 2012, complete the top four bicycle projects in the new Mobility Master Plan, building 12.5 miles of new bikeways to connect South 96th to the Narrows Bridge.
- Recruit a car-sharing company to Tacoma.
- Continue working with *Downtown: On the Go!* to improve transportation and land use downtown.

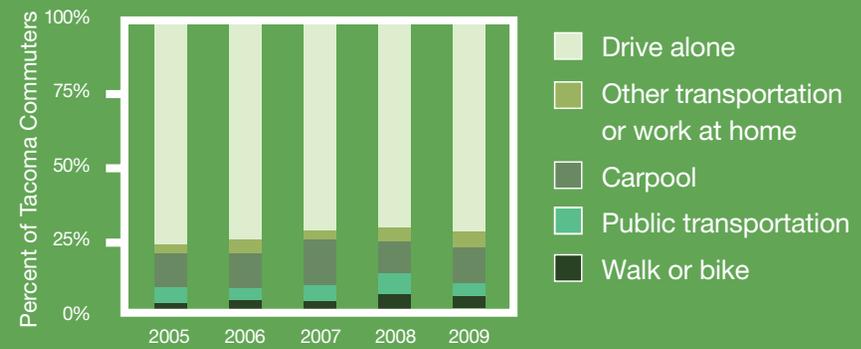
How Tacoma Moves

How we get around depends on many factors. Do we live near or far from shops and our workplaces? Can buses take us where we need to go? Can we bike and walk safely? Changing our travel habits takes time and effort, but we’re making progress.



Since 2005, the share of Tacoma residents who walk or bike to work has more than doubled to reach 5%, meeting a target set in the Climate Action Plan. Driving alone is still how three-quarters of commuters get to work, but the share of single-occupant vehicles has dropped slightly.

Tacoma’s Commute Methods, 2005-2009*



* 2010 data not available at time of publication.



Enhancing Compact/Livable Neighborhoods

Developing attractive, compact neighborhood centers; building complete communities with nearby places to live, work, shop and play; and directing growth to existing urban areas.

Compact, livable neighborhoods preserve farms and forests, support transportation choices, use existing infrastructure efficiently and promote a sense of community.

Benefits Air quality | Carbon sequestration | Farm and forest preservation | Health | Quality of life | Water use

What We've Done

Since 2008, Tacoma has planted 1,300 new trees and added more than 20 acres of parks and natural areas.

Tacoma also adopted three major policies to enhance our neighborhoods. *Complete Streets Design Guidelines* will make our streets safe and attractive for everyone to use. The *Open Space Habitat and Recreation Plan* will lead to a complete network of natural areas, parks and community gardens. The *Urban Forest Policy* will protect and add trees to our neighborhoods.

Next Steps

- Add 12 more community gardens and 10 acres of parks and natural areas in 2011.
- Work with Pierce County on a Transfer of Development Rights program to direct growth away from farms and forests.
- Inventory trees in each neighborhood business district and develop management plans to sustain existing trees and identify planting opportunities.

Tacoma's Gardens Grow

In just two years, neighbors have grown the number of community gardens in Tacoma from 9 to 19. Together they built raised beds, tilled soil, planted seeds, and harvested crops for their families, friends, and local food banks.



These gardens offer opportunities to grow low-cost fruits and vegetables, promote healthy activity, meet neighbors, beautify neighborhoods and even reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transporting food.

Community Gardens in Tacoma



Any Tacoma resident can apply for a garden plot.

Visit www.growlocaltacoma.com for more information.



Energy Efficiency in Our Buildings, Homes and Industries

Weatherizing homes; upgrading lighting, heating and cooling systems, and other equipment; conserving energy; and increasing the use of clean and renewable sources.

Energy bills are costly for both households and businesses. We have many opportunities to reduce energy use and support the development of new, renewable energy resources.

Benefits Energy costs | Energy innovation | Health | Jobs
Quality of life | Water use

What We've Done

In 2009–2010, Tacoma Power invested \$22 million in cost-effective energy savings for customers. Tacoma Power helped residents with rebates for energy-efficient bulbs, home weatherization (insulation and windows), and energy-efficient appliances. Business and industrial investments save energy in lighting, heating and cooling, and compressed air equipment.

Energy audits at more than 50 municipal facilities found ways to save energy through retrofits that will pay for themselves over time.

Next Steps

- Offer new energy efficiency programs to Tacoma Power customers.
- Conserve another 11 annual megawatts of energy in 2011–2012, enough to power over 9,600 homes for a year.
- Complete energy retrofits at municipal facilities.

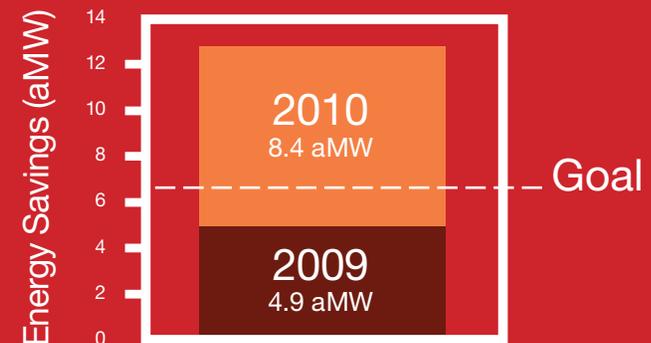
Tacoma Power Surpasses Goal

Tacoma Power more than doubled the Climate Action Plan's two-year goal by conserving 13.3 annual megawatts (aMW) of energy in Tacoma's homes and businesses – enough energy to power 11,625 homes for a year. These savings kept nearly 42,000 tons of carbon emissions out of the atmosphere.



By investing in cost-effective strategies, customers will save an estimated \$6.2 million on their energy bills each year. Even better, they'll enjoy more comfortable homes, better lighting and more efficient HVAC systems.

Tacoma Power's Efficiency Programs – Energy Conservation, 2009–2010





Reuse and Recycle... from Buildings to Food Waste

Reducing waste at the source first and then reusing, recycling and composting materials from our homes, businesses and construction sites

The items we throw away represent greenhouse gas emissions both in the landfill and from mining, producing, transporting and using those goods. Recycling, reuse, and reducing waste at the source can avoid many of these emissions.

Benefits Air quality | City costs | Energy efficiency | Water quality

What We've Done

In 2010, Tacoma Solid Waste Management added services to help residents increase recycling and reduce waste. A pilot program collected 600 tons of food scraps from more than 60 restaurants, grocery stores and other businesses for composting.

To help residents compost at home, Tacoma Solid Waste Management sold 250 reduced-cost compost bins. More than 100 residents learned to compost and avoid toxic chemicals at natural yard care workshops and neighborhood garden parties.

Next Steps

- Continue to phase in proportional, volume-based rates, so residents pay the same price per gallon of garbage for large cans as for small cans.
- Expand commercial food scrap composting.
- Upgrade the landfill transfer station to sort and divert more recyclables.

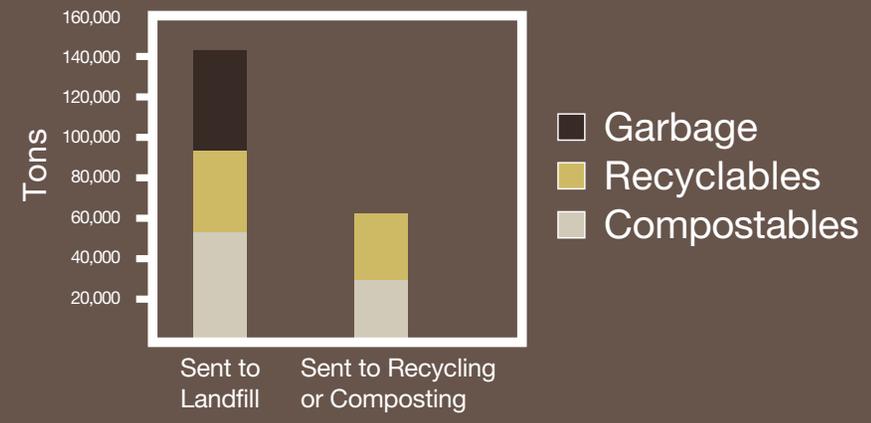
Tacoma Tosses Less & Recycles More

In 2010, Tacoma residents and businesses sent more than 142,000 tons of material to the landfill; recycled more than 28,000 tons; and composted nearly 34,000 tons of yard waste through city collection. Since 2005, landfill disposal dropped by about 25% while recycling held steady, so we're reducing waste overall.



Tacoma is doing a great job keeping yard waste and aluminum cans out of the landfill, but nearly two-thirds of materials sent to the landfill are potentially recyclable or compostable. We need to work on composting food scraps; recycling paper, cardboard and plastics; and recovering material from construction and demolition projects.

Garbage, Recycling, and Composting Tons, 2010



Progress on Climate Action Plan Goals



City Leading By Example

Good Progress

- ✓ Purchase fuel-efficient and alternative fuel vehicles
- ★ Convert traffic signals to LEDs

Some Progress

- ★ Adopt environmental purchasing policy
- ★ Adopt municipal green building standard
- ★ Establish preference for contractors who use low-emission and low-carbon fuels
- ★ Reduce energy use – review previous audits, hire resource conservation manager, conduct building commissioning
- Create waste reduction and conservation policy
- Encourage telecommuting and alternative work schedules
- Support and encourage state and regional product stewardship efforts
- Use renewable fuels for all municipal-owned diesel vehicles

Needs Work

- ★ Become EPA Green Power Partner



Moving People and Goods More Efficiently

Good Progress

- ✓ Develop a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian system
- ✓ Establish paid parking downtown
- ✓ Evaluate locations for new bus stops or routes
- Reduce or eliminate parking minimums
- Retrofit older diesel trucks
- Work with Sound Transit to complete the Sounder connection to Lakewood

Some Progress

- ★ Expand promotion of Pierce Transit online ridesharing and carpooling system
- ★ Implement a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian system
- Adopt anti-idling ordinance – for public vehicles by 2012 and private by 2020
- Advocate for incentives for residents to use more fuel-efficient or alternative-fuel vehicles
- Construct the initial phase of a streetcar system
- Increase the use of all public transportation modes
- Prioritize monitoring traffic signal synchronization
- Provide free or reduced-cost parking only for employees using carpools and vanpools
- Recruit a car-sharing service
- Work with Pierce Transit to increase frequency of bus service on arterials

Needs Work

- Adopt parking maximums instead of minimums
- Analyze the potential for shared parking
- Develop map of renewable fuel locations and electric plug-in stations



Enhancing Compact/Livable Neighborhoods

Good Progress

- ✓ Adopt the Open Space Habitat and Recreation Plan
- ★ Implement smart growth principles
- Incorporate complete streets principles in Public Works projects

Some Progress

- ★ Begin a regional Transfer of Development Rights program
- Develop an urban trees and open space inventory
- Inventory and map existing affordable housing options
- Promote amenities that make high-density living more attractive

Needs Work

- ★ Fund the Open Space Habitat and Recreation Plan
- ★ Increase tree planting on public and private property
- Apply a holistic approach to projects through municipal codes and development processes
- Create web-based housing match program



Energy Efficiency in Our Buildings, Homes and Industries

Good Progress

- ✓ Tacoma Power to meet energy conservation and renewable energy goals of Initiative 937

Some Progress

- ✦ Encourage installation of renewable energy
 - Achieve maximum possible energy savings in residential, commercial and industrial sectors
 - Develop green building program – hire green building advocate, determine barriers and identify incentives including expedited permitting

Needs Work

- Consider providing tax abatement for buyers performing conservation upgrades
- Require energy audit at time of home sale
- Reduce home heating oil use



Reuse and Recycle... from Buildings to Food Waste

Good Progress

- ✓ Determine if changing solid waste rate structure would encourage more recycling and waste reduction
- ✓ Explore home composting programs
- ✦ Implement natural yard care education
 - Increase recyclables sorting capabilities in new landfill transfer station

Some Progress

- ✦ Identify and implement additional residential and commercial education and other programs to divert organic waste
 - Continue mulching mower sales assistance program
 - Develop a commercial food waste recycling program
 - Improve operational efficiencies in Solid Waste Department
 - Increase commercial and residential recycling
 - Promote adaptive reuse of historic or older buildings
 - Secure and encourage additional organic material processing capability in the Tacoma area

Needs Work

- Encourage deconstruction and recycling of structures to be demolished



Get Involved!

- **Attend a Sustainable Tacoma Commission meeting**
www.cityoftacoma.org/sustainabletacoma
- **Give your car a break and take the bus**
Pierce Transit: www.piercetransit.org
Sound Transit: www.soundtransit.org
Real-time transit info by mobile phone or computer: www.onebusaway.org
- **Join a community garden**
www.growlocaltacoma.com
- **Plant a free tree**
www.cityoftacoma.org/treestreet
- **Shop at and support local businesses**
Find lists at:
www.GoLocalTacoma.com
www.healthybay.org (click on BEST—Business for an Environmentally Sustainable Tacoma)
- **Conserve energy at your home and business (your utilities can help pay for it)**
www.mytpu.org
www.pse.com
- **Brush up on what goes in your recycling bin**
www.cityoftacoma.org/recycle
- **Opt out of phone book delivery**
www.yellowpagesoptout.com
- **Safely dispose of your old, unused medications**
www.bartelldrugs.com/health/Takeitback.html