

Austin Coalition for Environmental Sustainability

aces

*A request to partner with
Cities of Mower County*



aces

Formed April 2007

- **Is an alliance of citizens, organizations and governments who are committed to working together in multiple efforts to reduce our local carbon footprint as part of a larger Statewide effort to reduce greenhouse emissions. Our Green Team focuses are:**
 - **Citizen and Government Partnerships**
 - US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement
 - “Cool City” designation
 - **Environmental Legislation and Coordination**
 - **Renewable Energy Programs**
 - **Citizen Initiatives**



Cities Take the Lead

- In February 2005, 141 nations signed and were preparing to put the Kyoto Protocol into effect aiming to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012.
- United States was not one of the nations to sign the Kyoto Protocol.
- Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels drafted the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and with eight other mayors presented it to the Conference of Mayors in March of 2005.



Cities Take the Lead

- Their goal: to have 141 mayors sign the agreement within one year.
*<http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/climate/quotes.htm#mayors>
- The U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement has been signed by 823 mayors from 50 states, Washington DC. and Puerto Rico representing a total population of over 67 million citizens.
- Thirty-five Minnesota cities have signed the agreement including: Austin, Rochester, Red Wing and Winona.



Cities Signing the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement



The U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement

- US Conference of Mayors is taking the lead in reducing global warming pollution.
- The Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change has found that climate disruption is a reality and human activities are largely responsible.
- To date 141 countries have ratified the Kyoto Protocol which requires a reduction of greenhouse emissions by 7% below 1990 emissions by 2012.



The U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement

- The USA has less than 5% of the world's population, produces 25% of the world's global warming pollutants, but has not signed the Kyoto Protocol.
- State and local governments throughout the USA are adopting emission reduction targets and programs.
- Governor Pawlenty signed **The Global Warming Mitigation Act of 2007** that requires Minnesota take immediate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by:
 - 15% by 2015
 - 30% by 2025
 - 80% by 2050



aces is involved with:

Austin/Mower County Cool Community Partnership

- A coalition of Mower County citizens and local governments working together to help reach goals set in 2007 MN Statutes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- To help us:
 - Take the pledge, become a “Cool City.”
 - Identify community members who will work on Austin/Mower County Cool Community Partnership Green Teams to help your city complete the four steps to becoming a “Cool City.”
 - Environmental Legislation and Coordinating Green Team
 - Renewable Energy Program Green Team
 - Citizen Initiative Green Team
 - Citizen/Government Partnership Green Team



Four Steps to Become a Cool City

Step 1: Take the “Cool Cities” pledge to sign the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.

*<http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/climate/quotes.htm#mayors>

Step 2: Conduct a Global Warming Emission inventory.

Cities can receive technical assistance to conduct a global warming emission inventory from a variety of sources including the International Council for Local Environment Initiatives (ICLEI)- Local Government for Sustainability. www.iclei.org



Step 3: Create a Solution Plan.

Develop a comprehensive energy-saving plan.

Some cities plans include:

*** *Green Vehicle Solutions-* www.greenfleets.org

Solution #1 *green fleets* - Phase in hybrids to their fleet of vehicles.

Solution #2 *hybrid incentives* - free parking, lower registration fees & taxes.

Solution #3 *clean buses* – compressed natural gas CNG or hybrid-electric diesel engines.



Step 3: Create a Solution Plan

Some cities plans include cont.:

**** Energy Efficiency Solutions.*

Solution #1 *Making new buildings more energy efficient.* Adopt Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) standards.

www.usgbc.org

Solution #2 *Energy efficiency retrofits to existing buildings.* LEED standards for existing buildings.



Step 3: Create a Solution Plan.

Some cities plans include cont.:

*** Energy Efficiency Solution cont.

Solution #3 Energy efficient street lighting. Convert traditional fixtures to LED.

Solution #4 Public Benefit Funds. Municipal utilities place a small surcharge on consumers energy bills to be used to create energy efficient projects to lower overall energy cost.

Solution #5 Combine heat and power. CHP systems recover heat normally wasted at power plants and funnel the heat into surrounding buildings.



Step 3: Create a Solution Plan

Some cities plans include continue:

**** Renewable Energy Solutions cont.*

Solution #1 Renewable Energy Standards. A renewable energy standard requires an increase in the percentage of electricity from clean, renewable energy sources in a city or utility area by a specific date.

Solution #2 Solar and Wind Installation. Cities are moving forward by financing the construction of renewable energy projects themselves.

Solution #3 City Utility Contracts. Some cities incorporate renewable energy requirements into their contracts with privately own local utilities.



Step 4: Implement and Monitor Progress

aces believes it is essential for Cities, Utility Companies and Mower County to make a plan and put it into action.

For more information about “**Austin/Mower County Cool Community Partnership.**” Contact Susan Hurm at 507-434-4774.

For more information about becoming a Cool City read “Cool Cities: Solving Global Warming One City at a Time.” Published by the Sierra Club or go online: www.sierraclub.org/coolcities



What's Happening in Austin

- First Commercial business installs 880 watt Photo Voltaic (PV) system.
- City of Austin installs a PV system at Rotary Park restroom – no grid connection.
- Austin commercial customer develops plan to install a 20 kW wind turbine.
- City of Austin plans to continue to pursue solar alternatives.



What's Happening in Austin

- Austin Utilities provides support to customers interested in renewable energy installations.
- Austin Utilities holds Earth Day promotion – gives out 550 CFLs and takes in 85 spent CFLs for recycling.
- Austin Utilities offers a full array rebates with energy conservation programs.
- J.C. Hormel Nature Center will install a 1.4 kW PV system this fall and incorporate a renewable energy display into their interpretive building.



aces encourages all citizens to
discover how to reduce their carbon
footprint.

- Find out online at...

www.carbonfootprint.com

Be Cool...Go Green!



What Other Cities Have Done

- Require all new City-owned buildings to be built to the Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) silver level of quality-a national benchmark for high performance green buildings. Minneapolis Greenprint, 2007 Environmental Report
 - www.usgbc.org
 - www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/sustainability
- Convert city fleet vehicles to hybrid technology (Ford's hybrid Escape and Mercury's hybrid Mariner both manufactured in Missouri). Missouri Mayors support Kyoto-type agreement. Joplin Independent.
- Issue an anti-idling mandate for trucks and buses. Missouri Mayors support Kyoto-type agreement. Joplin Independent.
- Install energy-efficient lighting and Energy Star appliances in city building. Missouri Mayors support Kyoto-type agreement. Joplin Independent.



What Other Cities Have Done

- Create unmowed buffer strips around park ponds and lakes. Mowing lines have been pulled back at some sites equating to less manicured turf and fewer mower hours. City of Eagen, MN
- New high efficiency furnaces have been/are installed as well as programmable thermostat in most park buildings. City of Eagen, MN
- Convert stoplights from incandescent to LED. This cost the city of Arlington, Texas \$1.35 million upfront. LED uses 80% less energy, lasts 8 to 10 times longer and will pay for themselves in several years. “Mayors Take the Lead” Newsweek. April 16, 2007.
- No net loss in citywide tree canopy cover by 2015. Minneapolis Greenprint, 2007 Environmental Report.



What Other Cities Have Done

- San Francisco banned non-biodegradable plastic bags, which cost the city \$8 million to clear from streets. “Mayors Take the Lead” Newsweek. April 16, 2007.
- City switches to ‘Green’ cleaning products supplied by Eco-concepts of Minneapolis. City of Duluth.
- Require all taxis licensed by City to be more fuel-efficient within 10 years. Minneapolis Greenprint, 2007 Environmental Report.
- The City co-sponsored the annual “Bike to Work Day” with the Transit Authority. City of Duluth.



Resources

- Underwood, Anne. “Mayors Take the Lead,” Newsweek, April 16, 2007, newsweek.msnbc.com.

