

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LANE COUNTY
EVERYMEMBER MATERIAL
MARCH 2008

GLOBAL WARMING AND YOU

There's no more denying it: global warming is here. The good news is that we can slow and eventually stop it, but we must act now. We may think that our seemingly insignificant actions will do little to address the problem, but remember, the pyramids were built one block at a time. The Great Wall of China was built one stone at a time. Our mighty rivers all began as small drops of water. If everyone takes steps to combat global warming, the result will be a significant impact.

The League of Women Voters encourages members to examine the issues, then to take action. We encourage you to examine the available options and do whatever you can to be part of the solution. Pick one or two things to start with, then move on. You will be amazed at how easy it is to make these small changes.

Utilities and other groups have resources to help you. The Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB), the Springfield Utility Board (SUB), and the Emerald People's Utility District (EPUD) offer various energy conservation programs to their customers. They will do an energy audit for you and make suggestions. If you want to replace your windows with double glazing, add a solar hot water system, or upgrade your insulation, they have rebate and low interest loan programs that will help with the costs. If you will be purchasing new appliances, there may be rebates available. Another resource is the Climate Masters program through the University of Oregon that will also do energy audits and make recommendations for conserving energy.

The following provocative quote from a recent article on global warming targets many of our personal habits: "Not all the answers are technological, of course - maybe not even most of them. Many of the paths to stabilization run straight through our lives, and in every case they will demand difficult changes. Air travel is one of the fastest growing sources of carbon emissions around the world, for instance, but even many of us who are noble about changing lightbulbs and happy to drive hybrid cars chafe at the thought of not jetting around the country or the world. By now we're used to ordering take-out food from every corner of the world every night of our lives - according to one study, the average bit of food has traveled nearly

1,500 miles before it reaches an American's lips, which means it's been marinated in (crude) oil. We drive alone because it's more convenient than adjusting our schedules for public transit. We build ever bigger homes even as our family sizes shrink, and we watch ever bigger TVs and -- well, enough said. We need to figure out how to change our habits." ¹

1. Bill McKibben, "Carbon's New Math," *National Geographic*, October 2007, page 35.