



Snohomish County
Office of the Executive
Aaron Reardon
County Executive

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REARDON ISSUES EXECUTIVE ORDER CALLING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon today issued an Executive Order to address climate change in a way that aims to reduce the County’s carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions.

“Our initial goal is by the Year 2020 to reduce Snohomish County’s greenhouse gas emissions to 20 percent below the Year 2000 levels,” Executive Reardon said.

Among other things, the Executive Order also endorses the principles of the recent US Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration.

Through the Executive Order, Executive Reardon will create a County Staff Climate Change Committee, made up of experts in the field who work for the County, to review the County’s internal operations and make recommendations on how to reduce Snohomish County government’s carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions.

“Living with an environmentally and economically sustainable focus is a way of life, not just the work of a committee,” Executive Reardon said. “I want this committee to be the central clearinghouse for County government to incorporate sustainability in our daily lives and work.”

The County has already established a partial inventory of its greenhouse gas emissions and has joined the International Coalition of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability).

“We already know we can achieve considerable reductions in CO₂ emissions related to energy-use in buildings by changes in building occupant behavior, cultural patterns and technology,” Executive Reardon said. “More energy efficient buildings will not only reduce carbon emissions considerably, but will provide health benefits by improving air quality and improve security by decreasing demand for energy.”

Specifically, Reardon's Executive Order calls for:

- Snohomish County has joined ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and will be an active member and participant in the Climate Protection campaign.
- Snohomish County endorses the principles of the Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration.
- The Executive will form a County Staff Climate Change Committee who will develop an inventory and baseline of greenhouse gas emissions for Snohomish County and make recommendations on emission reduction to the Executive. Considerations will include:
 - Use of alternative fuels, biodiesel, hybrid vehicles, and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles
 - Energy use by the County, including natural gas and electricity
 - More efficient use of the solid waste disposal cycle, including recycling
 - Adoption of green building design and construction standards for County facilities
 - County use of water
 - Increasing the use of public transportation through transportation and land-use strategies
 - Policies and strategies for the County to adopt or undertake to ensure the emission reductions and economic goals are achieved
 - Determining specific steps the County should take to prepare for the impact of global warming, including impacts to public health, agriculture, the coast line, forestry and infrastructure of the County
 - Work with cities in the County, tribal governments and with regional governments to maximize coordination and effectiveness of climate initiatives.

In addition to the Executive Order, Executive Reardon will also ask stakeholders in the community to serve on the first-ever Green Ribbon Climate Change Task Force to examine the community's carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions and make policy recommendations by December 2008.

“We believe these changes will save taxpayer dollars and help diversify our economy while creating jobs,” Executive Reardon said. “Changes will also improve our air quality, public health as well as our food and energy security. It all comes down to how livable we want our community to be in the future.”

In March 2007, State of Washington Governor Chris Gregoire appointed Executive Reardon to the State Climate Change Challenge Advisory Team. The Advisory Team will make recommendations for statewide action to the Governor by February 2008.

“We know global warming is real,” Executive Reardon said. “It’s time to stop talking and start taking action.”

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