

The title "SUSTAINABLE SAMMAMISH" is written in large, bold, white, all-caps sans-serif font. It is centered horizontally and positioned over a dark blue horizontal band that spans the width of the page. The background of the entire page is a scenic photograph of a lake with a wooden pier, surrounded by trees with autumn foliage, and a house visible in the distance. The sky is a clear, light blue.

SUSTAINABLE SAMMAMISH

Sammamish's official guide to sustainability.



Introduction

Earth's climate has changed throughout history, but today is changing at an unprecedented rate. In Sammamish, we are already seeing the impacts of a changing climate including warming temperatures, extreme climate events, and an increased risk of wildfire and smoke. While human activity is exacerbating the climate problem, it also holds the key to the solution.

Climate change threatens the health and safety of people, the economy, and the environment. As greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are released into the Earth's atmosphere, they trap the heat from the sun. This can produce changes in precipitation patterns, storm severity, and temperatures. The imbalance between GHGs produced from human activity and the ability for natural processes to absorb them has resulted in a continued increase in atmospheric concentrations. This phenomena is commonly referred to as climate change. Making changes big and small to everyday actions can reduce the amount of greenhouse gases (GHGs) we create, collectively tackling climate change

Climate Action Plan

In December 2023, the City of Sammamish adopted its first Climate Action Plan (CAP) to address the multifaceted challenges of climate change. The CAP identified that some of the most significant contributors to Sammamish's greenhouse gas profile include natural gas from residences, as well as transportation emissions. While the City can set precedence, achieving the outlined objectives requires collective efforts from all community members. Your participation is instrumental in fostering a more sustainable future for Sammamish.

The City of Sammamish is a proud member of the King County-Cities Climate Collaborative and Eastside Climate Partnership. In alignment with these regional partners and the CAP, the City Council passed Resolution R2023-1000 which set forth ambitious goals, including:

- A 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and a 96% reduction by 2050, using data from 2019 as the baseline.
- A 30% reduction of per capita Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by 2030 and 50% by 2050, relative to a 2016 baseline.

Sustainable Sammamish

Whether you rent or own your home, the Sustainable Sammamish Guide (SSG) contains resources and information meant to empower Sammamish residents to reduce their personal emissions and make a positive impact on the environment. By working together, residents and City officials are taking important steps to ensure that future generations can continue to enjoy the City's natural beauty and resources. Whether you're a longtime resident or a newcomer, we invite you to join us in our efforts to create a more sustainable Sammamish.

Disclaimer: The content of this guide is meant to inform the Sammamish community on ways to make a positive impact on the environment while minimizing negative impacts. The City is not endorsing specific services, rather providing resources for residents' consideration.

1. Sustainable Buildings and Energy

Benefits: Cost savings, GHG emissions reduction.

Reducing the amount of energy and natural gas that is used in your home helps cut down the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that are released into the atmosphere. You can help the environment by going electric and save money by maximizing energy efficiency at home. A few things to do include turning off your lights and thermostat when away from home, unplugging appliances that aren't in use, and switching to energy efficient appliances like heat pumps. Puget Sound Energy (PSE) has rebates and offers to save on energy efficiency upgrades to your living space.

pse.com/rebates

Key: High Impact Action ✓ **Renter-Friendly Action** ★



Appliance Conversion

Unplug Unused Electronics ★

Many electronics and appliances consume energy even when turned off but plugged in. This is known as standby power consumption. By unplugging devices such as chargers, computers, and entertainment systems, you can eliminate this extra energy usage.

Look for Labels ✓

Every appliance comes with two price tags: the purchase price and the cost of operating the product. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has [Ecolabel programs](#) to help identify products; for example, Energy Star certified appliances can help you save money by reducing energy use without sacrificing performance.

Think Smart ✓

Consider purchasing a smart or programmable thermostat to manage your heating and cooling systems more effectively. These devices can adjust the temperature based on when you are home and awake to save energy and cut down on costs.

Practice Best Practices ★

Turn off lights and appliances when not in use. Consider using power strips to easily shut off the power to appliances that occurs even when they are switched off. When possible, see if you can repair before replacing damaged appliances.

Heating/Cooling and Lighting

Utilize Natural Ventilation ★

The Pacific Northwest has an ideal climate to take advantage of natural ventilation by opening your windows and doors when outdoor temperatures are mild. On cold days, you can bundle up and close doors and windows to eliminate drafts. On warmer days, window shades and cross-ventilation from open windows can help cool your home without relying on air conditioning.

Adjust Thermostat Settings ★

Manually set or consider programming your thermostat to manage your heating and cooling systems more effectively. The department of energy [recommends 68 degrees as a baseline](#). You can save as much as 10% a year on heating and cooling by simply turning your thermostat back 7°-10°F for 8 hours a day (overnight, or when away at work or school) from its normal setting.

Electrify Natural Gas Appliances ✓

Electrifying home appliances by replacing gas appliances such as furnaces with heat pumps or electric alternatives can greatly reduce your household's carbon footprint. Check out [energysmarteastside.org/](#) and [wa.switchison.org/](#) for information and rebates to help you electrify your home.

Destroy Those Drafts ✓ ★

Check for drafts around windows, doors, and any other openings in your home. Sealing leaks with weatherstripping or similar can prevent cold air from entering during evenings and keep your home cooler in the summer, reducing the need for excessive heating and air conditioning.

Take Advantage of Natural Light ★

Daylight hours provide an opportunity to take advantage of natural daylight by opening curtains and blinds during the day, especially in the summer months. This not only reduces the need for artificial lighting, it also enhances the ambiance of your living space and lowers your electricity usage, decreasing utility bills.

Power Source Considerations

Go Solar ✓

Consider installing a [solar energy system](#) to your home's roof. You may need to check with your HOA first. Using solar power reduces the amount of carbon and other pollutants that are emitted into the environment and can reduce your electric bill.

[pse.com/green-options/renewable-energy-programs/renewables-home](#)

Support Renewable Energy Programs

PSE has [opt-in programs](#) that allow customers to match or replace energy use with renewable energy and support projects that help reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Engage with Energy Audits ✓

Consider having an energy audit performed on your home. This can help identify areas where energy is being wasted and provide you with recommendations for improvement. PSE's [online energy assessment](#) offers a quick 3-step process to help you better understand and control your home's energy usage.



What can I do?

Use this space to write down actions your household can try.



2. Sustainable Transportation

Benefits: GHG reduction, first mile/last mile connections, improved health outcomes.

Transportation accounts for nearly half of all greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Washington and nearly 14% in Sammamish. By taking the bus more, carpooling with family, friends, and neighbors, riding your bike, or walking, you can reduce the amount of GHG emissions created on your daily commute. Improved physical health is an added benefit of making the choice to walk or bike.

Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) Alternatives

Walk the Walk

If weather and time allows, try walking as a replacement for short trips in the car. Trails provide critical links in Sammamish's active transportation network – they can connect you to parks, schools, and other key destinations while creating opportunities for an active lifestyle.

Ride a Bike

For local trips, you can also consider making your journey via bicycle. The City has intermittent bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and mapping tools like Google Maps can provide routes that optimize the usage of bike lanes.

It's Cool to Carpool

When possible, share your ride with a neighbor. Connect with friends and family who may be going the same direction or destination for a one-time event or make it a regular thing with repeat trips to school, work, or extracurriculars.

Try Teleworking

If your job allows it, working from home can entirely or partially eliminate emissions from commuting.

Regular Vehicle Maintenance

Can improve your car's efficiency and reduce emissions. This includes keeping your tires properly inflated, changing the oil on schedule, and ensuring the engine is tuned.

Electrification

Electric and Hybrid Vehicles

You can also reduce your emissions and cut costs by driving a vehicle that gets more miles per gallon or runs on electricity part or all of the time. If you're interested in buying an EV, look for [state and federal incentives](#) and rebates to reduce the upfront cost. [epa.gov/greenvehicles](https://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles)

Public EV Charging Stations

If you drive an EV, there are numerous level 2 chargers in commercial zones along 228th Ave SE, and one site with level 3 fast chargers at Sammamish Highlands. [Online maps](#) are available to locate stations.

E-Bikes and E-Scooters

Consider purchasing low carbon micromobility devices such as e-bikes and e-scooters. These substitute for more polluting cars and support less car-dependency in the City. [Know before you go](#): Class 1 and 2 e-bikes are allowed on most regional trails and bike lanes. E-scooter riders should avoid sidewalks and are generally allowed on roadways that have a speed limit of 25mph or less.



Public Transportation and Mobility

Ride Metro Route 269 and Sound Transit Route 554 ✓

There are two bus lines that go through Sammamish. You can find maps of these routes and others by going to KC Metro's Trip Planner website. Route 554 has limited service. Route 269 will soon be increasing in frequency to 15 minute intervals and can be used to connect to the new Marymoor Village light rail station in Redmond. [tripplanner.kingcounty.gov](#)

Meet Metro Flex ✓

An on-demand neighborhood rideshare option localized to Sammamish and Issaquah. With one simple app—and just a few taps—you can ride anywhere in the service area, all for the same cost as a bus trip. [Metro Flex](#) has recently expanded to connect Sammamish with the Issaquah Commons and is FREE for youth 18 and under.

[kingcounty.gov/en/dept/metro/travel-options](#)

Venture with Community Van

KC Metro provides a van for pre-scheduled trips that you can use as a driver or as a passenger. Schedule your ride in advance or volunteer to drive your neighbors or your own family. [Community Van](#) is great to run errands, get to appointments, or attend activities and outings with large groups. The van can be taken on trips up to two hours away and must be scheduled at least two business days in advance.

Vanpool like a VIP

Metro [Vanpool and Vanshare](#) provide flexible, convenient and cost-effective ride share commuter vans. One monthly fare includes your van, fuel, maintenance, tolls, insurance and more.

What can I do?

Use this space to write down actions your household can try.



3. Sustainable Natural Resources

Benefits: Ecosystem services, climate resilience, community aesthetics, and health impacts.

Natural resources are materials or resources drawn from nature that support life and meet people's needs. Resources such as native species, bodies of water, soil, and open space play an essential role in Sammamish. They provide numerous tangible and intangible benefits called ecosystem services to residents, visitors, neighboring communities, and wildlife. This includes improved air and water quality, energy savings, and health and socioeconomic benefits for the Sammamish community.

Hands-On Opportunities

Volunteer Programs

There are many opportunities for volunteer stewardship in parks around Sammamish. Tasks include native plantings, trail building, wetland and stream restoration, invasive management, and storm cleanup. You can learn more about volunteer programs on the City website, [Sammamish.us/volunteer](https://www.sammamish.us/volunteer).

Trees

Right Tree, Right Time

Fall is the best time of year to plant a new tree in Sammamish. Trees planted in October-December benefit from our fall and winter rains, developing a stronger root system before the next summer dry spell.

Right Tree, Right Place

When planting a tree, be sure to think about how much available space you have, the surrounding structures like your house and fence, overhead power lines, and underground utilities. Short, flowering trees don't clash with overhead utility lines. Large deciduous trees on the southeast, southwest, and west provide cooling shade in the summer but don't obstruct the warming winter sunlight. Proper tree placement and spacing also decreases the chances of a wildfire damaging your home.

Tree Care

Trees need maintenance throughout their lives, but it is particularly important right after planting while the tree is establishing. Detailed tree care information is available at arborday.org/trees/tips/.

Native Species

Pollinator Gardens

Ensuring your yard or garden has a variety of plants so that something is in bloom year-round is the easiest way you can support on-going pollination. The more diverse the landscaping, the more pollinators you'll have visiting.

Natural Pest Control

Chemical pesticides and herbicides (bug and weed killers) can cause serious harm to people, pets, wildlife, and water quality. Before reaching for pesticides, you can first try weed puller tools, mulching, and even hand picking when feasible. Even natural and organic pesticide brands can harm beneficial insects like pollinators, so it is best to use them only if necessary and search for alternatives like neem oil or vinegar whenever possible.

4. Sustainable Solid Waste

Benefits: Pollution reduction, in addition to reducing emissions related to manufacturing, landfill gas, and end of life.

The products that we purchase, use and throw away have a significant impact on our climate. Each stage of a product's life, from production to disposal requires energy use that results in greenhouse gas emissions. By reducing the amount of waste that is created, you can decrease the amount of greenhouse gases emissions produced and reduce the negative effects of waste on the environment. [Republic Services](#) is the waste hauler in Sammamish. Additional information on waste, including information on toxics in the home, household hazardous waste, and Washington's recycling programs is available on the Department of Ecology website ecology.wa.gov/waste-toxics.



Reduce

Think Before You Buy ✓

The typical American produces 4.5 pounds of trash every day. All of these items use resources, create pollution and release carbon in their production and transportation to market. Many of them are not reusable or recyclable. A great way to make a difference in waste reduction is to avoid purchasing excess items in the first place.

Food Waste Reduction

Proper storage, preparation, and purchasing of food can reduce the amount of food waste in your home. When food is thrown away, it wastes all the energy, water, and other resources used to produce, package and transport the food.

Conscious Composting

The best way to compost scraps and leftovers is to put food and food-soiled paper in the compost bin and keep plastic out. Compostable cups, plates and utensils can also go in your compost bin. Food scraps can be composted even when they're moldy or rotten. Plastic bags, containers, and packaging do not belong in your compost because they do not break down.

Reuse

Stylish Storage ✓

Choose reusable grocery (tote) bags every time you go shopping. Reusable containers for food storage can help cut back on single use plastics like Zip top bags, decreasing the amount of waste that goes into the landfill.

Drink Smart

The average American uses more than 150 plastic water bottles a year. Choosing a reusable metal or glass water bottle can reduce the impact of plastic production and disposal. For other beverages like your morning coffee or smoothie, try a reusable cup – these can also help keep your drink hot or cold for longer.

Repair Before you Replace

Consider repairing damaged household items instead of buying new ones. Repair can be especially impactful as it can extend the lifecycle of products and reduce consumption meaning less waste and less money spent on having to buy a new product.

Recycle

Recycle Right

When you place the right items in the recycle, you ensure potentially valuable materials last longer. All items you place in your bin must be empty, clean, and dry. Recycling also helps reduce waste, which benefits the environment by reducing pollution. Recycling can also help cut your waste costs by reducing the size of your garbage can.

Recycling Events

The City of Sammamish partners with the City of Issaquah to host five recycling events each year: two in the Spring, one in the Summer, and two in the Fall. Make sure to check out the accepted materials list for each event date before bringing your items.

What can I do?

Use this space to write down actions your household can try.

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What goes where?

Scan QR code for recycling information.



5. Sustainable Water

Benefits: Cost savings on your water bill. It takes a lot of energy to pump, treat, and heat water, so conserving water also reduces GHG emissions.

Water conservation is an essential component of sustainability. It directly impacts resource availability, ecosystem functionality, and resilience to droughts. Water conservation means less water is diverted from our rivers, bays, underground aquifers, and estuaries, which helps keep the environment healthy. Water efficiency can also reduce water and wastewater treatment costs and the amount of energy used to treat, pump, and heat water. Water-saving efforts can have a large impact when scaled up to ensure use that sustains both the environment and future generations.



Appliances

Upgrade Fixtures with Water-Saving Alternatives ✓

Consider replacing old showerheads, toilets, and faucets with more efficient fixtures that are [WaterSense](#) labeled. These products use less water without sacrificing performance, saving water and money on utility bills.

Fix Leaks Promptly

Even a small leak can waste a surprising amount of water over time. To find out if you have a leak, turn off all the water in your home and go to your curbside meter and watch the dial. The readings are typically in 0.001 cubic foot so even the slightest leak will show up. Check faucets, pipes, toilets, and irrigation systems for leaks and repair them promptly.

Maximize Appliance Efficiency ✓

Waiting to run dishwasher and laundry loads until full can save hundreds of gallons a month. Utilize eco-friendly settings if available to minimize water use per cycle. Practice using cold water in your clothes washing machines when possible.

Shower Smarter

Reducing your shower time by just a few minutes can save [gallons of water per day](#). By minimizing shower duration, individuals can reduce the environmental footprint associated with water distribution and treatment. By replacing just one showerhead with a WaterSense labeled model, the average family can save the amount of water that it takes to wash 88 loads of laundry and conserve enough energy to power a home for 11 days every year.

Rainwater Management

Be Rain Wise

Consider installing a rain barrel to collect rainwater from your roof. This harvested water can be used to water plants, wash outdoor surfaces, and other non-potable situations, reducing the need for tap water.

Practice Permeability

Sidewalks, decks, and driveways are often constructed of impervious materials that water cannot soak through. Consider replacing impervious surfaces around your home with materials like mulch and pervious concrete. Materials such as these allow water to soak into the ground instead of running off.

Low Impact Development

Landscape Wisely

Utilize low impact development strategies like [rain gardens](#) that can help channel and filter stormwater runoff. Consider shrinking your lawn and choose drought resistant plants and native species for landscaping, as they require less water to thrive. Improve your soil by adding compost and mulch.

Optimize Outdoor Watering

Water your yard and garden during the early morning or late evening to maximize absorption. Consider using a smart irrigation system for targeted watering and adjust sprinklers to avoid watering sidewalks and driveways.

What can I do?

Use this space to write down actions your household can try.



Thank you

A sincere thank you from the [Sammamish Sustainability Commission](#), City Council, City staff, and your fellow Sammamish residents for taking action on sustainability. The information in this guide is meant to serve as a starting point for you to live a more sustainable and environmentally conscious lifestyle.

Many of these actions can be taken once or multiple times and will hopefully become second nature over time. The final action to consider in addition to the information in this guide is continued curiosity about humans' impact on the environment that sustains us. We encourage you to refer back to this guide as a centralized source of information and resources so you can be part of the solution, help the City achieve its collective Climate Action Plan goals, and sustain this beautiful City you call home.



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Buildings and Energy



[King County Green Tools - Eco-cool Remodel Tool](#)

Interactive tool for whole-home sustainability. Take a tour through Built Green's virtual house and find ways to green up your next home remodeling project.



[Eastside Climate Partnership and Energy Smart Eastside](#)

A multi-city energy efficiency program that supports the education and installation of heat pump systems. Energy Smart Eastside connects you with the information, financial incentives, and resources you need to go electric.

Transportation



[Department of Energy Electric Vehicle Charging Station Locations](#)

Find electric vehicle charging stations all across the United States and Canada.



[King County Metro Trip Planner](#)

Search for the quickest public transit route, real-time departures, and other essential transit information.

Natural Resources



[King County Native Plant Guide](#)

Browse lists of native plants, create your own native plant landscape, and get tips on plants best suited to your space.



[King County Green Home Remodel - Landscape Materials](#)

Information on ecologically superior landscape materials in a range of styles, to complement your home and personal mix of priorities.



[Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Habitat at Home](#)

How to create wildlife habitat on private property.

Waste



[Republic Services Solid Waste Service Guide](#)

A comprehensive guide on recycling, composting, hazardous waste, and other solid waste items in Sammamish.



[City of Sammamish Recycling Events](#)

Information on yearly recycling events in Sammamish. Make sure to check out the accepted materials list for each event date before bringing your items.

Water



[Sammamish Plateau Water - Using Water Wisely](#)

Learn how to reduce your "water footprint" and use water more efficiently.



[King County Rainwater Catchment Resources](#)

Information and resources on acquiring and setting up rain barrels and cisterns.