



EARTH HOUR 2009

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



8:30pm – 9:30pm, Saturday 28 March

What do I need to do for Earth Hour?

Turn off your lights and any non-essential electrical appliances between 8.30pm and 9.30pm on Saturday 28 March, 2009.

Earth Hour 2009 will only be a success if we have wide support from every section of the community – households, businesses, governments and not-for-profit groups – and huge participation.

We have a target of one billion people worldwide to “switch off” but we need your support.

Please register your support at www.earthhour.org/australia

What impact will Earth Hour have?

The first Earth Hour in 2007 reached more than 2 million people in Sydney. In 2008, it's estimated that between 50 and 100 million people around the world joined Earth Hour by switching off their lights and turning appliances off stand-by. Earth Hour 2009 aims to reach 1 billion people in over 1,000 cities.

This global vote for action in the lead up to the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen helps prove to world leaders that the public wants strong action to be taken on climate change.

Where is Earth Hour taking place?

In 2009, Earth Hour will be truly global.

After having between 50 and 100 million people around the world taking part in 2008, we're now setting ourselves a target of reaching one billion the world over.

More and more countries will register their participation as the campaign continues. Please check www.earthhour.org for the full list of cities and countries.

Is Earth Hour just for the big cities?

No. WWF aims to have 1,000 cities and towns of all shapes and sizes switching off for Earth Hour 2009. All Australians are encouraged to do their bit by turning off their lights and any non-essential electrical appliances no matter where they live.

Much of the attention will be focused on large cities because they naturally consume the most electricity and their CBDs change dramatically in appearance during Earth Hour.

www.earthhour.org/australia

EarthHourAU@wwf.org.au or EarthHourMedia@wwf.org.au



WWF always hoped that Earth Hour would grow into a global campaign and this year the message will spread right across the globe – lights out for Earth Hour.

In Australia, WWF hopes 250 local councils in regional and greater metropolitan areas will participate in Earth Hour 2009. The campaign gives local government an opportunity to engage their residents and showcase their own sustainability initiatives.

Which Australian Councils are participating in Earth Hour 2009?

All Australian capital cities are participating and an up-to-date list of Councils is available on www.earthhour.org/australia under the relevant state pages.

Why do we need to act?

Climate change is the greatest threat to life on Earth. It affects everyone no matter what part of world you live in.

Our lifestyles are causing a dramatic increase in the Earth's temperature, resulting in rising sea levels, an increase in drought and severe storms, and massive changes to the environment we all rely on to survive.

There is still time to change how our planet will look in the future - if we act now.

Can we afford to address climate change?

Research has consistently shown that reducing Australia's greenhouse gas emissions is affordable.

The Rudd Government's proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) sets emissions reductions targets which will not avoid dangerous climate change. Improving the CPRS emissions reduction targets to a range of 25 to 40 per cent will help the world avoid dangerous climate change. Reductions of this level do little to reduce Australia's economic growth.

The costs of inaction are much higher. Australia cannot afford to stand back and do nothing.

Will public lighting such as street lights turn off?

Public safety is paramount. Earth Hour is an enjoyable, yet powerful way of raising awareness about climate change. Any lighting that is essential to people's well-being such as streets lights and traffic lights will remain on during Earth Hour.

Do I have to turn off everything in my home during Earth Hour?

Not at all, but by switching off your lights and appliances you are demonstrating that you are willing to be part of the solution, not the problem, and are willing to make small changes in your day-to-day life that will make a difference.

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How can businesses participate?

The commercial sector (business, administration and services) accounts for 10 per cent off all Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.

WWF encourages all businesses to participate in Earth Hour 2009 and to inform all employees and customers that the organisation is taking part. We also encourage businesses to implement energy efficiency initiatives on an ongoing basis to help achieve our goal of reducing emissions in their city or town.

Businesses can begin by taking simple steps to improve energy efficiency and reduce their emissions. These steps can include eliminating non-essential lighting, reducing transport and using 100 per cent renewable energy.

How will you ensure that lights are switched off?

We are encouraging as many people to turn off the lights as possible. But we need your help. Please spread the word about Earth Hour to your friends, family and workmates – in conversation, via email, or on your blog. Social media sites such as MySpace and facebook help spread the word.

The more people that participate in Earth Hour, the more successful it will be in demonstrating to the world's leaders that the public is serious about combating climate change.

If everyone turns their lights back on at the same time – will there be a power surge?

No. We've checked with energy companies and authorities and turning all the lights back on will not cause a power surge.

How much CO2 will be saved during the event?

While WWF cannot measure exactly how much greenhouse gas emissions will be avoided during Earth Hour 2009, the event's aim is to create a public show of support for the world's leaders to create an international agreement to combat climate change.

What can I do after Earth Hour?

There are things everyone can do to help reduce Australia's greenhouse gas emissions. For instance, by using 100 per cent accredited Greenpower, households and businesses are making an investment in clean energy, as well as helping to create a clean and prosperous future.

By participating in Earth Hour 2009, individuals, families, businesses and governments are showing support for the world's leaders to take a brave stand against climate change at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

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What about resources being used to promote this event?

WWF is making every effort to make Earth Hour a sustainable event by reducing collateral, travel and energy used to organise and promote this global event.

Won't it still be daylight at 8:30pm?

No. It should be twilight or darker at 8:30pm everywhere in Australia.

Who's behind Earth Hour?

Earth Hour started as a joint initiative between WWF-Australia, Fairfax Media and Leo Burnett. The intent is for the event to be adopted by other residents, communities, businesses and governments around the world so they too can help demonstrate that individual action on a mass scale can help change our planet for the better.