

# 2010 GREEN HOME AND MOTORING INDEX

AN INSIGHT INTO AUSTRALIANS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS  
IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT AT HOME AND ON OUR ROADS.

# 2010 GREEN HOME AND MOTORING INDEX

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#### ABOUT THE RESEARCH

For more than 14 years, AAMI has conducted robust statistical research to examine the attitudinal and behavioural patterns of Australians at home and on the roads. AAMI releases this material

to help encourage safer driving and to promote home safety practices within the community.

The home research in AAMI's 2010 *Green Home and Motoring Index* is based on an internet survey of

2,812 Australians aged 18 years and over across all states and territories, conducted by independent research company Newspoll.

The motoring research is based on a separate independent internet

survey conducted by IPSOS Research of 2,818 Australians aged 18 years and over across all states and territories.

All collected data is carefully weighted in line with current

Australian Bureau of Statistics population demographics to ensure any extrapolation of results is representative of age, gender and population on a regional, state and national basis.

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# AAMI'S SECOND ANNUAL GREEN HOME AND MOTORING INDEX HAS FOUND LIVING GREEN REMAINS A KEY ISSUE FOR AUSTRALIANS IN 2010.

In a 2007-08 Australian Bureau of Statistics survey<sup>1</sup>, 82% of Australian adults (approximately 12.8 million people) reported they were concerned about at least one environmental issue.

AAMI's *Green Home and Motoring Index* is presented as part of our commitment to promoting sustainable living in the Australian community. The material in the Index is designed to help educate and inform the community of key environmental impacts of their day to day living and is an important platform from which AAMI can encourage greener driving habits and improved environmental practices in Australian homes.

The report was commissioned by AAMI in conjunction with Greenfleet, a registered not-for-profit environmental charity dedicated to helping the Australian community reduce the environmental impact of travel, business and lifestyle choices through carbon offsetting and practical advice.

By making better choices in how we live and drive on a day to day basis, all Australians can take steps to reduce our carbon footprint and protect the environment. The 2010 AAMI *Green Home and Motoring Index* contains a range of simple tips to help you reduce your environmental impact while also saving money.

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<sup>1</sup> Environmental Views and Behaviour Survey, 2007-08, Australian Bureau of Statistics.



# GREEN LIVING



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# ON THE HOME FRONT

■ AAMI's research shows most Australians are environmentally aware and are taking at least some steps to try to limit their impact on the environment. A number of sizeable positive changes in the 2010 research results suggests we are adopting more green practices around the home, with this year's data showing a greater consciousness of limiting the use of water, air conditioning and heating.

Greater use of phosphate-free detergents and grey water on gardens is also evident, along with an increased prevalence of people watering gardens at allocated times, and composting food waste.

While these are all positive trends, there is still room for further improvement in these areas.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, each year

the nation's eight million private households produce more than 100 million tonnes of greenhouse gases, consume approximately 11% of the nation's total water allocation and make up about 8% of our total energy usage.<sup>2</sup>

Although this may represent only a fraction of the energy and water used by industry, business and transportation, private consumption is rising year by year. In 2007-08, Australia's

residential sector accounted for 9% of total greenhouse gas emissions, an increase of 25% since 1990.<sup>3</sup>

These figures also don't take into account the water and energy consumption needed for the production of the things we buy, eat, and use on a daily basis. Carbon emissions from agriculture, industry and manufacturing all contribute to the products we consume at

a household level. Our buying patterns can influence much more than our immediate carbon footprint, also impacting our overall national and international footprint.

This emphasises the importance of individuals and families taking responsibility for their impact on the environment and introducing green practices around the home.



**AUSTRALIAN HOUSEHOLDS PRODUCE MORE THAN 100 MILLION TONNES OF GREENHOUSE GASES ANNUALLY.**

<sup>2</sup> Survey of housing and income, Australia 2005-2006, Australian Bureau of Statistics; Australian Bureau of Statistics Water Account Australia, 2004-2005, Australian Bureau of Statistics; Are households using renewable energy? 2006-2007, Australian Bureau of Statistics.  
<sup>3</sup> Environmental Views and Behaviour Survey, 2007-08, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

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# WE WANT TO DO MORE – SO WHAT’S STOPPING US?

■ The majority of Australians (87%) say they would like to reduce their impact on the environment, but cost continues to be a key barrier for many.

As a nation our commitment to being green remains strong, with one in five people nationally (22%) saying they would go to any length to reduce their environmental impact at home

– ranging from 25% in ACT to 19% in South Australia. Surprisingly, 18-24 year olds are significantly less likely to say they will go to any length (19%) compared with older age groups (23% for 25+ years).

But for others, cost remains a major impediment. According to AAMI’s research, four in 10 (41%) say they are willing

to be environmentally friendly at home, as long as it doesn’t cost anything. Older Australians appear the most cost-conscious, with 44% of people aged 50+ years saying they would like to reduce their impact provided there’s no cost involved (compared with 37% of 18-24 year-olds and 39% of 25-49 year olds).

Importantly, many green practices are free – such as recycling, turning off light switches when not in the room or composting domestic waste – and some can even save you money, making it easy to do your bit for little or no cost. State, Territory and Federal governments also provide a wide range of environmental rebates that can help offset the cost of larger purchases.

Demonstrating the need for continuing community education on environmental issues, a lack of information is the next most common barrier

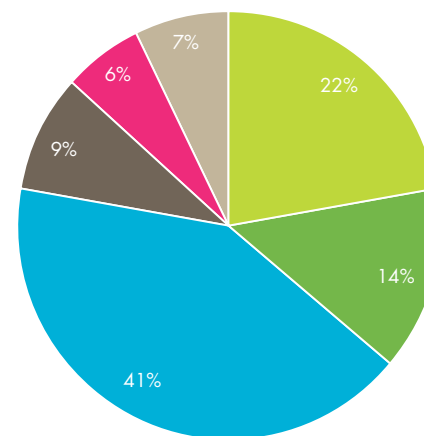
to going green at home. One in seven people nationally (14%) said they didn’t know how to go about reducing their environmental impact, with younger Australians the most likely to lack the necessary information (18-24 years – 20%; 25-49 years – 16%; 50+ years – 11%).

Surprisingly, with many working families becoming increasingly time poor, most people said that time wasn’t a major barrier to going green at home. Only 9% of Australians said they would reduce their environmental impact only if it did not take too much time – an encouraging figure.



LENGTHS HOUSEHOLDERS GO TO REDUCE THEIR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

- I will go to any length to reduce my impact on the environment
- I would like to reduce my impact but don't know how to go about it
- I would like to reduce my impact but only if it doesn't cost me any money
- I would like to reduce my impact but only if it doesn't take too much time
- I am not concerned about reducing my impact on the environment
- None of these



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## PAY MORE UPFRONT TO SAVE OVER THE LONG TERM

■ Increasing costs of water, gas and electricity are influencing the take up of greener technology. Many Australians are deciding to spend now in order to save money down the track.

Paying more upfront to help protect the environment

can actually save Australian households big dollars in the longer term. For example, energy saving compact fluorescent light globes may be more expensive than incandescent light globes, but they last six to 10 times longer and use 80% less energy.

AAMI's research shows a healthy trend in green investment is emerging, with more homes installing rainwater tanks, ceiling insulation, grey water systems, energy efficient appliances, energy saving light globes and water saving showerheads/taps.

New South Wales and Queensland lead the states when it comes to the take up of water saving taps and showerheads, with New South Wales registering a particularly noticeable increase over the last year. The growth in ownership of grey water systems is also

highest in New South Wales and Queensland.

Older age groups, especially people aged 50+ years, are more likely to have ceiling insulation, energy efficient appliances, energy saving light globes, water saving showerheads/taps and rainwater tanks.



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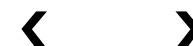
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# WATER SAVING EFFORTS IMPROVE SIGNIFICANTLY

■ In a country prone to extended droughts, it's not surprising that limiting water consumption continues to be a high priority for the vast majority of Australians.

Overall, 86% of survey

respondents said they made an effort to limit their water consumption. These results are largely consistent across the country, although residents in the Northern Territory were the least likely to limit their water

consumption (62%).

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, over half of Australian adults (55%) reported in 2007-08 that their water consumption had decreased in

the 12 months prior while 40% reported that it had remained the same.<sup>4</sup>

State and Territory government water restrictions have been in place for most Australians since

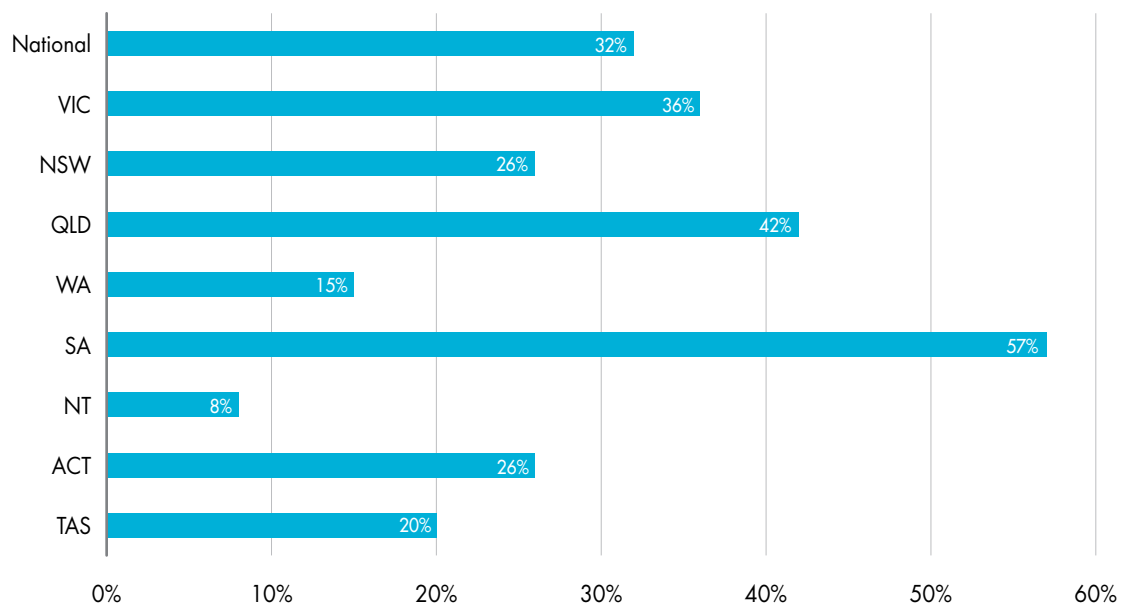
2002, so it is not surprising that three-quarters (74%) play by the rules and only water gardens when allowed.

Western Australia, ACT, South Australia and Victoria are the →



**THE PERCENTAGE OF AUSTRALIAN HOUSEHOLDS WITH RAINWATER TANKS HAS INCREASED TO 32% FROM 24% LAST YEAR.**

PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS THAT HAVE A RAINWATER TANKS



<sup>4</sup> Environmental Views and Behaviour Survey, 2007-08, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

most likely of all regions to follow water restrictions, although Queensland recorded the biggest increase from last year in the proportion of residents who stick to allocated watering times.

According to leading conservation experts, rainwater tanks provide a 20% reduction, on average, in tap water use<sup>5</sup>. Rainwater tanks are not only useful in cutting consumption when watering the garden or washing the car, but can also

be connected to the indoor plumbing for your toilet, washing machine and hot water system.

So it is positive to see that one in three Australian homes are now equipped with a rainwater tank (32%) compared with 24% reported in last year's Index. South Australians are the most likely to have a home rainwater tank (57%), followed by Queenslanders (42%) and Victorians (36%).

PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS THAT WATER ONLY IN ALLOCATED TIMES



**THREE-QUARTERS OF US SAY WE PLAY BY THE WATER RULES.**



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<sup>5</sup> www.savewater.com.au

# GOING GREY AND LIKING IT

■ From 1994 to 2007, the proportion of Australian households with water conservation devices more than doubled, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics.<sup>6</sup>

The average Australian household produces 400 litres of grey water each day. Grey water systems can play an important part in reducing overall water consumption, especially grey

water from baths, showers, basins, washing machines and tubs that can be used, untreated, on your garden.

AAMI's research shows one in seven Australian homes

(15%) now have a grey water system, up from 11% last year. Queenslanders and Victorians perform the best in this category, with 20% of households in these states now having a grey

water system in place. Victoria continues to take the lead when it comes to use of grey water on gardens, as they did last year.

Inside the home, more than two-thirds of householders (70% in →

PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH WATER SAVING DEVICES



<sup>6</sup> Australia's Environmental Issues and Trends, 2010, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

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2010 compared with 65% last year) say they have installed water saving showerheads which, if rated with three stars, use only nine litres of water per minute compared with 20

litres per minute for standard showerheads.

As increasing numbers of environmentally friendly cleaning and laundry products

hit supermarket shelves, their use is becoming more popular with Australians. According to AAMI's research, one in two householders nationally (48%) use phosphate-free detergents,

with those in ACT, Queensland and Tasmania (55%, 52% and 52% respectively) the most likely to do so and Northern Territorians (39%) the least likely.

**THE FOLLOWING TIPS WILL HELP REDUCE YOUR HOME'S WATER CONSUMPTION IN THE BATHROOM, KITCHEN AND LAUNDRY:**

- Install water efficient showerheads, taps and toilets wherever possible.
- Use a bucket to collect water for your garden while waiting for the shower water to warm.
- Fix leaking taps – these can waste up to 20,000 litres every year.
- Adjust the water level in your washing machine to match the size of the load.
- Try not to rinse dishes under a running tap if washing them by hand.
- Use the economy cycle on your dishwasher.



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# NO CEILING TO IMPROVEMENTS

■ Heating and cooling can account for up to 20% of total energy use in an average Australian home.<sup>7</sup>

The attraction of State and Federal rebates has helped push the installation of solar panels and ceiling insulation through

the roof. Through natural heating and reduction of heat loss, these measures can deliver significantly lower energy bills for the average Aussie family.

More than two-thirds (71%) of all Australians say their home now has ceiling insulation, a

substantial increase on 55% last year, and no doubt partly due to the now ceased Federal Government home insulation scheme.

Insulating your home can lead to savings of between 60 and 80% on heating and cooling costs<sup>8</sup>,

as insulation in the walls and the roof space keeps your house warmer in winter and cooler in summer.

This year 13% say they have solar panels, up from 8% last year. While this is a sizable increase, national solar panel use remains low.

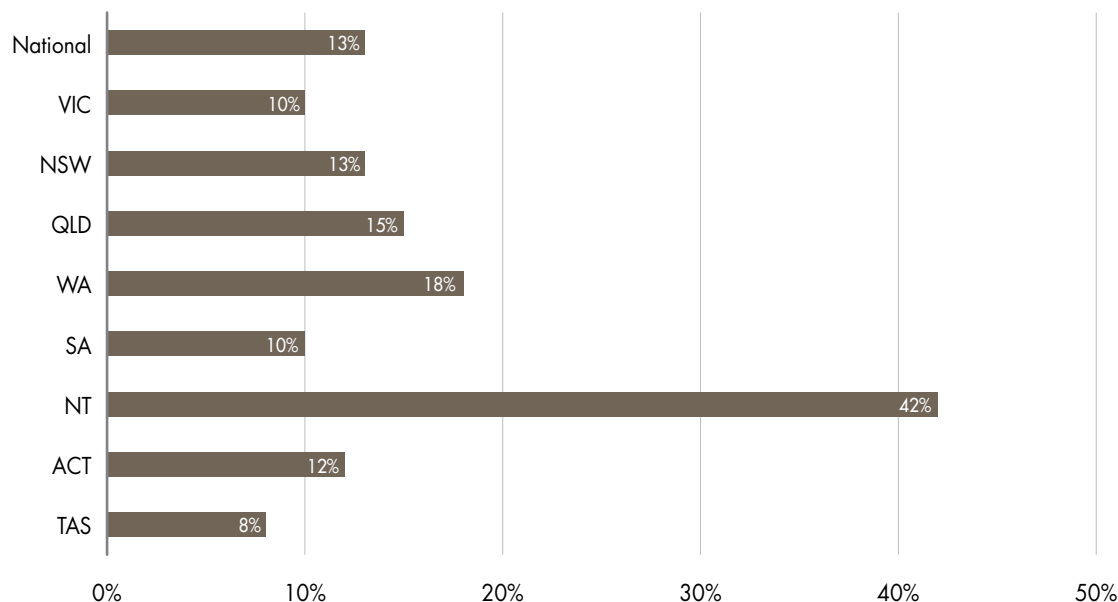
Solar panels are commonly used to heat water in the home; however their effectiveness depends on the home's geographical location, with the best position on the home being a northerly aspect, with the panels pointed towards the sun. This may be a reason why 42% of householders in the sunny Northern Territory say they use solar power compared to only 8% of people in Tasmania. Governments around the country have varying levels of rebate which may also impact the take up rate.



## WHEN CONSIDERING SOLAR PANELS:

- Check your house is suitable and whether council approval is required.
- Consider the timeframe to recoup your investment.
- Ensure the solar panels you choose are approved for a government rebate.
- Your supplier can provide advice on the most effective solar panel options for your home.
- Compare purchase and installation quotes.

## PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH SOLAR PANELS



<sup>7</sup> Australian Government Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts: livinggreener.gov.au

<sup>8</sup> www.choice.com.au

# ENERGY ALERT

Electricity accounts for up to 85% of household greenhouse gas emissions, so it makes sense to choose energy efficient products where possible and to modify our use of these items.

And it seems we are getting the message. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reports that energy efficiency was the most common factor considered by Australian

households in 2008 when replacing or buying most white goods, compared with 2002 when the most common factor was cost.<sup>9</sup>

AAMI's 2010 research found that nearly three-quarters of respondents (73%) say their home has energy efficient appliances, which represents a significant increase on 2009 (61%).

Most kitchen and laundry appliances have an energy and water efficiency rating, so it is easy to tell which everyday appliances save you money on utility bills. By investing in energy efficient appliances such as five-star rated washing machines, fridges and dishwashers, households can save hundreds of dollars in annual running costs as well as helping the environment.

More than four out of every five Australian householders (88%) say they use energy saving light globes in their home. Now a mandatory addition to a new home, energy saving light globes produce more light and use less energy and are also more environmentally friendly. With around 15% of household energy use attributed to light globes, making the switch to a greener

globe and turning off lights when not in the room are simple ways to make a big difference.

According to EnergyAustralia, by using just one 15 watt compact fluorescent bulb instead of a 75 watt standard bulb, you can save around \$10 per year on your energy bill.

## PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH ENERGY EFFICIENT APPLIANCES



<sup>9</sup> Australia's Environmental Issues and Trends, 2010, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

## TO CREATE A MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT HOME:

- Check seals on fridges, freezers and ovens and ensure they have adequate ventilation space.
- Defrosting your fridge or freezer will help it operate more efficiently.
- Operate one fridge, not two – running an old second fridge can cost up to \$200 annually.
- Wait until you have a full load in the dishwasher or washing machine before running.
- Use timers or light sensors rather than leaving lights on all night.
- Buy energy saving light globes to replace old incandescent globes.
- Upgrade to more energy efficient household appliances.

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# GET SWITCHED ON

■ Switching off lights and appliances is a simple way of helping to reduce energy consumption and the subsequent greenhouse emissions. Thankfully, most of us (92%) are now doing it, and it's largely consistent across the country.

Even when they appear to be switched off, many electronic

items like TVs, stereos and computers continue to use energy in standby mode.

A simple way to save energy is to switch items off at the wall when you aren't using them.

Take a look around your house to see what appliances you could turn off or use more efficiently to save energy and money. Things like phone chargers, microwave

ovens, electric towel rails, air conditioners, spare alarm clocks and cordless kettles can all add up to make a big difference to your overall energy use.<sup>10</sup> When you go on holidays, remember to switch off all appliances that don't need to remain on while you are away.

Almost three-quarters of Australians (72%, up from 64%

last year) say they limit the use of heating and cooling, a straightforward way to reduce energy usage and pocket big savings on bills.

Insulation, sealing gaps against draughts, good ventilation and planting native trees for shade are just a few of the ways to keep comfortable and reduce your reliance on heating and cooling.

Around Australia, three in five householders (59%) say they limit the use of their clothes dryer, a notorious energy user with most models rated quite low on the energy efficiency scale. According to the Federal Government's guide to choosing an energy efficient appliance, only 19 of the 249 clothes dryers on the Australian market have an official rating of three stars or above.<sup>11</sup>



## TO REDUCE HEATING AND COOLING:

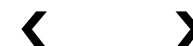
- Insulate walls and ceiling – it will make your home up to five degrees warmer in winter and 10 degrees cooler in summer.
- Only heat or cool the rooms you are using and close off other parts of the house.
- Change your thermostat according to the seasons.
- Use ceiling fans and turn off the air conditioner if the day is not especially hot.
- In winter, slow turning ceiling fans can help push warm air trapped at the ceiling back to floor level.
- When building or renovating, choose double glazed windows and protect them with interior curtains and exterior blinds or awnings.

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<sup>10</sup> Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts: livinggreener.gov.au

<sup>11</sup> www.energyrating.gov.au



# THE CYCLE OF LIFE

■ Recycling allows waste materials to be transformed into useable resources, reducing landfill and conserving resources.

Recycling is a high priority for most Australians, with 93% of householders nationally saying they recycle. This is up from 90% last year, a steady improvement.

Northern Territory households performed relatively poorly in

this area, recording the lowest rate of recycling in the country (78%).

Surprisingly, young people aged 18-24 years old were less likely to recycle (85%) compared with people aged 50+ (95%).

There was also a gender divide in recycling habits, with 95% of women saying they recycle compared to 91% of men.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- The most common litter items found on Clean Up Australia Day are plastics.
- Manufacturing plastics from recycled content uses only 30% of the energy required for making plastics from fossil fuels.
- 41 recycled plastic bottles represent enough energy savings to run a fridge for one hour.
- Every tonne of paper recycled saves a total of 2.5 barrels of oil, 4,100 kW of electricity, four cubic metres of landfill and 31,780 litres of water.
- Newspapers printed in Australia have a recycled content of up to 40%.
- Recycling a glass jar saves enough energy to light a bulb for four hours.



**THE OLDER AUSTRALIANS GET, THE MORE THEY DO IT – RECYCLING IS ONE OF OUR BEST GREEN HABITS.**

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# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In contrast to the high rate of recycling, less than half of Australians (41%) currently compost food waste at home. The good news is that this represents a significant increase on the 34% that reported this practice last year.

South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory

appear to be dragging down the food chain, recording the lowest food composting rates in the nation at 37%, 37% and 33% respectively.

Composting rates are highest within older age groups, especially among people aged over 50 years at 47%.

By composting, which is easy and cheap to do, organic material can decompose in a hygienic, eco-friendly way, and the resulting compost can be used in the garden as a soil conditioner or surface mulch.



**41% OF AUSTRALIANS COMPOST FOOD WASTE AT HOME, COMPARED WITH 34% LAST YEAR.**

## BE THOUGHTFUL WHEN RECYCLING ORGANIC MATERIALS, AS NOT ALL ARE SUITABLE FOR COMPOSTING:

YES	NO
✓ Old newspapers (wet them first)	✗ Diseased plants
✓ Vegetable and food scraps	✗ Meat and dairy products
✓ Fallen leaves (add in layers)	✗ Animal manure (especially the droppings of cats and dogs)
✓ Vacuum cleaner dust (remove glass or solids)	✗ Bones
✓ Tea leaves and tea bags	✗ Magazines
✓ Egg shells	✗ Metals, plastic, glass
✓ Coffee grounds	✗ Large branches
✓ Dead flowers	✗ Bread or cake (may attract mice)
✓ Used vegetable cooking oil	
✓ Wood ash	

# GREEN DRIVING

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# MORE DRIVERS THINKING GREEN

More Australian motorists are now considering environmental factors when the time comes to purchase a new car.

This year's Index shows 54% of drivers nationally would consider

factors such as a car's air pollution rating or its fuel efficiency, compared with 52% in 2009.

And it seems women are more environmentally conscious than men when it comes to selecting

their cars, with 57% of women taking green factors into account compared with 52% of Aussie males.

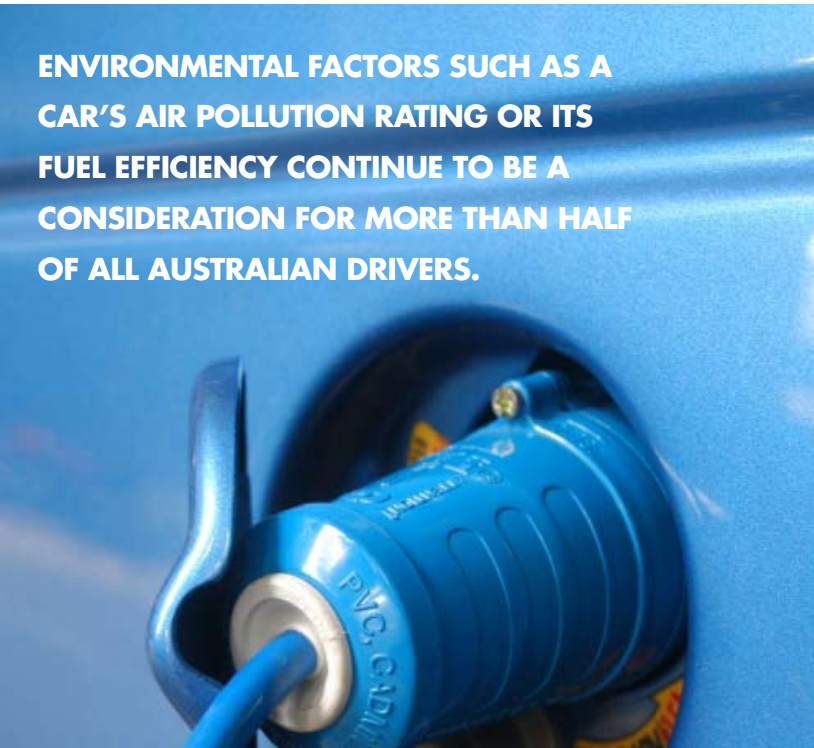
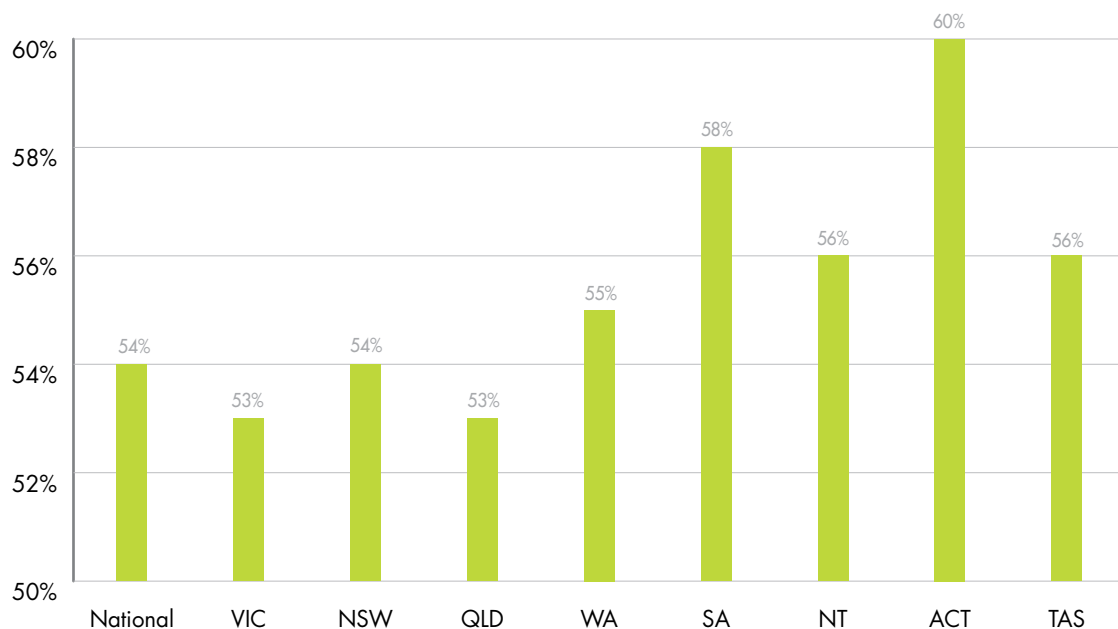
Those in the 55-64 age group are by far the most considerate in

this area, with 68% claiming to be mindful of environmental factors.

On a State and Territory basis, while ACT drivers are still the most considerate of environmental factors (60%),

drivers in South Australia and Victoria made the most improvement in this area, with South Australia now at 58% compared with 49% in 2009, and 53% in Victoria, up from 47% a year earlier.

PERCENTAGE OF DRIVERS WHO CONSIDER ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS WHEN BUYING A CAR



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# LEAN, CLEAN AND GREEN

■ Lead foot drivers aren't just a menace on our roads – they are also a tax on the environment.

Driving at high speeds or in a gear lower or higher than needed causes a car's engine to overwork and use more fuel. Two-thirds of drivers nationally (65%) say they

actively try to avoid this practice.

Two in every five drivers (41%) say they adjust their driving style to reduce their car's impact on the environment. Unfortunately, this is a slight decrease on previous years, with 44% of drivers last year and 42% in 2008

reporting they made adjustments to their driving style.

Motorists in Tasmania (45%), Western Australia (45%) and New South Wales (44%) feature as the best behaved in this field with those in Queensland the worst (38%).

More pleasing is our desire to drive smoothly without hard braking or acceleration. Four in five drivers (80%) claim they already do this, particularly older Australians, with 95% of those aged 65 years or older saying they drive smoothly. Young drivers were the least likely to

report smooth braking and acceleration (65%).

Consistent with the previous year, Tasmanian motorists are the most likely to say they drive smoothly (84%).



## THE FOLLOWING ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY DRIVING TIPS MAKE IT EASY TO BE GREEN ON THE ROADS:

- Fuel burns even if your car is standing still, so avoid excessive idling or think about switching your engine off until you need to get moving again.
- Keep a sensible distance between your car and the one in front of you. This will allow you to brake more evenly as you can anticipate traffic conditions ahead.
- Check your car's air filter. A clear air filter can improve your car's fuel efficiency by up to 10%.
- Where possible, try to avoid rush hour traffic or roads that are notoriously clogged. Busy roads mean more fuel wasted.
- Remember to use public transport, walk, take your bicycle or try another mode of more environmentally friendly transport wherever possible.

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# LEAVE IT IN THE GARAGE

■ One effective way to save money, cut pollution and ease congestion on our roads is to leave the car at home and walk, ride a bicycle or take public transport wherever possible.

Overall, the proportion of people

using public transport and walking or cycling to work, TAFE or university remains low (17% use public transport, 8% walk and 4% cycle).

When it comes to reasons for shunning public transport, 40%

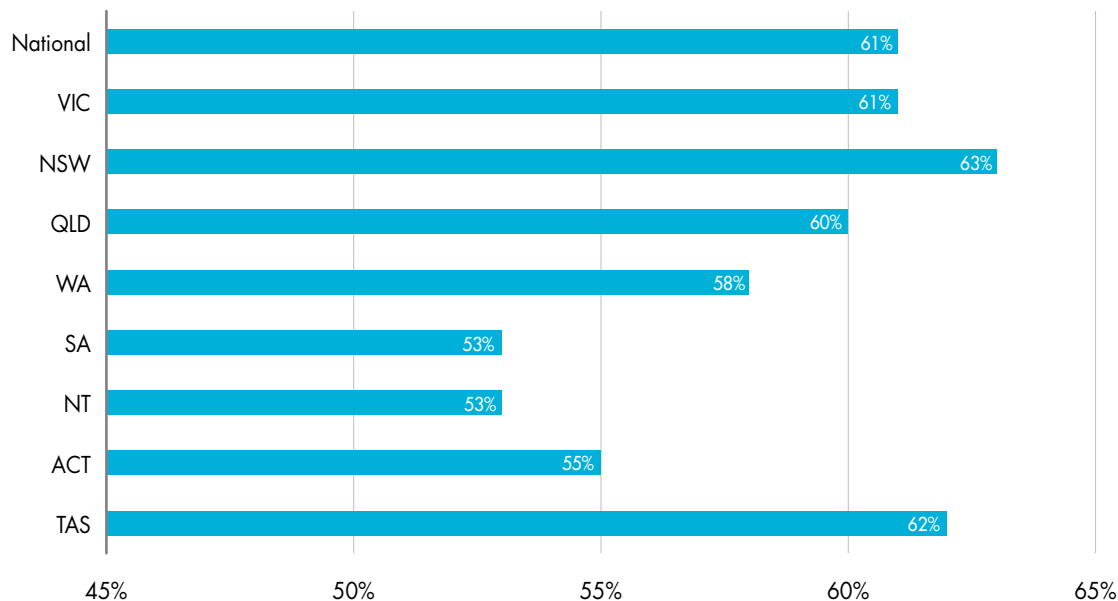
of Australians say that there is no public transport available in their area. For younger drivers (18-24 years), public transport takes too long (48%), while for the older age groups there are insufficient public transport options near their work or home.

On a more positive note, three-fifths of Australian drivers (61%) say they only use their car when they consider it necessary.

There has been little change in the popularity of carpooling over the last few years. Approximately

one quarter (26% in 2010 compared to 28% in both 2008 and 2009) say they share a car ride where possible. Tasmanians continue to be the most likely to carpool (29%), closely followed by residents of New South Wales and Victoria (both 28%).

PERCENTAGE OF DRIVERS WHO USE THEIR CAR ONLY WHEN NECESSARY



**THREE IN EVERY FIVE AUSTRALIAN DRIVERS SAY THEY ONLY USE THEIR CAR WHEN NECESSARY.**

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# GET PUMPED

■ Tyre pressure, car servicing, air conditioner use and a car's overall weight are all significant factors that influence the amount of fuel we use.

Nationally, almost three-quarters of drivers (72%) say they regularly check that their tyres are inflated properly. This is consistent with our findings in 2009.

When it comes to switching off the air conditioner, only half of Australian drivers (49%) will do this to reduce fuel consumption, although females are more likely to use the air conditioner sparingly (52%, versus 45% for males).

For every extra 45 kilograms of weight in a vehicle, fuel efficiency

can drop by 2% – so keeping the boot, roof racks and rear seat clear of any unnecessary items is important. Approximately half of all Australian drivers (49%) say they remove unnecessary weight from the car, a 5% improvement on 2008 (44%). More than half of all motorists in ACT say they follow this green practice (52%),

followed by motorists in New South Wales (51%) and Victoria (49%).

A regular service can also improve fuel economy and help identify any mechanical faults early, saving both time and money. Three-quarters of motorists (75%) say their car is serviced on a regular basis,

with just one in five drivers (21%) servicing their car only occasionally. The proportion of drivers who regularly service their car has remained similar over recent years (76% in 2009 and 73% in 2008). Females were more likely to have their car serviced regularly (78%, compared to 73% of males).

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Approximately 2.5kg of greenhouse gas is generated for every litre of unleaded petrol consumed.
- Driving style and the efficiency of a car affect the fuel consumption and amount of greenhouse gases released.
- A tyre under-inflated by one psi (pound per square inch) can reduce fuel efficiency by as much as 3%.
- Using the recommended grade of motor oil can improve fuel efficiency by 1 or 2%.
- Setting the air conditioner on high could increase fuel consumption by over 10%.

## PERCENTAGE OF DRIVERS WHO SERVICE THEIR CAR REGULARLY



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## FUEL FOR THOUGHT

■ Three in 10 Australian drivers (32%) say they buy fuels that they consider to be more environmentally friendly, such as ethanol or ethanol-blend fuel or biofuel.

The proportion of drivers who purchase these green fuels differs noticeably around Australia. Motorists in New South Wales are now the most likely to say they purchase these fuels, with steady increases registering over the past few years (30% in 2008, 38% in 2009 and 43% in 2010). Queensland motorists follow at 41%, while those in Western Australia continue to be the least likely to purchase ethanol or biofuels (9% in 2009 and 7% in 2010).

Biofuels are becoming more accessible across the country with a continued decrease in the number of drivers blaming availability (from 26% in 2008 to 19% in 2009 and 14% in 2010). Cost is another reason for drivers not purchasing biofuels (15%).

Interestingly, motorists are now more likely to think that biofuels will have a negative impact on their car (from 26% in 2008 up to 43% in 2010). This has risen to be the most common reason for not using biofuels, surpassing 'suitability for their car' which was the most common barrier in 2009.



**MORE MOTORISTS  
NOW THINK  
BIOFUELS WILL HAVE  
A NEGATIVE IMPACT  
ON THEIR CAR.**

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# OFFSET – AT A PRICE

■ Only 15% of Australian drivers say they currently offset their car’s emissions, even though it is becoming easier to do so. This is consistent with last year and continues to be lowest among motorists in Tasmania (10%), ACT (11%) and Western Australia (12%).

In what is perhaps a sign of a tight economy, more than two-

fifths of all Australian drivers (42%) now say they would not be willing to pay anything to offset their car’s emissions (up from 35% in 2008). This is more common in the older age groups.

As in 2008 and 2009, one-quarter of all drivers (24%) say they would be willing to pay up to \$50 to offset their car’s emissions, while 6% would pay between \$51

and \$100 (9% in 2008 and 8% in 2009).

Just 1% of drivers say they would pay more than \$150 to offset emissions (consistent with both 2008 and 2009).

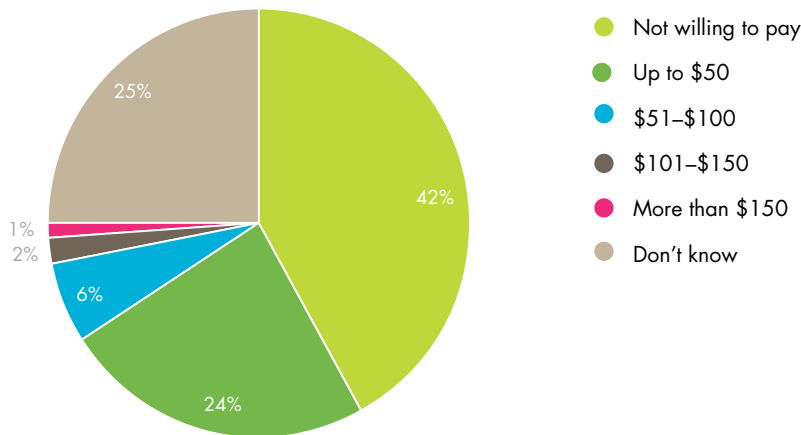
The transport sector is a major contributor to greenhouse pollution in Australia. Cars, trucks, vans, motor bikes and buses contribute approximately

13% of our total emissions, with a significant proportion of this coming from cars.<sup>12</sup>

By funding activities such as planting native forests, which capture carbon dioxide as they grow, paying to offset your car’s carbon emissions is a simple way motorists can give back to the environment.



## PERCENTAGE OF DRIVERS WHO ARE PREPARED TO PAY FOR EMISSIONS OFFSET



## TOP FIVE GREEN REASONS TO OFFSET YOUR EMISSIONS:

- Even if you reduce your emissions significantly, it is unlikely that you will eliminate all sources of greenhouse gases in your life.
- Global greenhouse gas concentrations are already elevated, so we need to recapture what’s already in the atmosphere.
- Offsetting emissions supports the development of sustainable industries.
- Offsetting current emissions is a great start while you work to reduce your emissions over time.
- Forest sinks, plantations designed to soak up greenhouse gases, make the environment more resilient to the effects of climate change.

<sup>12</sup> Australian Conservation Foundation – Transport and the environment



Sara Gipton,  
CEO Greenfleet

## Getting over the barriers to green

So it sounds like we all want to live a bit greener, but we feel like there are hurdles to getting there. Many of these hurdles are based on perceptions, but when you look a bit closer you see they are not as big as you first thought.

Despite recent bad publicity, insulating your home is an easy and effective way to reduce your environmental impact. Insulation installed in ceilings, walls and under the floor can all help to cut your home's heating and cooling costs, as well as making your home more comfortable to live in year-round. Curtains and blinds and sealing draughts also help to keep temperatures more constant inside your home.

Water conservation has multiple benefits as well. In addition to saving precious water, you'll save energy by saving water – particularly by reducing your hot water consumption. And it's good for your hip pocket, because you'll save money on both your energy and water consumption bills.

We were interested to see that just 6% of respondents were prepared to pay between \$51 and \$100 to offset their car's emissions. This is between \$1 and \$2 per week. When you consider the fuel costs for the average car come in at about \$40 per week<sup>13</sup>, and on top of that there

are registration, insurance and maintenance costs, does \$1 to \$2 per week really sound like too much to pay to offset the greenhouse pollution you create by driving?

When you break it down, it doesn't sound so scary, does it?

So, the key to living a greener lifestyle... try to do small things and build from there. You don't have to do everything at once, but if you take it a step at a time, you'll be living the greener lifestyle you want much sooner than you think.

It's easy to despair as our political

and industry leaders seem unable to do something. If we all wait for someone else to do something first then nothing will ever change. Yet, as I write this I am reminded of a quote by US anthropologist Margaret Mead... "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

So do what you can to change your own habits and influence the people around you.

**Every little bit helps, and together we can make a big difference.**



<sup>13</sup> Average ULP fuel consumption is 1,554 L/year @ \$1.30/L = \$2,020.20 / year. Based on ULP cars travelling average 14,000 km/year, with average fuel efficiency of 11.1L/100km – ABS Survey of Motor Vehicle Use (12 months ended 31 Oct 2007)

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