

## **Exterminating the Invisible**

**By: Jasper Barbash-Taylor**

Simone de Beauvoir once said, “Change your life today. Don’t gamble on the future, act now, without delay.” Global warming is quickly gaining on us in the race possibly known as survival. We must reduce our energy use and we must act now. My father once said, “You can never face a problem head on. You have to dismantle small conflicts first.” That is exactly what some of the more informed Americans are doing about global warming.

Living in the USA holds great responsibility. Although we produce about 27.8% of the world’s carbon waste as a country, we take drastic measures to cut down on our CO2 emissions and energy consumption. My family and I are taking action to try to discontinue the rapid expansion of global warming. Although we may not be the greenest household on the planet, we are still trying to use less conventional methods to complete tasks. For example, when the temperature in our vehicle is higher than desired, we roll down the tinted windows to allow the wind to cool us instead of turning on the air-conditioning that uses more fossil fuels. That lowers the energy consumption used by our cars. Secondly, I walk to school instead of taking the bus or driving. Walking conserves energy and therefore reduces carbon emissions. Lastly, we feed our chickens all of our vegetable waste that is not covered in mold or is diseased. (We don’t feed them meat because we don’t want to raise cannibal chickens.) Feeding them our waste puts less waste in our trash therefore cutting down on the energy that would be used.

Although we are trying hard to conserve energy, we could try more ways of energy conservation over the next 12 months. My family and I are going to try three new

ways to conserve energy. They consist of my parents carpooling to go to work, all of us using less water and air-drying our laundry. My parents will drive in one car to get to work. That will lower our energy usage produced from our own vehicles by about 50%. We will turn the tap off when lathering hands with soap and when brushing our teeth. Using less water also uses less energy to pump the water all around our house. Air-drying our laundry will allow us not to use our 'ancient' dryer that is definitely not energy efficient. It will save a lot of energy and cut down on carbon emissions.

Just helping to conserve energy at home isn't enough to stop the worldwide crisis of global warming. I also should ask clubs or other organizations as well as my friends to stop using so much energy. These are the ways I developed in an educated method to realistically cut down on energy consumption. When I am in a library or another place where there are computers, I can put the computers to sleep. That will save energy because the computers are using less energy because they are not searching for something and are not displaying anything. A second action I could take is asking people to remove their old appliances and replace them with newer, energy star ones. Energy star appliances are proven to use 10-50% less water and/or energy. Simple actions can make a big difference. If just one in 10 homes used Energy star qualified appliances, the change would be like planting 1.7 million new acres of trees. Using energy star appliances would have a huge difference on the carbon emissions and the most important action that I would try to get people to do. Although that is more important, there is one more. I could get places to have recycling bins that would recycle paper, and other materials. The final idea I have to is to write a letter to the mayor of Newton about recycling water bottles. I noticed that our school alone throws away over two hundred plastic water bottles per day.

If we were to recycle all of those bottles, we would save A LOT of plastic. Making plastic calls for a lot of energy. There is a lot of burning and other carbon releasing actions that take place to make plastic. Recycling these plastic bottles would not only affect my school but also the whole state of Massachusetts. Many people collect cans and bottles for recycling machines. Some of the few items they do not collect are plastic water bottles. If the large amount of people were to collect these bottles, there would be many happier people, (and richer, may I add), as well as maybe the more important, less energy consumption and less global warming.

Although it is impossible to attack global warming straight on, we must try to stop producing the carbon emissions that cause global warming. We can only do that by conserving energy. Wilma Rudolph once said, “Never underestimate the power of dreams and the influence of the human spirit.” We can dismantle this crisis and we can do it together.