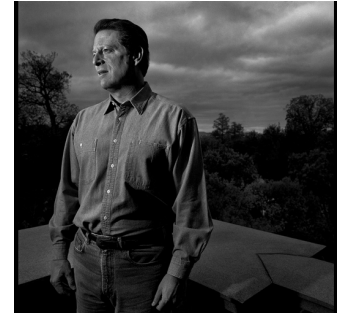




Thanks to the tireless efforts of high-profile and unsung activists, the public conversation about the climate crisis has finally moved beyond the question of *if* there is an issue to *what* can be done to about it. But while most Americans now concede that there is crisis, few know how to successfully address their role in it. And until a critical mass of Americans feel personally engaged in this race, our country and the world will suffer from a lack of leadership.

Climate Relay is a unique initiative that moves people to act by focusing on simple and rewarding actions anyone can take to reduce their impact on the climate and help lead our nation in the race to avert disaster.



*"When the politicians are paralyzed in the face of a great threat, our nation needs a popular movement, a rallying cry, a standard, a mandate that is broadly supported on a bipartisan basis."*  
**--Al Gore**

The campaign meets people where they are, provides them with concrete steps they can take to reduce their impact on the climate, supports them to make and maintain change, and uses the power of social networks to help them be part of a larger movement. Climate Relay uniquely combines:

- a proven methodology for creating behavior change
- an outreach campaign that reaches people through the institutions they trust most and leverages key partnerships
- the dynamic interactivity and tools of web 2.0 technology and social networks

Climate Relay will be launched in three northern California communities—Berkeley/East Bay, Santa Cruz County and Sonoma County—where there are is a high proportion of individuals and groups likely to be early adopters, along with organizations with the capacity to help drive the grassroots campaign.

The initiative has three major components:

- **Personalized Action Plans** that help people successfully reduce their climate footprint through web-based tools, information and support
- **Support Networks** that encourage people to participate, help them succeed and spread the word
- **Outreach Campaign** that brings together a media campaign and partnerships with utilities, government and business leaders, and community based organizations that reach a broad cross-section of the population

### **Climate Action Plan**

The core of Climate Relay is a 10 Step program that supports people to reduce their carbon footprint. The program builds upon the proven methodology of Empowerment Institute's [Low](#)

[Carbon Diet](#) program, along with web 2.0 technologies, to provide participants with everything they need to succeed. After joining [climaterelay.com](#), participants are:

- Given a **climate score**, based on a short assessment of their carbon footprint and steps they've already taken to live more sustainably.
- Presented with a recommended **Climate Action Plan**, based on their climate score and personal goals. Each plan is designed to address home energy use, travel, and consumer behaviors, with actions ordered to build momentum and get them to the finish line.
- Supported to complete each action through a **360° approach** that provides participants with know-how, tools, reminders, relevant products, and periodic check-ins. The hardest changes to make are not necessarily the most costly, but rather those that require a shift in behavior. Climate Relay will use a unique system of email/SMS and physical reminders that transform daily behaviors and alert people when it's time to revisit an action.
- **Connected to support networks** that provide participants with opportunities to join in collective goals, share their personal stories, get encouragement and resources from people they trust, and make friends.
- **Recognized for their accomplishments.** Individuals and groups are recognized for completing their challenge and are highlighted on the website for each step taken.
- **Encouraged to go beyond.** The last step in each plan is to take action beyond their household, whether that means engaging friends and family, contacting elected representatives, volunteering in local efforts, or helping "cool" their office or house of prayer.

Regular email newsletters provide members with ongoing suggestions and recommended actions. Participants are able to easily add actions to their plan or create a new set of 10 actions at the conclusion of the program.

## **Support Networks**

Though people can participate individually, the 10 Step program is built upon a social networking platform that allows participants to join and create their own relay groups. Much like Facebook, groups can be created for family and friends, colleagues, neighbors, or around common interests. This platform allows users to connect with other Climate Relay participants for support, to exchange ideas or resources, or to make friends. Through tools that allow them to track the impact of their groups and add widgets to other web sites, along with the positive reinforcement that comes from the site's recognition system, users are encouraged to spread the word and engage their friends and family.

Group administration tools make it easy for group leaders to send out personalized invitations, set group goals, track group progress, and set public/private permissions. In this way, a high school, congregation or business can create a private group solely for its members, with access to resources and downloadable materials that help them spread the word and organize their groups.

### *Relay Teams*

While groups can be created and interact entirely online, people are most likely to create and maintain behavioral change when they participate in real world peer networks. Therefore, participants will be encouraged to create or join their own Relay Teams—peer support networks

within each group that consist of households who meet together in person to create and complete their personal action plans. Relay Team leaders are provided with all the resources they need to organize meetings. Relay Team leaders and participants receive unique recognition within their groups and the broader Climate Relay community.

## Outreach Campaign

Climate Relay will reach people through five primary channels:

- **Grassroots Campaign.** Climate Relay will collaborate with community based organizations including faith-based organizations, environmental groups and neighborhood associations to reach their members. Partner organizations will be provided with ongoing support and resources to conduct organized outreach efforts in their communities.
- **Partnership with PG&E and other utilities.** PG&E will promote Climate Relay through the company's web site (e.g., linking directly from PG&E's carbon footprint calculator) and through other communications to customers. PG&E customers who join Climate Relay may receive an incentive to **ClimateSmart™** as a means to promote both programs. Customers who join the program may also receive a special PG&E branded reminder system that helps them remember to power down their home and take other energy saving actions.
- **Leadership Promotion.** Climate Relay will partner with government and business leaders throughout northern California to join the program and promote it to their residents and employees. Promotional efforts may include a mayor's challenge, city or neighborhood competitions, and other friendly competitions between teams.
- **Word of mouth and viral growth.** By building the program on a social networking platform and making it easy for users to send invitations, create groups and integrate Climate Relay with other web sites, word will quickly spread through virtual and personal networks.

## Why Climate Relay is Different

There are a great deal of ideas out there for how to live "green," as well as numerous websites that help people calculate their carbon footprints and "pledge" to make changes. Climate Relay combines best practices gained from feedback of Low Carbon Diet participants with web 2.0 technology to provide people with a whole solution—a 360° combination of know-how, tools, support, products, and incentives to both make and maintain change. The campaign reaches people through the institutions and people they trust most, ensuring higher levels of participation and commitment.

Data collection tools will also allow group leaders and key partners to track the impact of their participation. Government leaders will be able to see the number of city residents, businesses and organizations that joined the relay, as well as the estimated greenhouse gas reductions that result from their participation. Employers will be able to track the impact and participation of the employees who joined their group, allowing them to share these successes with clients and investors, build employee moral and recruit new talent.

A partnership with Climate Relay will help PG&E reduce residential energy use, promote participation in the company's **ClimateSmart™** and energy rebate programs, and grow the company's prominence as an industry leader in tackling climate change. Through simple database integration, PG&E will be able to connect Climate Relay members to its customers and

track, as a result, the direct reduction in household energy use that results from their participation.

We ensure success by:

- Customizing action plans to suit each household and making goals focused and achievable
- Facilitating group interactions that provide ongoing support, peer encouragement and a sense of collective action
- Providing incentives for participating and encouraging others to join
- Partnering with PG&E, government agencies, northern California businesses, and community based organizations to reach people
- Providing participants and partners with the means to track the impact of their involvement

## **Deployment**

The goal of Climate Relay is to engage more than one million households throughout the United States in meaningful action. The campaign will be rolled out in three key phases:

1. Pilots in targeted communities in the East Bay, Santa Cruz and Sonoma County, utilizing the Low Carbon Diet program. Pilots will be conducted with teams representing a cross-section of key community stakeholders, including governments, businesses, faith-based groups, educational institutions, and neighborhood associations. The pilots will serve as a key feedback mechanism to help develop the web application, create best practices for organizing efforts, and revise the Low Carbon Diet program, if applicable.
2. Launch of [climaterelay.com](http://climaterelay.com) and an expanded outreach campaign in the East Bay, Sonoma County and Santa Cruz/Monterey.
3. Expansion to other communities through the launch of a broader outreach campaign, as well as dissemination of best practices resources and trainings for community based organizations.

## **Partner Organizations**

The following organizations are collaborating on this initiative, providing proven expertise in community organizing, behavioral change and web development, as well as strong relationships with local community based organizations, businesses, government agencies, and elected representatives:

- [Climate Changers](#), based in Santa Rosa, CA
- [Climate Protection Campaign](#), based in Sonoma County
- [Ecology Action](#), based in Santa Cruz, CA
- [Ecology Center](#), based in Berkeley, CA

Each organization has secured partnerships with local governments, universities and other key community stakeholders. Other partnerships are currently being explored, including those with organizations that have developed comprehensive carbon footprint data; provide local resources like recycling, waste management, volunteer opportunities, and other services; and web-based resources.