

## Sustaining Earth, Our Island Home FAQs

### Q: How and when can I sign up my parish?

If you are in the Diocese of California, you can sign up your parish now!

All parishes in DioCal are on the [sustainislandhome.org](http://sustainislandhome.org) site. However, if your DioCal parish is in Contra Costa County, or if you have parishioners that live outside of following areas: Alameda County, Marin County, SF, San Mateo County, Palo Alto, and Los Altos, the local tracker site will be live by April 2019. Parishioners that live in areas where the tracker is not live yet can join the program by choosing another city near them to participate. When their cities become live (when we turn the tracker on in their area), we can move their accounts over to the correct site, or they can wait until their local area is available in March/April 2019.

If you are in another diocese, the tracker will most likely be available by March 6, 2019 and at latest by April 2019.

### Q: Can we start using the site now?

Yes! Go to [sustainislandhome.org](http://sustainislandhome.org). Enjoy the photos, messages, and prayers, and then scroll down to see the current participation by various churches in the Diocese of California, and the total (at the top) of all we are doing together. Then select Get Started in the upper right corner.

Select your city of residence and your congregation. Note: Your city of residence and congregation can be in different locations! Your baseline carbon footprint will be based on data from your city of residence, but your actions toward reducing that carbon footprint will be credited to your church.

After you choose these parameters, you'll be taken to your local tracker site where you will establish an account (sign up form). The next step is to answer some questions about your lifestyle habits (My Energy Profile), which will allow the app to measure your carbon footprint. Then you will select Actions to reduce that footprint. You can discuss actions on the Action Discussion page with others in your congregation and wider community (city/county). On My Dashboard, you will be able to see where you started (My Baseline) what actions you've planned or completed (My Plan), and how much you've saved (My Progress).

Beginning in March 2019, when [sustainislandhome.org](http://sustainislandhome.org) will be available to other dioceses, the Get Started prompts will ask you to name your state and diocese, as well as city and congregation. The reason for these additional questions is an upgrade that provides users with a dedicated page for their diocese.

### **Q: How long does it take?**

It takes about 10-15 minutes to fill out your energy profile (a bit more for people with solar panels on their home) and another 15-30 minutes to read about actions and select several to put in your Plan. There are some shortcuts so it's possible to complete your profile in a few minutes.

### **Q: I hit a snag. What now?**

Contact your Diocese contact for any questions.

### **Q: When will app version be available?**

The app will be out, along with some great upgrades, by April 2019! The app will allow everyone to use the site as long as they have a smartphone — no desktop required. In the interim, any computer or tablet can access the app.

We have some great upgrades coming that will make the Energy Profile much easier and more fun with interactive graphics. We will also be enhancing the ability to communicate with others in your congregation and post congregation level information including a photo and events, etc. We will also be providing recommendations on actions to help users get started.

### **Q: Who has access to my data, and how is it protected? What will “you” do with my data? Will others see my data, and if so, will this lead to pressure?**

Our site is hosted on a secure server and has the highest level of site encryption. We protect individual data and no one can see your household data or actions unless you share it with them. We never share or sell your data. If you join a team, others on your team will see the actions you are working on, to help facilitate team members working together and helping each other succeed!

Others in your congregation may be able to see your total points or your ranking for your household, but there is no pressure! Everyone does what they can and progresses at a rate

that's comfortable for them. If you feel like sharing a completed action, or something you learned, that's great! If you want to ask a question, that's great too. But these steps are totally optional.

You can read more about this in our privacy policies and term of use documents at the bottom of every tracker page:

- [menlogreenchallenge.org/privacy-policy](https://menlogreenchallenge.org/privacy-policy)
- [menlogreenchallenge.org/terms-of-use](https://menlogreenchallenge.org/terms-of-use)

**Q: I have already done a lot to reduce my carbon footprint and there's not much else I can do.**

You'll be surprised. There are over 70 different actions you can take, and they are ranked from Easy to Challenging. For each action, the upfront cost, the carbon reduction, and annual dollar savings are shown. You can filter by level of difficulty (Easy actions tend to cost little or nothing), or by category like Energy Efficiency or Transportation. You can also filter to see only Renter Friendly actions. And all the changes you wish to make will probably happen over a 3-5 year period, so no need to budget for them all at once. The important thing is to make a plan and get started!

**Q: What do you do for those people with more than one home or congregation, that is, vacation homes and churches in different locales?**

The program is for each household. If you have more than one home, we recommend creating an account for each home and assigning things like miles traveled as they make sense (don't duplicate and put air or car travel miles in twice). If you have two congregations and one home, it would be best to pick one congregation to join. We may create the ability to join more than one in the future, but you can only have your points and actions count towards one!

**Q: Can more than one person in a household sign up for the app?**

Right now, the app is designed for household accounts, so people in the same household would share an account. However; next year, we will be adding the option for individuals to create and account.

## Q: How do I enter my electricity usage information in the Energy Profile if I have solar panels?

If you have solar panels on your home, entering your electricity is a bit more complicated. There are instructions on the energy profile; however, if you have any questions, reach out to your diocese contact or fill out the Admin Contact form on the site! We would be happy to help with this.

## Q: The only way we'll impact climate change is through major government policy changes and reducing industrial pollution. It's a waste of time to undertake "feel good" efforts like this.

There is actually a lot that everyone can do that can make a significant impact:

1. **The direct impact:** 40% of U.S. emissions, according to the EPA 2017 Emissions Inventory are from basic household activities (electricity use, home heating, transportation, food, and waste generation). If everyone took actions in these 5 ways: choosing 100% green electricity; buying an EV or bike, walking or using public transit; electrifying their home (efficient electric heating and appliances); reducing or offsetting 100% of air travel, and stopping eating red meat, it would wipe out nearly 40% of US emissions.
2. **The indirect impact:** The Episcopal Church has official standing in both the UNFCCC and We Are Still In (an organization of cities, states, corporations, tribes, and faith organizations, working toward meeting the U.S. Paris Agreement commitments), as well as a lobbying arm in Washington, D.C. Greening your own home in community with what will be millions of other Episcopalians is an effective advocacy tool.