

TOOLKIT

# Making the GreenShift

Simple steps to inspire climate action in your organization



# Contents

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<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Behaviors that make a difference .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Making change stick .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Your tools for change .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<hr/>	



# Introduction

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More and more businesses are realizing that sustainability can no longer be a choice – it must be an imperative, and it must start with them.

Climate pledges abound, but once supply chains and power supplies have been assessed, what is the next step?

In good news, employees are ready to help. And engaging internal teams around climate action does more than impact the planet. Successful organizations have reported improved employee satisfaction and retention, not to mention powerful stories to share with stakeholders.

# INTRODUCTION:

## So where to start?

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Right here!

This GreenShift toolkit, developed by Rare and tested at multiple companies in various industries, can be used at your organization or within your community. Any business, nonprofit, neighborhood group, faith organization or social club can take advantage of the methods and messages we've already tested to ensure high engagement and real behavior change.

### WHAT'S INSIDE:



#### Behaviors that make a difference

Check out three ways your group can change things up to significantly impact climate change.



#### Making change stick

Understand the science behind changing behavior – how to do it and how it works.



#### Your tools for change

Use our tried-and-true tactics for building behavior change into your sustainability program.

**READY TO BE INSPIRED?** The time is now, and the transition is easier than you'd expect!



# INTRODUCTION:

## The power of supporting a GreenShift

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### Ready for a GreenShift?



#### WHO IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR

If you're part of a corporate sustainability team, this toolkit is designed for you and your workplace. But the included tools and resources could work just as well for a neighborhood or faith-based community or any group interested in working together to improve their carbon footprint.



#### WHY USE IT

Your organization may already have a sustainability program, as well as initiatives focused on improving employee engagement. But it's amazing what can happen when efforts are combined and infused with a proven, behavior science-backed structure. This toolkit offers simple ways to step up your impact on employee satisfaction and sustainability.



#### HOW TO USE IT

Whether it's inspiration or simplification you're looking for, it's all here.

- **Strengthen what you've got:** Already have an employee sustainability program in place? No need to reinvent the wheel. Incorporate our tips and behavior change levers to build upon what you've got, supplementing or refining your program so it's even more robust and impactful.
- **Put it all together:** Starting from scratch, or from a place with disconnected initiatives and efforts? Get organized with our behavior science-based structure and foundational tips to develop a truly targeted and engaging program for all involved.





# Behaviors that make a difference

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When it comes to sustainability programs, the obvious answers aren't always the optimal ones. For example, recycling and composting are highly visible, but unfortunately have not shown to have a major impact on the climate. Rare has identified shifts that require similar effort, but offer a much greater reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

# BEHAVIORS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

## Focus on impact

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### Food

*Green your eating for easy impact*

It turns out that what's good for you is also good for our planet. Tweaking your diet to reduce meat intake, subbing in vitamin-rich veggies every so often, is all it takes.

Research shows that even cutting out a single burger or a couple pieces of chicken each week will make a measurable impact over your lifetime.

#### Did you know?

**If cattle were their own nation, they would be the 3rd largest greenhouse gas emitter, just behind China and the U.S.**



### Transportation

*The future of transportation is now*

There are now Electric Vehicles (EVs) to meet almost any need, tax credits to make them more affordable, and support infrastructure that is growing by the day. But even if you're not in the market for a car today, you can help!

Do your planet (and your health!) a favor by swapping out your shorter drives for a walk, bike ride or public transit experience.

#### Did you know?

**EVs don't only save you cash at the pump — they typically cost less to maintain than their gas guzzling counterparts.**



### Energy

*Join the renewable energy evolution*

Electricity isn't going anywhere, but our dependence on fossil fuels can. Today, there are options for switching to clean energy no matter where you live and whether you own or rent.

Take advantage of IRA tax credits to invest in rooftop or community solar or look into community aggregated renewable energy options.

#### Did you know?

**Solar and wind energy now provide the least expensive power for 67% of the world.**



# Making change stick

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We don't have to care or know a lot about something to change.

When it comes to behavior change, how we go about doing it matters. And it turns out that the science of human behavior gives us a lot to work with when trying to figure out what's going to work best to motivate people to change.



# MAKING CHANGE STICK:

## An introduction to behavioral science

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It probably comes as no surprise that people are complicated.

We have a broad spectrum of ways in which we process information and make decisions.

On one end of the spectrum, are our thoughtful, deliberate, calculating selves. This is where we take our time, weigh the pros and cons, and try to be as rational as possible. But in reality the majority of our decisions happen somewhere near the other end of the spectrum, which involves our quick-thinking, quick-acting, reactive, and autopilot selves.



**Weighing options,  
calculating costs  
and benefits**

**We often assume and  
like to think that our  
decisions are mostly  
made here.**



**Reacting  
automatically,  
quickly**

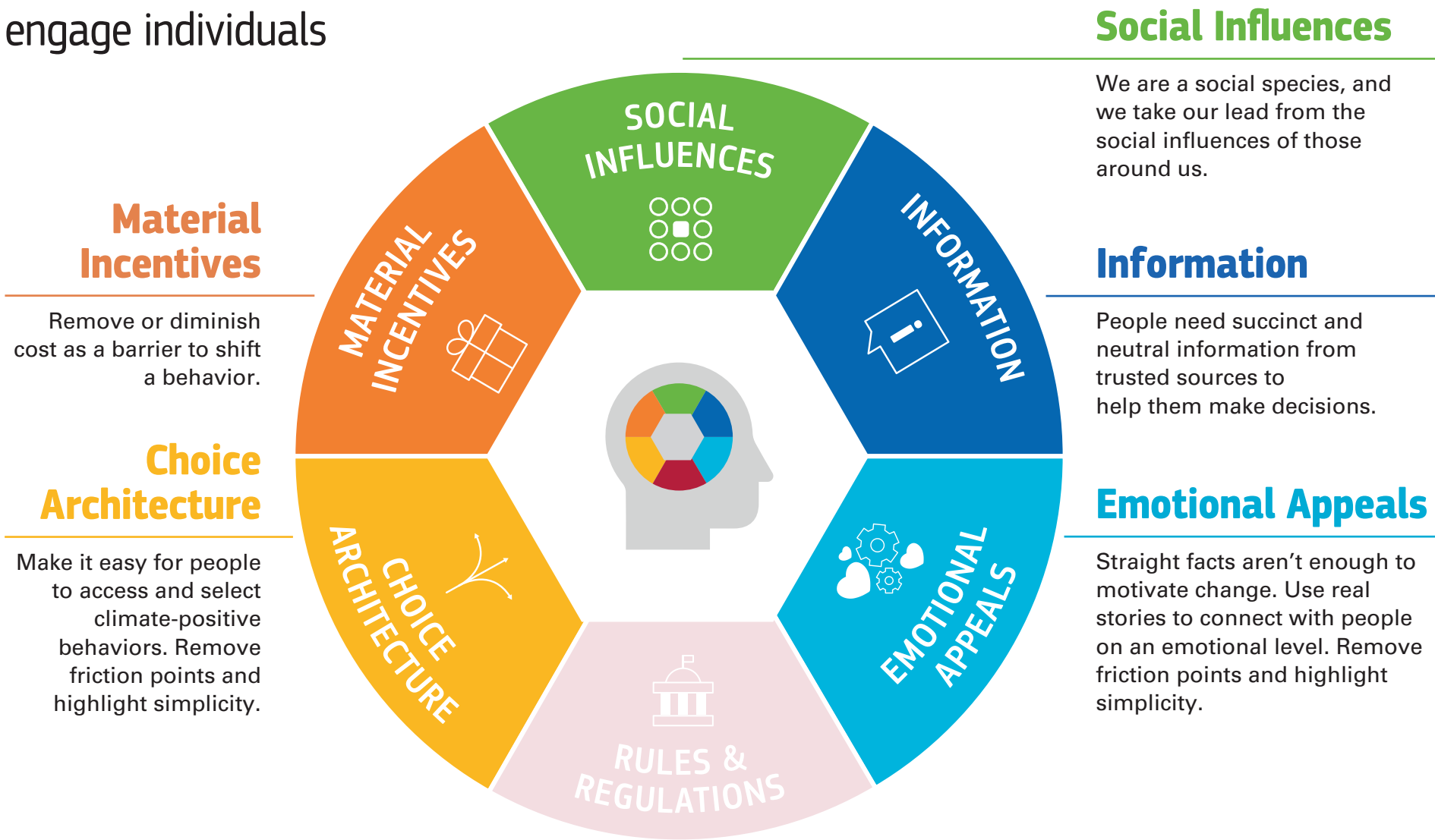
**But in reality, most  
of our decisions  
happen on this side  
of the spectrum.**

# MAKING CHANGE STICK:

## An introduction to behavioral science

Research shows that any program encouraging behavior change needs to engage individuals on multiple fronts.

Take employees on a journey toward new habits and patterns.



# MAKING CHANGE STICK:

## Turn interest into action

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Rare developed the GreenShift program by combining best practices from experts and research in behavioral science, employee engagement, and engagement marketing. The result is a holistic and enjoyable path to behavior change that keeps a few key tenets in mind:

### Normalize Climate Action:

What is the best predictor of climate action – Political orientation? Climate concern? Nope. By far, it's whether you believe that other people are already taking action and expecting you to do the same.

**We must make climate-friendly behavior as common, normal, and expected as possible.**

### The Messenger Matters:

Who do people listen to when it comes to making changes in their life? As expected, they are most likely to adopt behaviors that are emulated by those whose perspective they value.

**If someone you identify with or care about adopts climate friendly behavior, you will too.**

### Make it Simple:

When it comes to change, the first step is always the hardest one to take. Too many (or overly complicated) instructions will turn people off to action before they've even begun.

**Simplify the process and reduce their options to get people moving in the right direction.**



# Your tools for change

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The best program structure is the one that works for your team. Incorporate the topics and activities that make sense for your company, taking into consideration:

- **Optimal Timing:** What cadence of communication and activities fits best into current programs and outreach? Monthly? Quarterly?
- **Existing Programming:** Can you piggyback on an event or initiative that already exists, such as a “wellness week,” to efficiently increase impact?
- **Existing Resources:** Do you already have a Green Team you can work with to host events or challenges?
- **Existing Benefits:** Does your organization already offer benefits such as transit passes? Perhaps there’s a wellness stipend you could apply toward a plant-based cooking class?



# YOUR TOOLS FOR CHANGE:

## Structuring your program

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### IMPERATIVES FOR IMPACT



#### Make it Affordable

**Material incentives can be persuasive, and they may already exist!** Highlight organizational discounts, rebates and trial opportunities that are already being offered.

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#### Make it Eventful

**Activities are a great way to provide a resource (material incentive), create engagement (social influence), and share important information.** Think cooking classes, EV demo days, bike clubs and more!

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#### Make it Practical

**Help employees make good decisions by providing trusted and vetted information.** Share articles, YouTube videos, or even appropriate TikToks or Reels via email and social channels.

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#### Make it Social

**Nothing gets people going quite like other people (social influence).** Anoint peer-level ambassadors to encourage participation in programming, start threads on group chat channels and get executives to jump in first.

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#### Make it Challenging

**Encourage some competitive fun!** Incorporate individual or team challenges to incentivize participation in events, benefits and conversation around these green topics.

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# YOUR TOOLS FOR CHANGE:

## Structuring your program

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### BUILD ON WHAT YOU'VE GOT

When it comes to sustainability, even organizations that think they are starting from scratch rarely are. Take a look at the building blocks you already have to make quick progress toward the program you want.

- **Existing benefits and discounts:** Many companies already offer transit benefits, corporate discounts for EVs, bike purchases, group meals, and more. Highlight the green options you already have, and make your next team meal a veggie-forward one.
- **Existing green leaders:** Look to your employee groups for ambassadors and influencers. Sustainability team members can be tapped to model and normalize new behaviors and show them off in group settings or communication channels.
- **Existing sustainability programing:** Already have a celebration or group offsite coming up? Think about simple activities or speakers to incorporate, such as a community solar ambassador or vegan chef. Feature relevant benefits, such as free public transit to the event, or offer perks for those who show up in an EV.
- **Existing employee communications:** Does your organization actively use Slack or MS Teams? Use these existing channels to highlight green behavior, such as giving shoutouts to people who bike to work or initiating a vegetarian lunch challenge.





YOUR TOOLS FOR CHANGE

# Food





# FOOD: Eat More Veggies

## Simples changes with a big impact.

Did you know that two-thirds of Americans are already starting to reduce the amount of meat they eat? They've likely learned that eating less meat and more plant-rich food is a great way to help the planet, protect our animals, save some cash and improve our health at the same time.

Swapping in plant-based options doesn't have to mean giving up meat entirely. There are small steps you can take to make a difference.

## Best Practices:

- Incorporate an event that includes a subject matter expert for questions.
- Link to this helpful resource:
  - » [Harvard Medical School's "What is a plant-based diet and why should you try it?"](#)

## IMPERATIVES FOR IMPACT



### Make it Affordable

Does your health insurance broker provide healthy recipes, healthy food discounts or access to meal planning services and recipe generators such as [Ends + Stems](#) (free!)? Promote them!



### Make it Eventful

Invite an engaging food expert or local chef to present fun, delicious plant-forward meals to the group. Or do a meat-alternative taste-off.



### Make it Practical

Offer plant-based options when catering events. Ensure there are plant-based options in vending machines and in company cafeterias.



### Make it Social

Use your company's social messaging tool to encourage interaction on this topic: "Drop your favorite plant-based or plant-forward recipes in the chat!"



### Make it Challenging

Challenge participants to swap 1-2 meals a week for a plant-based option. Participants can log their meals and turn them in for a prize!

YOUR TOOLS FOR CHANGE

# Transportation



# TRANSPORTATION: Beyond the Car

## Put down your keys – it’s better for everyone

Changing how you get around is good for you and the planet. Consider mixing up your transportation – incorporating walking, biking and public transit into your lifestyle.

While healing the planet and cutting down on road congestion, you can reap the rewards in the form of your own mental and physical health. Leaving your car at home can even save you money by lowering fuel cost and maintenance needs.

### Best Practices:

- Incorporate an event that includes a subject matter expert for questions.
- Link to these helpful resources:
  - » [Research and link to your local public transit webpage](#)
  - » [League of American Bicyclists](#)

### IMPERATIVES FOR IMPACT



#### Make it Affordable

Are there public transit, bikeshare reimbursements or discounts available to employees? Be sure to draw attention to these benefits, or consider adding them.



#### Make it Eventful

Host a Lunch + Learn and invite a public transit official to talk about transit tips or a [League of American Bicyclists Educator](#) to speak about bike safety.



#### Make it Practical

Showcase your office’s bike racks or showers. Advertise public transit options and create carpool message boards.



#### Make it Social

Use your company’s social messaging tool to encourage interaction on this topic: “Do you commute via public transit or biking? Drop your tips + tricks in the chat here:”



#### Make it Challenging

Host a special day or month incentivizing your organization to bike to work or use less fuel. Form teams and/or incentivize with fun prizes!

# TRANSPORTATION: Switch to Electric

## The era of the EV is upon us

It's no wonder that EV sales are skyrocketing and options are exploding. EVs present a compelling solution to reduce our carbon footprint, and now they are more affordable than ever. Used EVs have entered the market, the Inflation Reduction Act is offering enticing tax credits, and of course, the fuel savings are significant.

For those looking to purchase or lease a vehicle, a new, used or leased EV is often the smartest option for the planet and your wallet.

### Best Practices:

- Incorporate an event that includes a subject matter expert for questions.
- Link to these helpful resources:
  - » [EnergySage Electric Vehicles](#)
  - » [EPA's EV Myths](#)

### IMPERATIVES FOR IMPACT



#### Make it Affordable

Does your company offer any EV automaker discounts? Do you have EV chargers on site? Promote these benefits! Highlight any federal, state, or local tax benefits or rebates for EVs.



#### Make it Eventful

Host a lunch + learn or webinar and invite a representative from [EnergySage](#) to speak about the benefits of going electric.



#### Make it Practical

Showcase your office's EV chargers. Put policies in place to encourage charger sharing. Incentivize those that rent EVs for work related travel.



#### Make it Social

Use your company's social messaging tool to encourage interaction on this topic: "Drop a 🗣️ if you own an electric car - write a quick review of the one you own and any tips for those considering the switch!"



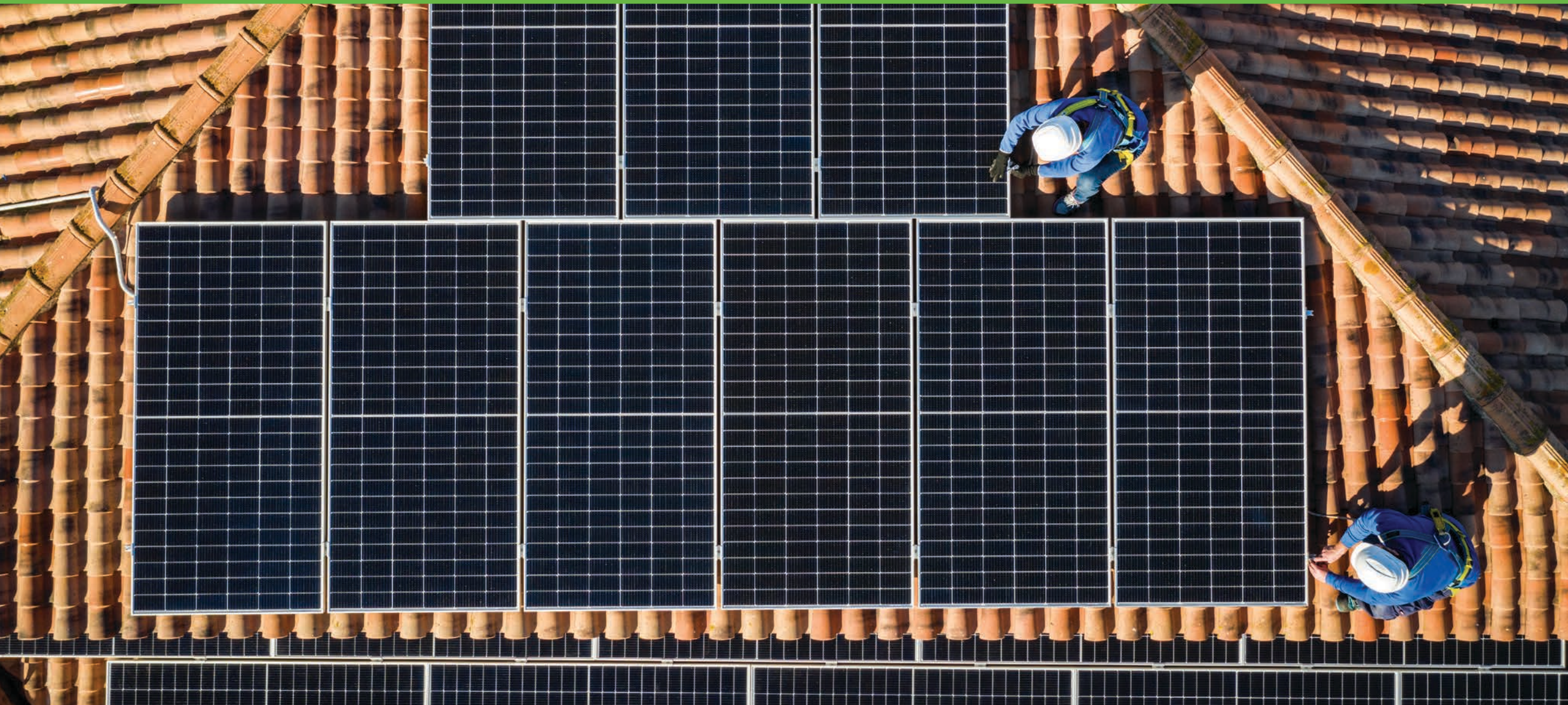
#### Make it Challenging

Offer incentives to anyone who shows up to the next work event in an EV. Enter those who test drive an EV into a raffle.



YOUR TOOLS FOR CHANGE

# Home





# HOME: Switch to Clean Energy

## Join the renewable energy evolution

Electricity isn't going anywhere, but our dependence on fossil fuels should. Home energy use accounts for roughly 20% of greenhouse gas emissions.

Today, there are options for switching to clean energy no matter where you live and whether you own or rent. Solar panels can be a surprisingly affordable option for homeowners who take advantage of IRA tax credits, but Community Solar or other aggregated renewable energy options are available to almost everyone. Learn how you can join the shift toward renewable, sustainable, and clean energy.

## Best Practices:

- Incorporate an event that includes a subject matter expert for questions.
- Link to these helpful resources:
  - » [EnergySage: Solar Power 101](#)
  - » [EnergySage: Community Solar Guide](#)
  - » [DOE Homeowner's Guide to Going Solar](#)

## IMPERATIVES FOR IMPACT



### Make it Affordable

Does your company offer any solar panel installation discounts? Promote these benefits!



### Make it Eventful

Host a Lunch + Learn and invite a representative from [EnergySage](#) to speak about the benefits of solar panels or joining a Community Solar project.



### Make it Practical

Showcase your office's solar panels or a local community solar project! Create opportunities for people to learn from their colleagues about navigating a solar panel purchase.



### Make it Social

Use your company's social messaging tool to encourage interaction on this topic: "Have you installed solar in your home? Drop your solar company's name or any tips you have for those interested in installation in the chat:"



### Make it Challenging

Host a challenge - raffle off prizes to employees that attend a company hosted renewable energy event or reward those that get a home solar quote or sign up for Community Solar!

# THANK YOU

Learn more and stay up-to-date on the latest in behavioral science by following  
Rare's Center for Behavior & the Environment (Be.Center).