# Surf Coast Shire Council pivots from carbon offsets to direct local emission cuts



Surf Coast Shire Council has announced a shift in its approach to addressing organisational greenhouse gas emissions, opting to move away from reliance on paid accredited carbon offsets towards more direct and measurable local emission reduction actions. This change aligns with what the Council describes as evolving best practice in climate emergency responses.

Cr Leon Walker, representing the Council, stated, "Best practice has changed and so must we." He further explained that the Council’s focus is now on reducing its operational emissions and supporting local carbon abatement projects that yield environmental, social, and economic benefits.

Effective from 30 June 2025, the Council will cease being a certified carbon neutral organisation under its Climate Emergency Response Plan 2021-2031. Funds previously allocated to purchasing non-local offsets will instead be redirected to initiatives aimed at reducing the Council’s own emissions and fostering local carbon abatement efforts.

Cr Walker emphasised the ongoing commitment to emission reduction, saying, "We remain as committed as ever to reducing organisational emissions and to tackling the climate emergency." He also detailed the Council’s target, aiming for zero emissions from all operations, excluding the Anglesea landfill, by 30 June 2030.

The Anglesea landfill constitutes the Council’s largest source of emissions, accounting for roughly 70 to 85 per cent of corporate emissions. The Council notes that because of the "legacy" emissions from organic material deposited over decades, emissions from the landfill cannot be fully eliminated for over 20 years. Therefore, the Council intends to focus its efforts on reducing emissions from other organisational sources and supporting projects that offer local environmental benefits.

Planned emission reduction measures include transitioning Council facilities from gas to electric power, converting the light fleet of Council vehicles to electric, and replacing appliances that use refrigerants with high global warming potential. Since 2021, the Council has already achieved a 41 per cent reduction in non-landfill corporate emissions through several initiatives such as switching Council operations to 100 per cent renewable electricity via the Victorian energy collaboration, installing solar power and battery storage systems, upgrading street lighting to LED, and introducing food and garden organics (FOGO) residential waste collection to divert organic materials from landfill.

Looking ahead, the Council plans to develop an organisational Emissions Reduction Strategy for consideration in 2026 following the completion of the Council Plan later this year. Cr Walker said, "We will continue to monitor and review what's going to deliver the best results so we can lead the way to achieve a true cleaner, greener future."

This information has been reported by Mirage News.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/News-and-media/Latest-news/Council-sets-zero-emissions-target-2030> - This article announces Surf Coast Shire Council's commitment to achieving zero emissions by 2030, aligning with their updated Climate Emergency Corporate Response Plan.
* <https://www.themercury.com.au/news/geelong/the-surf-coast-shire-has-set-a-deadline-to-achieve-zero-emissions-by-2030/news-story/50b7e1318160ded20f806fdab512f559> - This news piece reports on Surf Coast Shire's ambitious goal to achieve zero emissions by June 30, 2030, excluding the Anglesea landfill.
* <https://www.miragenews.com/new-climate-emergency-action-plan-aims-to-1093729/> - This article details Surf Coast Shire Council's new Climate Emergency Action Plan for 2023-2025, focusing on supporting community efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pursue renewable energy opportunities.
* <https://timesnewsgroup.com.au/surfcoasttimes/news/sustainable-council-facilities/> - This report discusses Surf Coast Shire Council's adoption of a policy to implement Environmentally Sustainable Design principles in its facilities, aiming to reduce emissions and operational costs.
* <https://timesnewsgroup.com.au/surfcoasttimes/news/shire-climate-emergency-response/> - This article highlights Surf Coast Shire's progress in addressing the climate emergency, including joining the Victorian Energy Collaboration to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 15.5%.
* <https://timesnewsgroup.com.au/surfcoasttimes/news/shire-adopts-new-climate-action-plan/> - This piece reports on Surf Coast Shire Council's adoption of a new climate action plan detailing objectives for the next two years, supporting its overall Climate Emergency response for 2021-2031.
* <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMihwFBVV95cUxNLWhhZ2ItZlVpTEJFUzlVaGVRQ01Tek9SMDhSNjFzZnVtRG91c3BFMXdXZ1k4SUg3aDZ4UEZFcG56S0NoempNeTV3NXpZdHQwX1h2a3h0ODVXcjNBbm9qM1B3bUxhQjRQZjF4cVgtb2JVWUUwOUV5NE4wRnhVTThYRFgxOWZjNFE?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data