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## **Local Climate Program Launches Million-Mile Carbon Offset Challenge**

**Rochester, NY — [April 13, 2026]** — A new Earth Month challenge is inviting residents across the Rochester region to turn everyday travel into climate action. Rochester Energy Efficiency and Weatherization (RENEW), an initiative of Rochester Area Community Foundation, has launched the Million-Mile Carbon Offset Challenge, inviting individuals and businesses to offset the emissions from flights, road trips, and daily commuting. Contributions to the [RENEW Climate Fund](#) support energy upgrades that make local homes safer, more comfortable, and more affordable to heat and cool.

A contribution of twenty dollars can offset the carbon emissions from a roundtrip flight between Rochester and Orlando or a road trip to Virginia Beach. Funds raised through the challenge help pay for insulation, efficient heating systems, and other improvements that reduce energy costs while cutting local greenhouse gas emissions.

“This is a chance to take action together,” said Elizabeth McDade, RENEW’s director. “The challenge is big, but the impact is bigger.”

Since launching in 2015, RENEW has helped upgrade 980 homes while reducing more than 12,000 tons of carbon emissions. More than 2,200 residents with an average household income of \$30,200 have received RENEW funding for home improvements, many of whom are elders or single heads of households.

The impact can be life-changing. [Rocco](#) is a homeowner living along Lake Ontario who was paying about \$300 per month in utilities in a poorly insulated home where a space heater provided the only warmth in part of the house. After working with RENEW, the home received insulation, a furnace, and a heat-pump water heater. His first utility bill following the improvements was just \$15.

For climate-conscious residents, the challenge offers a simple way to take action locally. One local resident, Debby Kornfeld, regularly offsets the carbon emissions from her flights



through the RENEW Climate Fund. “I’m going to help somebody stay warmer in the winter or cooler in the summer. That’s tangible,” says [Debby](#).

Community members can calculate and offset their travel emissions through RENEW’s online carbon calculator. Businesses and organizations are invited to participate by offsetting corporate travel.

To join the Million-Mile Challenge, visit [renew-roc.org/Challenge](https://renew-roc.org/Challenge).

### **About RENEW**

RENEW, an initiative of Rochester Area Community Foundation, helps residents make their homes more energy efficient, safer, and more comfortable. By braiding funding and leveraging expertise from a network of partners to implement energy-efficiency upgrades, RENEW empowers low-income homeowners while reducing our area's carbon footprint.