

~ Leaving a Better Environment to Future Generations ~

Aiming to become an Environmental City, “Ecopolis Itabashi”

An outline of Itabashi City’s Basic Environment Plan (Revised Edition)

Itabashi first created a comprehensive, long-term environmental preservation policy, entitled “Itabashi City’s Basic Environment Plan”, in March 1999. Following a review of the Plan, the local government has published a revised version, outlined below.

The policy addresses the realization of “Ecopolis Itabashi” , a city in tune with the environment, and its basic philosophy is summed up by the slogans: “Ecopolis Itabashi, an Environmental City Promoting Harmony with Nature” and “Ecopolis Itabashi, an Environmental City Sustained through Partnership” .

Itabashi’ s local government aims to take an active role in fulfilling the goals of the Environment Plan, not only by ensuring that all local policies seek to secure a pleasant environment, but also by encouraging the diverse sectors of the local community, including citizens, industry and administrative bodies, to cooperate in tackling environmental issues.

When deliberating revisions to the Plan, the Resources and Environment Council took into account public comment and feedback provided through environment workshops, making sure the public had a say in any changes.

1. What is Itabashi City’s Basic Environment Plan?

Itabashi City is blessed with a rich natural environment encompassing the Arakawa Riverside, Akatsuka greenbelt and patches of farmland in Tokumaru. Making sure that this abundance of nature is still in existence as our children turn into parents and grandparents is a wonderful goal. In order to achieve this goal, people living in Itabashi, industries located in the city and the administrative bodies that

operate here need to work together to reduce their impact on the environment, as well as create a society that will continue to strive towards the creation of a better environment for future generations.

The Basic Environment Plan announces the direction that citizens, industries and local government should take by 2008 to tackle environmental problems such as exhaust gases from vehicles, noise pollution, loss of green spaces and waterside areas, global warming and waste management.

2. What kind of environment is Itabashi aiming for?

The Plan describes 4 environmental goals for the city:

- ① “A city where the air is clean” : Making the air purer by reducing automobile exhaust gases
- ② “A city where living creatures are all around” : Creating an environment inhabited by other living things by protecting the green spaces and waterside areas around us
- ③ “A city which aims to prevent global warming” : Guarding against global warming by saving energy and resources
- ④ “A city which creates little trash” : Reducing the amount of garbage by composting kitchen waste and saying no to excess packaging and other throwaway items

3. The Role of Citizens, Industry and Local Government

Everyone in the city has a role to play and it is vital that residents, enterprises, institutions and local government do what they can individually, as well as in cooperation with each other, to achieve the four environmental goals outlined above.

<The Role of Citizens>

- Take an interest in the environment and make an effort to learn more about and deepen your understanding of green issues
- Make an effort to reduce the environmental load of activities in your daily life

- Work towards creating a pleasant environment through cooperation with other global citizens

<The Role of Industry>

- Take measures necessary to protect the environment and prevent pollution caused by industrial activity
- Work to keep the environmental load of every stage of production, distribution, marketing, use and disposal of manufactured goods to a minimum
- Endeavor to make public any information related to the environment
- As a member of the local community, take an active part in environmental conservation efforts

<The Role of Local Government>

- Keeping in mind the particular characteristics of the city, comprehensively and systematically carry out policies that promote the creation and preservation of a pleasant environment
- Endeavor to pioneer respect for the environment through all the policies and daily business activities of the local government
- Work on providing the necessary support and encouragement to citizens and industries in their efforts to create and preserve a pleasant environment
- Actively cooperate with national, metropolitan, local or other concerned bodies on problems that require a broader approach
- Endeavor to make public any information regarding environmental conditions or policies that have an impact on the environment, etc.

4. Measures to Fight Global Warming

The theme of the revised Basic Environment Plan is “Measures to Fight Global Warming” and it was decided that action over the next four years should focus particularly on prevention of this phenomenon.

◇ **How global warming works and its implications (see diagram below)**

The atmosphere contains various “greenhouse gases” (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, fluoron gas etc.) that readily absorb heat and keep the earth at the ideal temperature for human and animal life.

However, with growing consumption of fossil fuels such as coal and oil, the amount of these greenhouse gases discharged into the atmosphere has also increased, making the earth’s temperature slowly rise (this process is called “global warming”).

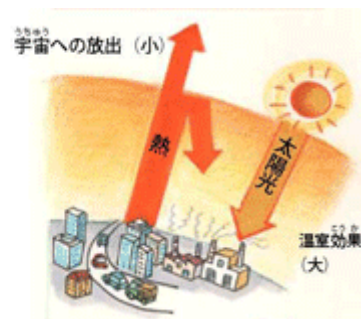
If global temperatures continue to go up in this way, scientists worry that there will be serious effects such as a shortage of agricultural produce and an increase in the spread of infectious diseases.

Correct level of greenhouse gas



Air Temperature: 15°C

Excess of greenhouse gas



Temperature Increase: Global Warming

(Taken from the Ministry of the Environment’s homepage)

◇ **International Goals**

In February 2005, Japan, along with a number of other nations, signed the Kyoto Protocol, an international agreement aiming to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Japan has to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 6% compared with 1990 levels to comply with the accord.

6. Working together to prevent global warming

Since, of all the greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide (CO₂) is present in the greatest amount, the fastest way to stop global warming is to reduce the amount of CO₂ we produce.

The problem is that CO₂ emission is very closely related to our daily lives. For example, the electricity we use at home, school and in our office buildings is made by burning coal and oil, a process that releases CO₂. Using gas to heat things at home or in factories also produces CO₂. In other words, trying to suddenly cut down on CO₂ emissions in our daily life is extremely difficult. However, just because it's difficult doesn't mean we should sit back and do nothing. If you think about the serious effects of global warming, any small lifestyle changes we can make that reduce CO₂ levels are worth it.

The picture below gives some examples of things we can all do to help cut down on CO₂ and prevent global warming, such as turning off lights when you leave a room, reducing the amount of trash you put out (garbage trucks release CO₂, and burning the trash releases still more), planting trees (plants breathe CO₂ and help to get rid of it). If we all do our bit for the environment at home, school and work, our actions will have an effect!

7. Things you can do at school or home to help prevent global warming

Let's think about what we can do as individuals to reduce the amount of CO₂ live in a way that improves Itabashi's environment and the planet as a whole!

◇ Things you can do at home

