

Estimating emissions reductions for council pledges

Council pledges may encompass both qualitative and quantitative dimensions, and may be submitted by an individual council, or on behalf of a group of councils in relation to their collective actions.

It is not expected that every action described as part of a council pledge will be accompanied by an estimate of emissions reductions.

Where it is possible to estimate greenhouse gas emissions reductions, these will help to illustrate council's contributions towards Victoria's emissions reduction targets.

This guidance material will continue to be updated with input and feedback from councils.

Guidance for emissions reduction estimates

(1) Focus on corporate emissions

For the purpose of a council pledge, any emissions reduction estimates should focus on a council's corporate operations.

This may include:

- emissions related to the consumption of energy from the Victorian electricity grid to power offices, municipal facilities, and street lighting (and their reduction through improvements to energy efficiency and / or investments in renewable energy);
- combustion of natural gas or fuel used in vehicles (and their reduction by switching to renewable energy sources or introducing electric vehicles into council fleets and municipal operations); or
- emissions associated with the management of waste processing facilities (and their reduction by diverting organic waste from landfill or capturing landfill gases for other uses).

(2) Focus on the 2021-2025 period

For the purpose of a council pledge, any emissions reduction estimates should focus on the period from **1 January 2021 to 31 December 2025** to align with the five-year interim pledge period defined in the *Climate Change Act 2017*.

While actions that address emissions across the local community (often called community-scale emissions) can be included within a council pledge, it is not necessary to include estimates of these emissions reductions.

(3) Calculating emissions reduction estimates

Some councils will have readily available data that can be used to estimate emissions reductions that are expected to result from any actions they are taking to reduce emissions. Other councils may have more limited capacity to develop such estimates.

Estimating emissions reductions is a technical undertaking, and there is a range of guidance material that may help to develop emissions reduction estimates.

As a starting point, the Sustainability Victoria Local Government Energy Saver program developed a series of webinars about reporting greenhouse gas emissions (<https://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/Grants-and-funding/Local-Government-energy-saver-program>).