

# Why Should You Climate Strike On Friday, September 27?

## Let us count the ways.

By Bill McKibben  
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A year ago, inspired by Swedish schoolgirl Greta Thunberg, young people around the world began climate striking—walking out of school for a few hours on Fridays to demand action against the global warming that darkens their future. In May, when 1.4 million kids around the world walked out of school, they asked for adults to join them next time. That next time is September 20 (in Canada September 27), and it is shaping up to be the biggest day of climate action in the planet’s history. Everyone from big trade unions to a thousand workers at the Amazon headquarters, and from college kids to senior citizens, are setting the day aside to rally in their cities and towns for faster action from our governments and industries.

***Join other Vancouver Unitarians under our banner at the Vancouver Global Strike for Climate on Sept. 27 at 1:30pm at City Hall - 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Cambie Street.***

But it will only be a success on the scale we need if lots of people who aren’t the regular suspects join in. Many people, of course, can’t do without a day’s pay or work for bosses who would fire them if they missed work. So, it really matters that those of us with the freedom to rally do so. Since I published the first book for a general audience on climate change 30 years ago this month, I’ve had lots of time to think about the various ways to move people to action. Let me offer a few:

§ **Strike**, because the people who did the least to cause this crisis suffer first and worst—the people losing their farms to deserts and watching their islands sink beneath the waves aren’t the ones who burned the coal and gas and oil.

§ **Strike**, because coral reefs are so gloriously beautiful and complex—and so vulnerable.

§ **Strike**, because sun and wind are now the cheapest way to generate power around the world—if we could match the political power of the fossil fuel industry we could make fast progress.

§ **Strike**, because we’ve already lost half the animals on the planet since 1970—the earth is a lonelier place.

§ **Strike**, because our governments move with such painful slowness, treating climate change as, at worst, one problem on a long list.

§ **Strike**, because this could be a great opportunity—and maybe the last opportunity—to transform our society towards justice and towards joy. Green New Deals have been proposed around the world; they are a way forward.

§ **Strike**, because forests now seem like fires waiting to happen.

§ **Strike**, because young people have asked us to. In a well-ordered society, when kids make a reasonable request their elders should say yes—in this case with real pride and hope that the next generations are standing up for what matters.

§ **Strike**, because every generation faces some great crisis, and this is ours.

§ **Strike**, because half the children in New Delhi have irreversible lung damage simply from breathing the air.

§ **Strike**, because Exxon and the rest knew all about global warming in the 1980s, and then lied so they could keep cashing in.

§ **Strike**, because what we do this decade will matter for hundreds of thousands of years.

§ **Strike**, because the temperature has hit 129 degrees F (or 54 degrees Celsius) in big cities in recent summers. The human body can survive that, but only for a few hours.

§ **Strike**, because do we want to be the first generations to leave the planet in worse shape?

§ **Strike**, because batteries are ever cheaper—we can now store sunshine at night, and wind for a calm day.

§ **Strike**, because the UN estimates unchecked climate change could create a billion refugees this century.

§ **Strike**, because the big banks continue to lend hundreds of billions to the fossil fuel industry—people are literally trying to get rich off the destruction of the planet.

§ **Strike**, because what animal fouls its own nest?

§ **Strike**, because indigenous people around the world are trying to protect their rightful land from the coal and oil companies—and in the process protect all of us.

§ **Strike**, because every time they cut down a patch of rain forest to grow some more cows, the climate math gets harder.

§ **Strike**, because science is real, because physics exists, because chemistry matters.

§ **Strike**, so you can look your grandchild—or anyone else's—in the eye.

§ **Strike**, because the world we were given is still so sweet.

*Bill McKibben is the founder of climate change campaign 350.org, a scholar in residence at Middlebury College, and the author of the new book *Falter: Has the Human Game Begun to Play Itself Out?*.*

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## **RECORD PARTICIPATION IN SEPT 20 GLOBAL CLIMATE STRIKES**

“Some 250,000 people gathered in New York City... The count for London and Melbourne was about 100,000. Dublin had 25,000, and there were some 270,000 in Berlin with over a million across Germany... In total, some four million people in 150 countries participated.” (Vancouver Sun)

“Trade unions representing hundreds of millions of people around the world mobilised in support, employees left their workplaces, doctors and nurses marched and workers at firms like Amazon, Google and Facebook walked out to join the climate strikes.” (The Guardian)

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at the Vancouver Global Strike for Climate  
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