



Contra Costa County Climate Leaders Program

DECEMBER ISSUE

A PROJECT OF GENERATION GREEN - A 501(c)3 NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Contra Costa County Climate Leaders (4CL) Program

Contact Us!

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Visit us on the Web!

www.cccclimateleaders.org

You'll find case studies, best practices, issues of the month, workshop materials, archived newsletters and updates on local government activities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Contra Costa County!

Funding



Bay Area Funds from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) At this week's meeting, MTC announced that \$80 million was designated for a first-in-the-nation regional grants program that will fight climate change by funding innovative strategies to reduce driving. Thanks to advocates and outspoken organizations, MTC added an additional \$28 million for the program that was otherwise going to go to freeway ramp meters. Let us picture thousands of kids in every county walking and biking to school instead of parents driving them, thanks to Safe Routes to Schools programs reaching 400 schools across the Bay Area. Picture buses zooming through timed traffic lights thanks to new technology that will prioritize transit over cars in real-time. Picture cities making less driving more attractive through free transit passes, more car-sharing, and parking policies that support truly walkable communities. For more, Transform is watching this issue closely <http://www.transformca.org/> or contact MTC www.mtc.ca.gov



Local City News

Pittsburg Completes Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory! The main sources of GHG emissions in Pittsburg are industrial processes, trucks & automobiles, home & business, and waste. Learn more about Pittsburg's Climate Action program http://www.contracostatimes.com/environment/ci_13927644?nclick_check=1 and download the greenhouse gas inventory report at: <http://www.ci.pittsburg.ca.us/Pittsburg/Government/Departments/Public+Works/Climate+Action+Home.htm>. The next milestone for the city is the creation of a Climate Action Plan in early 2010. To invite community participation, the city has launched the city's new "Living Green" Facebook page (see <http://www.facebook.com/PittsburgLivingGreen>). <http://mail.ci.pittsburg.ca.us/extranet/PressReleases/City%20eNews%20Release:%20%20Friday,%20November%2020,%202009.EML?Cmd=open>

New Power Plant Plans in Contra Costa PG&E is requesting state approval for 2 natural gas-powered plants in Antioch and Oakley. The utility maintains that it needs the 1,550 megawatts of power that the plants will produce to meet future energy demands as well as to have reliable power 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Some question the need for more power and encourage PG&E to focus on increasing energy through renewable sources. Opponents of the project also fear that CCC houses more than its share of pollution and related health issues due to the 14 power plants already in operation in the county. Contra Costa County produces more megawatts of power than the other eight Bay Area counties combined.

http://www.businesswire.com/portal/site/home/permalink/?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20091207005427&newsLang=en

Other City News



The 4CL Program offers:

Quarterly workshops for education and networking opportunities.

Monthly newsletters for environmental updates, pertinent local information, and interesting upcoming events.

Ongoing website containing the CCC city environmental developments, archived newsletters, and other educational resources
www.cccclimateleaders.org.

The City of San Mateo is green and SMART! The SMART (San Mateo Action Responsible Together) campaign promotes community participation and behavior changes to address climate change through recycling and energy/water conservation. Community involvement is needed to meet the city's sustainability goals. SMART has won several awards, including a national award from the City-County Communications and Marketing Association in the Go-Green Energy Conservation Category. Learn more about the program and their continued efforts at <http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/smart>

Alameda County is drafting their community Climate Action Plan (CAP) The CAP will contain objectives, measures and actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from activities within the community such as: (1) Transportation choices (e.g. improving bicycle infrastructure and bus links) (2) Water conservation (e.g. efficient appliances and use of rainwater) (3) Waste diversion (e.g. improving recycling and composting services) (4) Building and public realm energy use (e.g. energy efficiency retrofits) and (5) Green infrastructure (e.g. expanding the urban forest). See http://www.co.alameda.ca.us/cda/planning/climate_action_plan.htm

Dallas Police Department Reduces Emissions without Sacrifice Police officers in Dallas tend to leave their vehicles idling for 25-50% of a typical 8 hour shift. Currently, the vehicle must be left running in order to power the police car equipment (lights, radio, laptop, camera, etc). With new "idle reduction technology", the cruiser's electrical load will be sufficiently powered and eliminate the need to keep the cars idling. The technology is estimated to reduce the current idle time by 75-80%. Learn more: http://www.dallascityhall.com/pdf/pio/DallasDeliversCityHallHighlights_0809.pdf



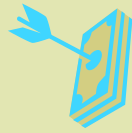
Legislation

CA Releases Regulatory Proposal for Multi-Sector Cap-and-Trade System The preliminary rules for CA's cap-and-trade system were unveiled on Nov. 24th. In effect in 2012, this program is in response to A.B. 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 which requires CA to curb GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, about 15% lower than 2006 levels. The program would apply to the state's largest sources of GHG covering over 600 facilities from different industries. CA's program will be market-based and over the years will implement declining emissions caps for carbon dioxide, methane, and other GHG. <http://arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/capandtrade.htm>

EPA files Endangerment finding: On December 7, 2009, the Administrator signed two distinct findings under the federal Clean Air Act: (1) Green house gases threaten the public health and welfare of current & future generations. (2) motor vehicles contribute to the GHG pollution which threatens public health. This is a pre-requisite to future legislation and is likely to spur members of Congress to enact their own bills. <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/endangerment.html>
<http://washingtonindependent.com/39428/epa-will-propose-greenhouse-gas-regulation-today>

Copenhagen Climate Talks In Progress (December 7th-18th) Negotiators from around the world are convening in Copenhagen in hopes of international accord to curb GHG emissions. President Obama has pledged to reduce U.S. emissions "in the range" of 17% of the 2005 levels by the year 2020, dependent upon congressional support. With the U.S. having stated targets, many are hopeful that the Copenhagen conference will get the 190 nations on the right track for emission reductions. See more: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/26/us/politics/26climate.html>.

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Impacts

CalAdapt- Visualizing Climate Change Risk and Adaptation Options in CA The state partnered with Google to create an interactive tool as a preparation mechanism for Californians and climate change. The program, CalAdapt, shows Californians how warming temperatures, rising sea levels, precipitation shifts and more frequent, intense wildfires impact their environment. Visit <http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/visualization/> for the full-length tour, narrated by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Projections for U.S. Coastal Flooding Seem Worse than Previously Expected The melting of ice sheets from Greenland and Antarctica will contribute to a much sharper rise in sea levels than previously estimated, according to the environmental group Clean Air-Cool Planet. Using conclusions based on research out of ice melting studies at Utrecht University in the Netherlands, the group said climate change will cause sea levels to rise 39 inches by 2100; previous U.N. estimates set this figure at a maximum of 23 inches. This will dramatically affect U.S. coastlines.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idUSTRE5AI57O20091119>

Governments Not Preparing for the Health Effects of Climate Change Climate change will make Americans more vulnerable to diseases, disasters and heat waves, but governments have done little to plan for the added burden on the health system, according to a new study by a nonprofit group, Trust for America's Health. The report states that a warming planet is likely to leave more people sick. The biggest fears for Americans are heat waves, more "extreme weather events", more widespread diseases, and increased air pollution. Experts involved with the study said that these threats might be reduced if the federal government adopts a cap on GHG emissions but it is too late to stop the changes altogether because some damage has already been done. The study recommends that the government act now in order to prevent and minimize these effects. Possible strategies include planting more trees to cool urban air and stocking extra medicinal supplies for diseases that might appear in new areas.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/26/AR2009102602402.html>



Economics

President Obama Continues to Push for Green Job Creation as a Recession Solution While the economy is now technically growing, it does not seem as if the pace of growth will be sufficiently high enough to pull the 15.4 million unemployed workers back into employment. The American Recovery act is estimated to have created or saved between 600,000 and 1.6 million jobs but millions more are still in need. President Obama's job creation plan focused on small businesses, American infrastructure, and energy efficiency and clean energy investments. See the full speech at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-job-creation-and-economic-growth>



Upcoming events

Local Environmental Events: December 2009/January 2010

New Legislation for water in California TeleBriefing *December 15th, Phone-in.* In this one-hour TeleBriefing, the California State Assembly's expert on water resource law and policy, the attorney member of the State Water Resources Control Board, and a prominent environmental lawyer in private practice will discuss the implications of the recent major policy development. Dial in to hear about the immediate and future effects of the new legislation passed by the Governor on November 12th. More information is available at: <http://www.lawseminars.com/detail.php?SeminarCode=09CAWATB>

Solar Power Generation USA *January 20-21, 2010; Las Vegas.* Government officials, utilities, developers and investors will share their expertise in CSP, CPV and large-scale PV, transmission, policy and technology developments. More information: <http://www.solarpowercongress.com>

Bay Area Environmental Education Resource Fair *January 23rd, San Rafael.* Discover the latest in classroom materials, environmental education programs, and field trip sites. Each year the BAEER Fair presents workshops and exhibits that represent over 120 resources, including conservation & stewardship, science, living history, art, and more. Join in the fun and attend workshops introducing conservation and wildlife education, school gardens, and strategies for fostering environmental awareness. For more information about the workshops offered at this year's BAEER Fair, please visit <http://www.baerfair.org>.

EPA Webinar on Green Power Purchasing Aggregations *January 28, webinar.* EPA's Green Power Partnership will host a webinar on aggregating demand for green power. Through the aggregation of power purchases, buying groups are able to purchase electricity and green power at reduced rates by lowering transaction costs and leveraging their purchasing power. Learn about the necessary steps, benefits, strategies and potential hurdles. To register, visit <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/869620779>

New Partners for Smart Growth Conference *February 4-6th, 2010; Seattle, Washington.* The conference features 95 sessions and more than 300 speakers addressing smart growth topics from climate-positive planning to walkable urban living and storm water management. Case studies of smart growth initiatives will be highlighted. Training sessions on greenhouse gas measurement, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and other topics will be offered. For more information visit: <http://www.newpartners.org>.

Other

ICLEI Announces New Sustainability Planning Toolkit for U.S. Cities & Counties
With this toolkit, jurisdictions of all sizes can now follow a proven, straightforward, and flexible process to develop a long-term sustainability plan -- or update an existing plan -- that brings together individual environmental, economic, and social initiatives under one holistic vision. You will find guidance on how to structure your planning process, what types of strategies and measures to include in your plan, step-by-step guidelines to achieve each of the Five Milestones for Sustainability, best-practice examples, checklists, templates, and guidelines for organizing a team to develop the plan. The full toolkit is accessible only to ICLEI members, but there are valuable free resources available to everyone at <http://www.icleiusa.org/sustainabilitytoolkit>.



Contra Costa County Climate Leaders Program is now on Facebook! Become our fan at: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Contra-Costa-County-Climate-Leaders-Program/172718714392?ref=ts>.