



Contra Costa County Climate Leaders Program

NOVEMBER 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



Federal Loans for Solar Energy Vice President Biden announced a Federal program for home solar installation. Similar to the Berkeley FIRST program, participants may take out loans at a fixed rate and pay for the investment over a period of time. In this manner, solar panel installation projects can become feasible for families who would be unable to afford the upfront costs of such projects. See the article at:

http://www.contracostatimes.com/green-living/ci_13604050



Local City News

Pleasant Hill Encourages Projects to Reduce Waste Pleasant Hill is offering grant money to non-profit groups who are promoting recycling and composting in the city. Awards will range from \$500 to \$2,500 and must address waste reduction, reuse, recycling or composting. Through the Pleasant Hill Civic Action Commission, \$15,000 will be granted to various groups to encourage creative approaches to reducing waste in Pleasant Hill. See the article: http://www.contracostatimes.com/green-living/ci_13498323

Waste Makes Fuel in Livermore On November 2nd, the Altamont Landfill opened the world's largest plant that converts landfill gas to liquefied natural gas. The plant will take landfill-generated methane gas and turn it into liquefied natural gas to fuel garbage collection trucks. Currently, only one or two other plants on Earth employ a similar process. Statewide, 495 trucks now are being supplied with garbage fuel from the new facility; 49 of those trucks are in the Bay Area. Read more at:

http://www.contracostatimes.com/environment/ci_13696048

Green Cities California Explore the website www.greencitiescalifornia.org to learn about best practices from cities around CA. The website is dedicated to sharing best practices for sustainable public policy across the state. You will find easily accessible, ground breaking environmental policies that you can immediately download and modify for your jurisdiction.

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.

Ciclovía in LA? Ciclovía is an idea that was born 30 years ago in Colombia. Every Sunday, the city was shut down to all cars and motor vehicles allowing hundreds of thousands of cyclists to take to the streets. CicLAvia is a group of advocates hoping to recreate this idea in LA. By holding events which keep residents local on the weekend, supporters hope to revitalize the local economy. Also, by encouraging and providing safe opportunities for bicycling, supporters hope to get residents and children more active and healthy, reducing the current obesity rates.

<http://www.latimes.com/theguide/events-and-festivals/la-et-guidefeature5-2009nov05.0.730238.story>

Major City Toxicity Study by Forbes Atlanta is named the most toxic big city in the United States. Las Vegas is named the least toxic. This recent Forbes study based rankings on the number of Superfund sites in the principal city, number of facilities that release toxic chemicals, amount of toxic chemicals released in the area and air quality ranking. Contrary to popular belief, crowded urban areas don't necessarily create more pollution. Often the most pollution releasing facilities are located outside of the main city limits. The major metropolitan area studies revealed Los Angeles in the top 10 most toxic while Sacramento, San Jose and Riverside were in the top 10 least toxic. <http://www.forbes.com/2009/11/02/toxic-cities-pollution-lifestyle-real-estate-toxic-cities.html>

Clean Coal Plants in the Works BP and GE are working to integrate carbon sequestration and gasification into the coal power plant process for commercial use. These processes are predicted to reduce the CO2 emissions by up to 90%. Several of these clean coal plants are in the process of being completed. The first will be located in Bakersfield, CA.

<http://www.wbcd.org/plugins/DocSearch/details.asp?type=DocDet&ObjectId=MzY0MDI>



Legislation

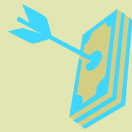
TV Energy Efficiency Laws Stalled By submitting 91 pages worth of comments at the end of the 45 day comment period, the Consumer Electronics Association, businesses and individuals succeeded in delaying the passage of energy efficiency standards for televisions. Adequate assessment must be given to the comments before the passage of the standards. The recommended criteria would require a 30% reduction of energy usage by 2011. That reduction would increase to 50% by 2013. While many TVs already for sale would pass the 2013 requirements, opponents of the legislation fear that the law will stifle economic advancement.

http://www.mercurynews.com/bay-area-news/ci_13713307?source=rss

CA Water Reform Legislation CA water reform has been an uncomfortable topic for Californians for many years. Finally, through bipartisan agreement, legislation has been decided upon. Water conservation, delta restoration and dam projects are all included in this legislation. Voters will face this issue on the November ballots. See more details in the following article:

http://www.contracostatimes.com/environment/ci_13711310

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Impacts

Climate Success Influenced by Many Variables Political, social, and economic factors will play a role in determining the success of a population facing climate change. Societies that are reasonably climate-fit can become climate-weak because of poor government decisions. Without focus and preparation for the changes that are happening, some populations will be affected more negatively than those who are making resiliency plans to survive the coming years. <http://e360.yale.edu/content/feature.msp?id=2205>

Changing Human Behavior When trying to change the energy consumption of households, the best method to producing actual behavioral change was achieved through comparison with other neighbors. When an individual was told that his/her energy usage exceeded that of the household next door, a more dramatic change in behavior was seen. See the article at: <http://e360.yale.edu/content/feature.msp?id=2141>

Vulnerable Countries Fight for Survival Currently, those displaced by sea level rises, droughts or other effects of climate change do not qualify for U.N. refugee status. President Nasheed, a leading voice on global warming from the more vulnerable nations said, "We are not responsible for the hundreds of years of carbon emissions, which are cooking the planet, but the dangers climate change poses to our countries means that this crisis can no longer be considered somebody else's problem." A group of 11 nations who are particularly vulnerable have created the V11 group to fight the developed world emissions and call for a legal human rights framework. Together they adopted a declaration for a low-carbon future to be presented at the U.N. climate-change summit in Copenhagen, Denmark. http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2009/11/11/Vulnerable-nations-for-climate-change/UPI-79671257972252/

Economics



Stephen Colber and Al Gore Debate With the current recession, can the US afford a cap and trade program for emissions? What options are best considering the impending need and the economic state of the country? Stephen Colber and Al Gore participate in a comedic sketch of what we should do during these times of change and unfortunate circumstances. 5 min video http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/11/05/stephen-colbert-and-al-go_n_346770.html

Economists See Climate Change as a Threat Surveys were sent to 289 economists who had published climate-related studies in the top 25 economics journals in the past 15 years. 144 economists responded, and 75% agreed or strongly agreed on the "value" of greenhouse-gas controls. 91.6% wanted a tax or "cap and trade" system, where polluters buy and sell emission permits, instead of regulation, to cut greenhouse gases. 84% agreed the effects of global warming "create significant risks" to the economy, particularly to agriculture, fishing, insurance and health. See the full article at http://www.usatoday.com/tech/science/environment/2009-11-03-economist-climate_N.htm.



Upcoming events

Local Environmental Events: November/December 2009

SPUR Emerald City *November 17th, San Francisco.* An evening forum dedicated to the discussion of manufacturing and industrial production in the US. Professor Joan Fitzgerald, Director of the Law, Policy and Society Program at Northeastern University, will preview her book *Emerald Cities: Urban Sustainability and Economic Development* which will be published in January 2010. See more information at http://www.spur.org/events/calendar/emerald_cities

Build It Green Bay Area Public Agency Council (BA-PAC) meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 19, 2009 from 9:00am-3:00pm at the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR) in San Francisco, www.builditgreenevents.org

Sustainable Industries Green Business Economics Forum, *November 19th, San Francisco* www.sustainableindustries.com

CHP: A Strategy to Meet Sustainable Community Planning Goals *November 19th, Webinar.* EPA's Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Partnership and Local Climate and Energy Program will host this webinar addressing the opportunities and challenges of implementing CHP as part of local community sustainability plans. You will see why CHP makes sense for the local community, learn about the applications best suited for CHP, and review considerations that need to be addressed. To participate in this Webinar, please fill out an online registration form at: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/174550778>. A background document on CHP for Local Governments is available at: http://epa.gov/cleanenergy/documents/7.3_combinedheatpower.pdf

Federal Climate Policy 101 *December 8th, Webinar.* Join ICLEI in the first of a series of webinars dedicated to what is happening in Washington DC with the federal climate legislation. Learn what this legislation will mean for local governments. Register and learn more at <http://www.icleiusa.org/news-events/federal-climate-policy-101-webinar>.

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

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 stormwater 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

SF Environmental Champion Appointed to Head EPA's Region 9 The Obama administration appointed Jared Blumenfeld, Director of the San Francisco Department of the Environment, to serve as the Regional Administrator (RA) of EPA's Region 9 San Francisco office. Jared will be one of 10 presidentially appointed regional administrators in the United States. The region 9 office covers: CA, AZ, NV, HI, and the Pacific Islands. Each regional office is tasked to do the work and implement policy for the Federal USEPA. Mr. Blumenfeld has championed progressive green policies at the local city level; see San Francisco's Program at <http://www.sfenvironment.org>.