



Contra Costa County Climate Leaders Program

APRIL 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!



Become our fan at:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Contra-Costa-County-Climate-Leaders-Program/172718714392?ref=ts>

Funding



Residential Energy Financing

Contra Costa County Climate Leaders held a successful Residential Energy Financing workshop on April 1st. Visit our website for more information on the workshop or to view the presentations on California First, PACE and energy efficiency financing. These programs allow the cost of energy upgrades to be paid through property taxes over next 20 years...with no money down! Cities are encouraged to use the City of Richmond's resolution templates to pass your own city resolution—and to write a resolution to the County urging their participation in California First!

<http://www.cccclimateleaders.org/text/workshops.html>



Local City News

The County Connection Using Eco-Warrior Vehicles!

County Connection is replacing 40 of its 131 buses with eco-warrior vehicles. These buses are built locally by a Hayward-based company, utilize particulate filtration devices to reduce emissions by 85%, and have aluminum bodies and panels which are 100% recyclable. Nine of the new buses will be hybrids, allowing for better fuel savings and lower CO₂ emissions. County Connection will unveil its hybrid buses April 24th at Walnut Creek's Civic Park.

The Oakland Airport Achieves LEED NC Silver

Our local Oakland Airport became the first passenger terminal in the United States to achieve the LEED NC Silver certification for their extension and renovation project of Terminal 2. The Airport was congratulated for their leadership in creating green jobs, saving energy costs, and providing a healthier environment for the airport's workers and visitors. Green design and construction features include:

- Energy efficiency measures that exceed California energy standards by 25% and reduce carbon emissions by an estimated 211 tons per year.
- Diversion from landfills of more than 80% of jobsite waste, by recycling or reusing scrap drywall, metal, plywood, carpet, and other materials.
- Water conservation measures yielding 24% less water use than in a similar conventional building.
- Selection of paint, carpet, glue, cabinetry, and plywood products that emit few or no volatile organic compounds (VOCs).
- An advanced storm water treatment system that channels runoff into plant-filled ditches, or swales, providing a natural filtering system that removes pollutants before the water reaches the San Francisco Bay.
- Innovations such as a Green Housekeeping program to reduce environmental and health impacts of cleaning products and chemicals used in the terminals.

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.

Santa Clara County Setting a Precedent with the Green Building Collaborative

All 15 cities in Santa Clara County are adopting common standards for green building. The process began as an informational session on green building and eventually became the Green Building Collaborative. The aim was "to collaborate for ease of adoption and consistency, to get cities moving in the same direction on green building policy." One secret to the success of the project was to make the policy easy for cities to consider by creating a sample resolution to adopt or adapt as necessary; city staff appreciated not having to duplicate efforts. Adopting common standards promotes consistency for contractors often working in multiple jurisdictions within the county. Through these efforts the county hopes to lead by example and encourage the public sector to also build green. http://www.usgbc-ncc.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=360&Itemid=99999999

Austin Seeks a New Blueprint for Power Utilities

Historically, power companies have aimed to provide an ever-expanding supply of energy to the consumer. With the help of a \$10.4 million Smart Grid grant from the Department of Energy, Austin Energy will instead seek to promote energy efficiency and conservation, renewable and distributed generation. The city's municipal power company is seeking to meet climate goals while still remaining profitable. Austin officials believe they are creating a model for the nation, showing that green energy development can be accelerated. The project will seek 1,000 residential and 75 commercial volunteers to try out a wide range of clean energy pilot projects.

European Union's CO₂ total dropped 11% in 2009

The European Union's carbon dioxide emissions fell by 11 percent last year, the largest drop since Europe started its cap-and-trade program in 2005. The decline brings the EU closer to its goal of reducing emissions by 20% this decade. Still, the 27-nation block is struggling to show leaders in the U.S. and Asia that its five-year-old emissions trading program, the world's largest, encourages companies to spend on greener technologies as output and company profits decline.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601130&sid=aadYdhUVdqu>



Legislation

Automobile Industry Drops Legal Challenge To CA GHG Regulations

The final regulations have been issued in order to establish a unified national program for the substantial reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and improved fuel economy for vehicle models in the years 2012-2016. With these national standards now in place, the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers and other plaintiffs agreed to dismiss all claims targeting California's standards for 2009-2016 model vehicles and will not pursue further motions in the district court involving the existing regulations.

Green Building Standards Code and Other Efforts: Northern CA Chapter Update

The US Green Building Council's Northern California Chapter (USGBC-NCC) played a crucial role in the formation of California's first Green Building Standards Code, adopted earlier this year. The code has established a higher mandatory minimum and raised the bar for green building in the state. The USGBC-NCC has many upcoming projects including the state legislative program, AB 32 defense efforts, and continued work on green code related issues at a local and state level. To help with green building efforts, please fill out a short questionnaire (http://you.usgbc-ncc.org/questionnaire.jsp?questionnaire_KEY=328) to help the USGBC-NCC better understand where codes or legislation might be changed to encourage greener practices. Learn more about the chapter's efforts here: http://www.usgbc-ncc.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=385&Itemid=246.

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Impacts

Warming Likely to Push State's Water Systems to the Brink

California's rivers, canals, reservoirs, levees and lakes are likely to be profoundly stressed as global temperatures rise according to the state's Department of Water Resources in a recent report. The updated California Water Plan sees climate change pressuring a system that is the lifeblood of the state's agriculture industry, cities to the south and commercial fishers in the San Francisco Bay region. The report cautions that systemic adaptation to warming, including regional coordination of water resources, will be crucial as changes in snow pack, river flows and sea levels affect a state whose population will likely be 40 million by 2050. The water plan states that "California's reservoirs and water delivery systems were designed, and operating rules have been developed, using historical hydrology -- an assumption that the past is a good guide to the future. With climate change, that assumption may no longer be valid."

http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/docs/cwpu2009/0310final/highlights_cwp2009_spread.pdf

Poison Ivy and Kudzu are Poised to Embrace the North

A recent report from the National Wildlife Federation warned that Deer ticks, mosquitoes, poison ivy and other invasive species will dominate in a warming, carbon dioxide-rich world. Some of the harshest and most unpleasant species will benefit from climate change. With increased carbon-dioxide, ivy will spread. The warmer temperatures will also cause the ivy to synthesize more of its itchy chemical, urushiol. Deer ticks, which are the carriers of Lyme disease, will see a range increase of 68 % in North America. Some species have already witnessed proliferation according to the report.



Economics

Summer Gas Prices will have Senators 'Clamoring' for Energy Bill

White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said he expects the Senate energy and climate bill will get a much-needed push this summer after gasoline prices start their annual climb. During his daily briefing, Gibbs said President Obama "absolutely" wants Congress to pass an energy and climate bill this year. He predicted the measure would soon get some momentum. "Energy has made it through the House, and my guess is there will be a clamoring for an energy bill when gas prices go up, as they normally do, as we get closer to more driving, as we get closer to the summer," Gibbs said.

U.K. Projects 100,000 Jobs by 2030 in Carbon Capture

The United Kingdom said it expects its carbon capture and storage (CCS) industry to produce 100,000 jobs and \$6.5 billion per year by 2030. The economic benefits will be welcomed as the country tries to reduce the emissions of facilities such as coal-fired power plants. The UK Energy Secretary states, "We have a strong, established and skilled work force in precisely the sectors needed to get CCS deployed at scale. And we have some of the best potential sites in Europe for CO₂ storage under the North Sea." The country's Department of Energy and Climate Change has previously announced plans to support testing of CCS technology at four coal-fired power plants, funding the project with fossil fuel taxes.



Upcoming events

Local Environmental Events: March/April

Earth Day Activities

April 17th, Richmond.

Annual Earth Day activities will take place at the Recycling Center. Location: West Contra Costa County Recycling Center, 101 Pittsburg Ave., Richmond. For more information call (510)215-3125 or visit their website at <http://www.recyclenore.com>.

Transportation: Greatest Challenge to Reduce Emissions, Community Gathering

April 20th, Santa Rosa

Carli Paine, Transportation Program Director for Oakland-based TransForm, is the featured speaker. Carli will explore ways to reduce emissions in this sector responsible for most of Sonoma County's greenhouse gases. She will also give an update on implementing SB 375, the California law that requires land use and transportation to be incorporated into local planning. Potluck dinner. Questions about the event? Please contact Lora Neffson, 525-1665x114, lora@climateprotectioncampaign.org.

Earth Day Activities

April 24th, El Cerrito

Work Parties: 9am-Noon; Volunteer Appreciation Lunch: Noon-1:20pm. Pre-register for the event today -- online, by phone, or by email. More information available through the following sources: (510)215-4354, gschultz@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us, or <http://www.el-cerrito.org/esd/earthday.html>.

Other

EPA Ranks Cities with Most Energy-Efficient Buildings, Announces 2010 ENERGY STAR Award Winners

EPA has released its second annual ranking of U.S. metropolitan areas with the most energy-efficient buildings that earned the ENERGY STAR rating in 2009. The city with the most ENERGY STAR labeled buildings is Los Angeles, which also ranked #1 in 2008. Second in rank is Washington D.C. followed by San Francisco in the number three spot. Find the whole list online at

<http://www.nalgep.org/about/news.cfm?Page=1&NewsID=56498>. During the 2009 year, 3,900 commercial buildings earned the ENERGY STAR rating, a 40% increase over the previous year. Annual utility savings have increased to almost \$1.6 billion while avoiding greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those of more than one million homes.

Dutch Artist's Medium Sends Climate Change Message

A Dutch artist has arranged two large sculptures on an iceberg in Greenland to raise awareness about climate change and is letting people watch online as the ice melts <http://www.reuters.com/news/video/story?videoid=59769149&videoChannel=1004>. For more on environmental artists, consider joining our Dumpster Diversion Project in Contra Costa County. Learn more at <http://www.trashopia.com>.