



# 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!*

**Tel: (925) 631-0597**

**[info@cccclimateleaders.org](mailto:info@cccclimateleaders.org)**

*Visit us on the Web!*

[www.cccclimateleaders.org](http://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!**



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## Funding



### **2011 Kodak American Greenways Awards**

The Eastman Kodak Company, The Conservation Fund and the National Geographic Society team up to present the Kodak American Greenways Awards Program. For 2011, the Greenways Program anticipates awarding up to fifty percent of the grants to those greenways projects that demonstrate the convergence of economic prosperity and the environment. Grants range from \$500 to \$2,500. The 2011 application deadline is June 15th. For more information and to download an application, visit: <http://grants.conservationfund.org>.



## Local City News

### **City of Benicia Offers Climate Education for Free**

The public is invited to a series of free environmental lecture-workshops beginning April 12. The series, entitled "Stewards of our Children's Future: 2011," was organized by the Benicia Community Sustainability Commission in collaboration with Solano Community College. Those who attend all five may earn a certificate of completion from Solano Community College. Read more here: [http://www.timesheraldonline.com/ci\\_17740671](http://www.timesheraldonline.com/ci_17740671).

### **Study to Assess the Possibility of Sonoma County Becoming a Power Supplier**

The formation of a public power agency could be a way to boost investment in local renewable energy sources and make faster cuts in greenhouse gas emissions. This six-month study will evaluate rate implications for customers, financial risks for the county, potential partnerships and opportunities for job creation that could come with any county's move into the power business. Learn more about the challenges facing this effort here: <http://www.watchsonomacounty.com/2011/03/county/sonoma-county-may-form-power-agency/>.

### **SF International Airport Terminal Receives LEED Gold**

The renovated terminal is the nation's first to capture LEED gold status. The terminal is designed to save 15% more energy than required by California's building code, saving \$170,000 in annual operations costs. The builders reused materials in the existing building, reducing the terminal's global warming impact by about 12,300 tons of carbon dioxide. Learn more here: [http://www.contracostatimes.com/environment/ci\\_17785863](http://www.contracostatimes.com/environment/ci_17785863).

## 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](http://www.cccclimateleaders.org).

### **NACo Produces Video Success Stories for County Energy Projects**

The National Association of Counties (NACo) has created 11 short videos featuring successful implementation of energy projects by counties around the United States. Each three- to five-minute video includes interviews with county officials and staff, as well as images of county projects. Los Angeles County and Sonoma County, California are both featured. The videos are available online at:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/NACoVideo#grid/user/70AE4221EF1A9CC1>

### **Chicago Offers Opt-Out-Plan for Junk Mail**

The City of Chicago's Climate Action Plan seeks to divert 90 percent of the city's waste from landfills by 2020. As a part of this effort, the city has partnered with Catalog Choice to offer a new program to reduce direct mail paper waste. Consumers will be able to opt out of junk mail. Learn more here: <http://www.overnightprints.com/news/chicago-offers-opt-out-plan-for-direct-mail-offers-52245>.

### **Honolulu, Hawaii to Create Rail Transit Authority**

Honolulu voters authorized a new city transit authority to begin operations this coming July. This authority will create a new 10-member panel to oversee the construction and operation of the city's 20-mile elevated rail systems. The formation of this board is to ensure that decisions are not unfairly influenced by any single politician. Learn more here: [http://www.staradvertiser.com/editorials/20110130\\_Next\\_Stop\\_Rail\\_transit\\_authority.html](http://www.staradvertiser.com/editorials/20110130_Next_Stop_Rail_transit_authority.html)



## Legislation

### **Increased Renewable Energy Legislation**

Californian legislature passed a bill that would require renewable power sources to supply one-third of California's electricity by the end of 2020. The bill would give California one of the nation's most aggressive policies for increasing the use of renewable power. State Senator Joe Simitian, who wrote the bill, cast it as a way of boosting California's clean-energy industry, which has continued to grow in recent years despite the recession. The bill is now heading to Governor Jerry Brown's desk. Read more here:

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2011/03/30/MN4L1IM38G.DTL>.

### **Senate Rejects Bill that would Limit EPA's Authority to Regulate GHG Emissions**

The Senate rejected a measure that would limit the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. Learn more about the voting outcomes here:

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/2chambers/post/senate\\_rejects\\_bill\\_that\\_would\\_limit\\_epas\\_authority\\_to\\_regulate\\_greenhouse\\_gas\\_emissions/2011/04/06/AFHjb3qC\\_blog.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/2chambers/post/senate_rejects_bill_that_would_limit_epas_authority_to_regulate_greenhouse_gas_emissions/2011/04/06/AFHjb3qC_blog.html).



## Impacts

### **Health Impacts of Climate Change are Evident**

If physicians want evidence of climate change, they may well find it in their own offices. Patients are experiencing illnesses once only occurring in warmer areas. Chronic conditions are becoming aggravated by more frequent and extended heat waves. Treating diseases or conditions new to their location and finding the ones that are growing worse represents only part of the challenge to physicians presented by climate change. Read more here: <http://www.ama-assn.org/amednews/2011/04/04/edsa0404.htm>.

### Study predicts large regional changes in farmland area

While most studies of climate change and agriculture have focused on projected crop yields, the University of Illinois researchers assessed global and regional land availability. They systematically studied worldwide changes in soil temperature and humidity. Regions with relative high latitudes – China, Russia and the U.S. – could see a significant increase in arable land in coming years, but Africa, Europe, India and South America could lose land area. The total global potential of arable land is expected to decrease by the end of the 21st century. Read more here: [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2011-03/uoiaspl032511.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2011-03/uoiaspl032511.php).

### More than One Billion People will Lack Water by 2050

A recent study by the National Academy of Sciences predicts that more than one billion urban residents will face serious water shortages by 2050 as climate change worsens effects of urbanization. The shortage threatens sanitation in some of the world's fastest-growing cities but also poses risks for wildlife if cities pump in water from outside. The study found that under current urbanization trends, by mid-century some 993 million city dwellers will live with less than 100 liters (26 gallons) of water each day - roughly the amount that fills a personal bathtub – which was considered the daily minimum requirement by this study. Learn more here: <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gJJDVHw62fSiDe5oOGPXu2w9w>.

### Economics



### Investors Need to Keep Climate Change in Mind

Policy makers have been recently pressing biologists to dissect how much of the changes observed in wild species are due specifically to greenhouse gas driven climate change. With limited research funding, scientists feel money should be directed toward studies on species adaptations and conservation of species. Biologists urge people to do those are things can and should be done on a short-term scale. "Think globally about climate change and how that's going to affect your national park, or your reserve or your endangered species, but in terms of action, you've got to think locally". Learn more here: [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2011-03/uota-tgb031711.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2011-03/uota-tgb031711.php).

### Solar Being Implemented on CA "Starter Homes"

While pricey solar panels are often found on the roofs of high-end houses, KB Home is installing the arrays on homes with base selling prices that range from \$250,000 to \$360,000. In California, that's starter home territory. The solar panels come standard on the already Energy Star-qualified homes. The homes are already among the most energy-efficient available today and adding the solar makes the homes even more affordable for new buyers. KB Home estimates that the standard 1.4-kilowatt solar array will supply about 30 percent of the electricity for a 1,800-foot to 2,000-foot square home. Read more here: <http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/03/24/now-starter-homes-boast-solar-arrays/?ref=earth>.

### Save Money and Fuel by Driving More Efficiently

Delegates at the Sustainable Cities Conference in took a test drive with the ECOS-10. This program is a software package that is used to demonstrate how simple changes can have huge impacts on fuel consumption. With some minor changes in your driving habits, you can save over \$500 per year based on 25,000 kilometers a year. That could translate into a reduction of more than 1,000 kg of carbon dioxide going into the atmosphere. Learn the top five techniques to save you money and fuel here: <http://www.torontosun.com/life/greenplanet/2011/02/24/17391831.html>.

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## Upcoming events

### Newsletter Contributors:

#### Content:

Sophie Damerel,  
4CL Consultant

#### Editor:

Katherine Bracken,  
4CL Volunteer

#### Contributing Editor:

Lynda Deschambault,  
Executive Director of 4CL

Newsletter articles are collected from a variety of sources and are cited via a website reference when applicable.

To add content or events to our next monthly newsletter, please send an email to [info@cccclimateleaders.org](mailto:info@cccclimateleaders.org).

### Exterior Solid-State Lighting Solutions for Municipalities

*April 19, Webcast*

Municipalities are increasingly saving energy costs through renovation or retrofitting of street lighting fixtures. In this webinar, attendees will learn about the basics of exterior based, solid-state lighting, as well as present best practices in specifying and implementing cost-effective projects. This presentation is for municipalities that are interested in understanding the tools needed to implement an efficient lighting project. To learn more, or to register: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/547838328>.

### Climate Showcase Communities: Lessons Learned and New Approaches

*April 27, Webcast*

In 2010 and 2011, 50 communities across the United States were selected as Climate Showcase Communities. This webcast will provide an overview of the program and highlight several of the 2010 recipients as they wrap up the first of three years of funding. Speakers will cover implementation challenges, lessons learned, and progress to date. Webcast participants will gain insights that can help them implement their own climate and energy programs. To register, visit: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/449303410>.

### Plan Bay Area

*May 7, Concord*

Participate, comment and join a public discussion on how to accommodate future growth in the Bay Area, specifically Contra Costa County. Plan Bay Area is a joint effort to create a prosperous, sustainable future by producing an integrated land-use/transportation plan looking forward to 2040. For more information about the workshop and what's happening in your county, visit here: [http://www.onebayarea.org/plan\\_bay\\_area/workshops.htm](http://www.onebayarea.org/plan_bay_area/workshops.htm).

### Sustainable Enterprise Conference

*May 13, Rohnert Park*

Attend the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, spending a day learning and networking in order to help North Bay businesses, nonprofits, and other organizations transition to economic, environmental and social sustainability. Learn more and register here: <http://sustainableenterpriseconference.com/>.

## Other

### Encouraging Local Gardening

Gardening is perhaps the greatest tool for building sustainability that we can all share. Gardens can improve water quality, air quality, access to food, and personal health. This article (<http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/news/2011/03/31/growing-sustainable-city>) addresses case studies of community gardening efforts. What are Contra Costa County cities doing with gardens? Let us know at [info@cccclimateleaders.org](mailto:info@cccclimateleaders.org) or on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/cccclimateleaders>.