



Contra Costa County Climate Leaders Program

JUNE 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:

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Funding



Deadlines Approaching for Sustainable Communities Grants

For more information on these funding opportunities, please visit the <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/nofa10/sustaincomm.cfm> US Department of Housing and Urban Development and http://www.fta.dot.gov/planning/planning_environment_8510.html Federal Transit Administration.



Local City News

Bay Area Air Board Approves Guidelines to Limit Development Emissions

In an effort to limit the number of greenhouse gases and toxic air contaminants, the Bay Area's air pollution board adopted the nation's most far-reaching local development review guidelines. These guidelines give cities and counties numerical pollution thresholds to use when deciding if developers must enhance the land-use review process with studies on pollution removal. Planning for new Bay Area houses, apartments, gas stations, sports arenas, chemical plants and shopping centers could be affected by these new guidelines. Read more at: http://www.contracostatimes.com/environment/ci_15211311 here.

A Close-Up Look at Bay Area Business Sustainability Reporting

The San Francisco Bay Area is thought of as a progressive region, leading the nation in various aspects of environmental awareness and sustainability. For this reason, the EcoStrategy Group took a close-up look at the largest Bay Area companies to see what they were doing in terms of reporting the results of their environmental practices. About 25% of the largest Bay Area companies issue sustainability reports. Learn more about the environmental practices of our Bay Area businesses in this [report](http://www.ecostrategygroup.com/trends.pdf).

CA Assembly Approves Bill to Ban Plastic Bags at Grocery Stores

It could soon cost California shoppers at the checkout if they forget to bring their own bag to the grocery store. Legislation passed by the state Assembly would prohibit grocery stores, pharmacies, liquor stores and convenience stores from giving out plastic bags. It would also charge customers for using store-issued paper bags. If signed into law, California would be the first state to impose a statewide ban. The ban's goal is to get rid of unsightly plastic bags that often wind up in urban rivers and the ocean, as well as reduce the number of bags heading for landfills. The bill, AB 1998, still needs Senate approval. See the full [article](http://www.contracostatimes.com/environment/ci_15218273?nclick_check=1).

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.**

Other City News



Sustainable San Mateo County Report on Indicators

Sustainable San Mateo County presents the *2010 Indicators for a Sustainable San Mateo County* report. This is the 14th annual edition of the Indicators Report. The report tracks 32 different trends, or indicators, which affect the long-term health and prosperity of the county. It highlights actions that cities in the county are taking to move towards a more sustainable future, assesses the progress of the county and more. Individual sections can be viewed on the website or you can download the full <a href="<http://sustainabilityhub.net/2010-indicators/>">PDF.

Sustainability Plan Case Study: The Process Behind PlaNYC

ICLEI's case study contains in-depth detail about how the City of New York developed its renowned PlaNYC sustainability plan, and how this planning process laid the groundwork for New York's emergence as a leading sustainable city. ICLEI created this resource because other cities, towns, and counties have been eager to follow New York's lead and learn its keys to success as they strive to meet their own sustainability challenges and goals. The case study complements ICLEI's previously released Sustainability Planning Toolkit. Get your copy <a href="<http://www.icleiusa.org/action-center/planning/sustainability-planning-resources/planyc-case-study-the-process-behind-the-plan/>">here.

Laser Technology Used to Map NYC and its Solar Potential

Last month, a plane outfitted with laser technology for detailed imagery, made nine 6-hour flyovers of New York City. The technology was used to collect environmental data and create up-to-date three-dimensional maps of the locations in NYC that are most likely to flood, the buildings best suited for the installation of solar power, and the neighborhoods most in need of trees. The \$450,000 project employs a new laser technology to update current flood-plain maps and shed light on the solar power capacity of the city. Experts will analyze the data in the next few months and will aim to create solar and flood maps by the end of 2010. This technology has already been used to map solar potential in San Francisco. Read the article <a href="<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/10/nyregion/10mapping.html?ref=earth>">here.



Legislation

Senate Carbon Legislation Introduced

After months of negotiations and much anticipation, the "discussion draft" of the Senate bill was finally released. The bill named the American Power Act, numbers nearly 1,000 pages and is currently being reviewed. Issues of offshore oil drilling, impacts on manufacturing jobs, and the stability of a carbon market are creating concern among Senators and various industries. Many elements have been relaxed from the measure approved by the house last year. A small percentage of emission allowances are dedicated to domestic and international efforts for coping with climate change but no adaptation funding will start for another 9 years. Funding for avoiding deforestation has been eliminated. Environmental and anti-poverty groups praise the overall bill but call the financing disappointing.

Local Governments serve as Idea Labs for Federal Lawmakers

As politicians consider changes to national climate and energy policies, many look to small economies as pilots for legislation reform. Local efforts to reduce emissions and alter behavior can serve as idea labs where mistakes can be made and approaches honed in preparation for setting national policy. The recent climate bill has utilized lessons learned in local laboratories. The proponents of the municipal efforts are also going to find themselves pushing the policies to the national scale. Learn more <a href="<http://wwwp.dailyclimate.org/tdc-newsroom/2010/05/the-incubators>">here.

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Impacts

2010 Could Be Hottest Year Ever!

According to data published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), global temperatures in the first four months of 2010 indicate that this could be the hottest year ever. The combined April global land and ocean average surface temperature was the warmest on record at 58.1 degrees Fahrenheit. This temperature is 1.37 degrees F above the 20th Century average of 56.7 F. Warmer than normal temperatures were experienced in Canada, Alaska, the eastern US, Australia, South Asia, northern Africa and northern Russia. NOAA also found that Arctic ice covered only about 5.7 million square miles, 2.1% below the average extent between 1979 and 2000. Learn more [here](http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6412YF20100519).

Science Academy's Recent Reports Indicate Immediate Climate Action Necessary

The National Academy of Sciences released three reports in late May which have been billed as the "most comprehensive study of climate change to date". The reports, requested by Congress and issued by the academy's National Research Council, included a review of current scientific evidence regarding climate change, an examination of strategies to reduce emissions, and a look at how the United States can adapt to the impacts of climate change. The study's recommendations include the formation of a single federal entity or program to coordinate a national, multidisciplinary research effort aimed at improving both the understanding and responses to climate change, as well as increased efforts to deploy a comprehensive climate observation system. The reports are available at [here](http://americasclimatechoices.org/).

Nigerian Islands Lost Due to Erosion and Rising Seas

It appears that Nigeria has lost some islands in the Niger Delta region due to erosion from the Atlantic Ocean. The lost Islands are in the Delta region, where Nigeria earns about 90 per cent of her foreign exchange revenue. The revelation was announced at a workshop on the problems of climate change for coastal states in Nigeria. At this year's conference, coastal states were saying they felt threatened by rising sea levels that could cause more erosion. Read more http://www.nguardiannews.com/sunday_magazine/article05/090510?pdate=090510&ptitle=Nigeria%27s%20Islands%20Lost%20To%20Atlantic%20Ocean

[here](http://www.nguardiannews.com/sunday_magazine/article05/090510?pdate=090510&ptitle=Nigeria%27s%20Islands%20Lost%20To%20Atlantic%20Ocean).

Vietnam Fears Rapidly Rising Sea Levels

Ho Chi Minh, a major city in Vietnam, is one of the world's most populated cities as well as the economic center of Vietnam. It sits barely above sea level and is among the ten cities in the world most likely to be affected by extreme floods and rising sea levels. A recent study has been completed to help the city protect itself from the impacts of global warming, and offers some concrete predictions as to what the city may face. Detailed adaptation planning is the key to a resilient Ho Chi Minh City. In a major study presented two years ago, German researchers found the city's residents are only marginally aware of the risks scientists say it will face. Read more [here](http://www.adb.org/documents/reports/hcmc-climate-change/hcmc-climate-change-summary.pdf).

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Economics

Bill Gates Pays for "Artificial" Clouds to Beat Greenhouse Gases

After the United Nations failed to secure agreement on cutting greenhouse gases, individuals took matters into their own hands. The first trials of a controversial sun-shielding technology are being planned by the Microsoft billionaire, Bill Gates. He is funding research into machines that would suck up ten tons of seawater every second and spray it upwards. This would seed vast banks of white clouds into the sky which would then reflect the Sun's rays away from Earth and prevent continued warming. Learn more http://technology.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/tech_and_web/article7120011.ece

[here](http://technology.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/tech_and_web/article7120011.ece).



Upcoming events

Local Environmental Events: June/July

Science In The Park: How is Climate Change Affecting Bay Area's National Parks

June 16, Mill Valley

Can change in our parks be measured? What are micro-climate models? What is our role in restoring and preserving our parks' "natural balance"? Steffen Bartschat was the "inside man" at a National Resource & Science Symposium of scientists from national parks in northern California. He will answer questions and show excerpts from the presentations. Afterward, you are invited to take a 1 hour hike to the Haypress project site, starting at Tennessee Valley trailhead. Learn more <a href="<http://events.contracostatimes.com/mill-valley-ca/events/show/118637225-science-in-the-park-how-is-climate-change-affecting-the-bay-areas-national-parks>">here.

Commissioning, Energy & Atmosphere, Indoor Air Quality and YOU

June 17, Walnut Creek

Join Diablo East Bay Branch of the US Green Building Council for a presentation focusing on the LEED points in Energy and Atmosphere and Indoor Air Quality strategies employed at the AAA Station Landing, followed by a tour of the facility. The property earned LEED Gold certification and will use 40% less water, 17% less energy and has many recycled products for the interior materials. Learn more here.

Building a Net-Zero Home: Advantages, Misconceptions, and Challenges

June 23, Oakland

Join the US Green Building Council for a presentation and panel directed towards net-zero energy homes. Get up to speed on the basics and discuss the details with pioneers in this field. Find out more online.

Join the Climate Discussion: The CAPCOA Climate Change Forum

August 30 & 31, San Francisco

The California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA), along with its co-hosts, the California Air Resources Board and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, are proud to present this forum. The CAPCOA Climate Change Forum will create a collaborative environment where progress can be made towards the harmonization of climate programs. This conference will focus on how federal, state, and local agencies can most effectively align efforts to advance climate change programs in California. Learn more <a href="<http://www.capcoacclimateforum.com/>">here.

Effective Policies: The Next Generation of Energy Efficiency

June 23, Webinar

Discussion will include: capturing untapped energy savings, policies driving a clean energy economy, the essential role of local governments in reducing energy, GHGs and more. Learn more <a href="<http://www.icleiusa.org/news-events/effective-policies-the-next-generation-of-energy-efficiency-webinar>">here.

Other

DOE Release New Solar Infrastructure Guide for Local Governments

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has developed a comprehensive resource to assist local governments and stakeholders in building sustainable local solar markets. "Solar Powering Your Community: A Guide for Local Governments" introduces a range of policy and program options that have been successfully field tested in cities and counties around the country. The guide describes each policy or program, followed by more information on benefits, implementation tips and options, examples, additional references and resources, and more. Visit their website for an online version of the guide.