

# CLIMATE ADAPTATION

## Contra Costa County Climate Leaders

A project of Generation Green - a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization

Find Links to Other Local Government Policy Opportunities at  
[www.cccclimateleaders.org](http://www.cccclimateleaders.org)



### WHAT?

Assembly Bill 32 states the state of California “must adopt regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emission reductions. The full implementation of AB 32 will help mitigate risks associated with climate change....” According to C40 cities, 70% of cities are already dealing with the effects of climate change and over 90% of all urban areas are ‘coastal’ meaning most are at risk of flood damage. Infrastructure damage can pose unexpected costs to cities. <sup>(1)</sup>

### WHY?

The changing climate has presented itself in extreme weather events such as hotter days, more intense wildfires, stronger and more frequent hurricanes, flooding and more intense droughts. Already, the sea level in California has risen approximately 7 inches (18 centimeters) from 1900 to 2005, reports the National Climate Assessment. Storms are expected to get more severe, with increased risk of flooding. Saltwater is also expected to intrude into fresh aquifers as the sea rises, contaminating precious groundwater. <sup>(2)</sup> Events such as El Nino have caused numerous floods in cities all over California, causing mudslides, power lines crashing, top soil washing away, and storm water overflowing sewers. <sup>(3)</sup> Extreme weather events cause flooding, power outages, destruction of infrastructure, loss of homes, and even loss of lives. As these events are becoming more frequent cities need to adapt and prepare. Cities are looking modify and develop local infrastructure to withstand floods and big storms and establish emergency plans in the event of extreme weather patterns. <sup>(4)</sup>

### WHO?

Local governments are the closest level of government to the citizens and to their communities. They play the first responder role to crises and emergencies. Local government’s deliver essential services to their citizens (health, education, transport, water, etc.), which need to be made resilient to disasters. By investing in adaptation, cities can improve broader economic performance by increasing city competitiveness and attractiveness for investors and the private sector in general. <sup>(5)</sup> In addition to attracting more interest by investing in adaptation, local governments also need to build resilience among vulnerable groups such as the urban poor who will be mainly affected by the affects of climate change.

### WHERE?

Examples of Local Government resilience policies in Contra Costa County:

- Oakley’s [five year improvement plan](#) includes storm drain improvement and street resurfacing
- Pittsburg’s [Climate Action Plan](#) includes adaptation strategies to events such sea-level rise and drought preparedness:
- [Concord’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan](#)



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Examples of Best practices Local Governments elsewhere:

- Three of our Bay Area cities are part of the 100 Resilient Cities Initiative: Oakland, SF and Berkeley.
- Oakland launched [Resilient Oakland](#) to identify the problems areas where the city needs to adapt
- San Francisco launched [Resilient-SF](#) which outlines the potential future dangers that SF may have to face and seeks to find solutions to prepare the city and its residents
- Berkeley's [resilient efforts](#) include ensuring critical city services for 7 days without outside power in the event of a major outage. Berkeley also developed the [Berkeley Resilience Strategy](#) which outlines strategies for adaption and preparedness.
- The Mayor of Los Angeles created a [plan that includes adaptation](#)

### HOW?

Here are some local government strategies to adapt and prepare for the effects of climate change:

- [Identify the climate effects in your community, develop, update and implement local mitigation plans](#)
- Use planning guidance, tools and information that have been developed, tested and refined by the [Adapting to Rising Tides Program](#) to address the specific challenges of climate change
- Take inventory of your existing infrastructure and key community structures that are potentially susceptible to each climate change extreme weather exposure.
- Evaluate your city/town's current ability to address projected impacts.
- Be sure to adjust the project impact for uncertainty, timing, or adaptive capacity.
- Prioritize the adaptive needs.
- Identify the strategies to address the highest priority adaptations.
- Develop an implementation plan that includes phasing of strategies and a monitoring system
- For more resources and tips on developing a climate adaptation plan click [here](#)

### TO LEARN MORE?

- [United States Office for Disaster Risk Reduction](#)
- [Contra Costa County Flood Preparedness](#)
- [California Climate Change Adaptation](#)
- [California Climate Change Center's Third Assessment on Climate Adaptation](#)
- Adapting to Rising Tides Contra Costa County: [Adaptation Response Handout](#)

Sources:

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/ab32/ab32.htm>

<sup>2</sup> <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/report/regions/coasts#california-differences>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/sotc/global/201513>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.ucsusa.org/global\\_warming/science\\_and\\_impacts/impacts/global-warming-rain-snow-tornadoes.html#.VwnW-JMrIU0](http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/science_and_impacts/impacts/global-warming-rain-snow-tornadoes.html#.VwnW-JMrIU0)

<sup>5</sup> <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTURBANDEVELOPMENT/Resources/336387-1318995974398/GuideClimChangeAdaptCities.pdf#page=11>

