



# 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*

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**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



### Tax Credits for Home Efficiency Upgrades

"Cash for caulkers," as the tax credit is nicknamed, lets homeowners claim credits worth up to 30% of materials costs when they take certain steps to improve home efficiency. The maximum credit is \$1,500 and the program expires December 31st. To make the most of the federal tax credit, homeowners can combine qualifying projects with other incentives offered by utilities, states, or municipalities.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Environment/2010/1018/Energy-efficient-homes-courtesy-of-federal-tax-credit>



## Local City News

### eBART to Extend into Antioch

On October 29<sup>th</sup>, local, state and federal officials gathered at the Pittsburg/Bay Point BART station for the groundbreaking for the extension of the BART system into Eastern Contra Costa County. Reaching 10 miles from the Pittsburg/Bay Point station to the City of Antioch, the eBART line will use clean-diesel technology, which is 60 percent less expensive to build than conventional BART. According to BART, eBART is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 260,000 pounds per day.

[http://www.mtc.ca.gov/news/current\\_topics/10-10/ebart.htm](http://www.mtc.ca.gov/news/current_topics/10-10/ebart.htm)

### Green Communities Program Connects Cities with College Interns

The Green Communities Program works to equip local governments with information to make better decisions about reducing GHG emissions as they reduce energy consumption. The Program, funded by PG&E and the California Public Utilities Commission and implemented with the help of ICLEI, will pay interns from UC Merced, University of the Pacific and CSU Stanislaus to work with staff members in participating cities to develop a GHG inventories. Participating cities include Modesto, Turlock, Ceres, Patterson, Oakdale, Riverbank, Hughson, Waterford, Newman and Livingston. Stanislaus County and the cities of Los Banos and Sanger are also looking into the program. Learn more at: <http://www.istockanalyst.com/article/viewiStockNews/articleid/4646897>.

## 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).

### **Sea-Tac Airport Receives FAA Grant To Reduce Greenhouse Emissions**

Sea-Tac International Airport announced that it will receive \$18.3 million from the Federal Aviation Administration for a project expected to reduce GHG emissions and save money. Aircraft will be able to obtain pre-cooled or pre-warmed air piped from a central utility plant at the airport. This will allow planes to shut down their auxiliary power units, which emit CO<sub>2</sub> gases and other emissions, and need fuel to operate. Once installed, the project is expected to reduce more than 50,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, save up to 5 million gallons of fuel and \$10 million in fuel costs per year. The CO<sub>2</sub> savings are the equivalent of taking 8,700 cars off the road. The project is expected to create 120 jobs. Learn more at: <http://www.waterlandblog.com/2010/10/28/sea-tac-airport-receives-faa-grant-to-reduce-greenhouse-emissions/>

### **Largest Solar Project: Mojave Desert**

The first solar energy project on federal land is breaking ground in the Mojave Desert. It's being called the largest solar project in the world and is expected to create more than 1,000 jobs in San Bernardino County. The 3,600-acre plant will nearly double the amount of renewable energy available in the U.S. It will use 346,000 mirrors to reflect sun rays to a tower. As water inside is heated, the steam created will spin a turbine to produce clean energy. About 140,000 homes will receive electricity from the plant. The project's three generating plants will be built in stages between now and 2013. [http://abclocal.go.com/kabc/story?section=news/local/inland\\_empire&id=7749227&cmp=twi-kabc-article-7749227](http://abclocal.go.com/kabc/story?section=news/local/inland_empire&id=7749227&cmp=twi-kabc-article-7749227)

### **Sewage-to-Biogas Field**

The San Antonio Water System has set the national bar high in the sewage-to-biogas field, by becoming the first water district to hook a biogas facility up to a commercial gas pipeline. Methane gas is a natural byproduct of the sewage treatment process. Conventional treatment plants generally burn off the Methane. Some treatment plants have installed equipment to capture the gas and use it as a power source, which significantly lowers the release of greenhouse emissions. Biogas captured at the facility is sold commercially through a nearby gas pipeline for an estimated \$200,000 annually, which will help manage the cost of the treatment facilities. Read more at: <http://cleantechnica.com/2010/10/24/san-antonio-gets-the-scoop-on-first-commercial-biogas-from-municipal-sewage/>.

### **Greenworks Philadelphia: Implementing Urban Sustainability**

In 2008, Philadelphia's Mayor pledged to make Philadelphia the number one green city in America. To make good on the pledge, the Mayor's Office of Sustainability was created. A year was spent researching municipal sustainability, talking with residents, and drafting Greenworks Philadelphia. The ambitious plan sets 15 sustainability targets in the areas of energy, environment, equity, economy, and engagement to make Philadelphia the greenest city in America by 2015. In this webinar, they discussed the first year of Greenworks implementation and shared the successes, strategies and plans for sustainability. View the slides and the October 29<sup>th</sup> webinar video here: <http://www.vitanuova.net/journal/2010/09/october-29-2010-greenworks-philadelphia-implementing-urban-sustainability.html>



## Legislation

### **Proposition 23 Defeated**

Prop. 23, the most high-profile environmental measure on a ballot anywhere in the United States, was defeated. "I think it's extremely significant that in recessionary times Californians once again prove you can have both a strong economy and a clean environment," said Steven Maviglio, spokesman for the campaign against Prop. 23. He said the "coalition we put together - Republicans, Democrats, new economy, old economy - was effective." Read more at: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2010/11/02/MNGN1G2HVN.DTL#ixzz14Msr6CqZ>

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### European Green Party Calls for Taxes To Pay for Shift to Sustainable Economy

The party holds 55 of 736 seats in the European Parliament and has representation in national parliaments across Europe. The specific economic policy paper and the overall Green New Deal platform mark the first time the Green Party has united to squarely address the economy as a central issue in environmental protection. The party hopes that connecting the issues more clearly for the public and policymakers will help its reform proposals gain popular and political backing.

### Regulatory Announcement for Medium- and Heavy-Duty Vehicles

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) are announcing the first program to reduce GHG emissions and improve fuel efficiency of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles, such as the largest pickup trucks and vans, semi-trucks. These vehicles make up the transportation segment's second largest contributor to oil consumption and GHG emissions. The agencies estimate that the combined standards could reduce emissions by 250 million metric tons over the life of vehicles sold during 2014 to 2018, while providing an estimated \$ \$41 billion in net benefits to truck drivers and society at large. Read more here: <http://www.epa.gov/oms/climate/regulations/420f10901.htm>



### Record Breaking Storms in the Mid-West.

The strongest storm ever recorded in the Midwest swept through Minnesota with intense winds and downpours. The 'superstorm' caused the lowest pressure ever recorded in a U.S. non-coastal storm. There is evidence that wintertime extratropical storms have grown in intensity in the Pacific, Arctic, and Great Lakes in recent decades. Learn more at: <http://www.treehugger.com/files/2010/10/superstorm-strongest-recorded-midwest.php>.

### Native Species Altered Due to Climate Change

As the climate changes, some environments are becoming hostile to the flora and fauna that long nurtured them, those species considered "native". Species that can migrate have begun to move to more hospitable temperatures and humidity. For those individuals that have long fought the invasion of non-native species, the battle parameters have changed. Species that do not migrate may face extinction. Decisions must be made regarding which species to save, which to transplant and what to let go with the changing habitats. Read the full article at: <http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2010/10/native-species-climate/>.

### Holland Island: The Last Home Falls

Sea levels in the Chesapeake are rising faster than they are in some other coastal regions of the US. A striking example is the fall of the last structure on Holland Island. The island devastation has to do with the sinking land, an effect of ancient glaciers as well as climate change. The Earth's oceans are rising because polar ice is melting and because warmer water expands. These two factors mean that seas will rise a tenth of an inch annually, eroding about 580 acres of Maryland a year, according to the state. The loss of land is all around the bay but is most noticeable on the low islands. Learn more and see pictures here: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/24/AR2010102402996.html?sid=ST2010102403309>.



### Economics

The Biggest Loser: Energy Diet Program Winners!

The U.S. EPA challenged 14 buildings nationwide to compete in a "waste loss" challenge. After a year of competition, the Morrison Residence Hall at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was declared the winner. The building cut its energy use by 35.7%, saving more than \$250,000 on utility bills and emitting 730 fewer metric tons of greenhouse gases. For the Competition, the competitors measured energy use via Energy Star Portfolio Manager. Together, the 14 teams saved more than \$950,000 in utility bills and reduced carbon dioxide emissions equal to the electricity use of nearly 600 homes for a year. Could Contra Costa cities compete against each other to encourage energy tracking and reduction?

<http://content.usatoday.com/communities/greenhouse/post/2010/10/epa-biggest-loser-unc/1>

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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).

**Geothermal Energy Expected in Increase Over Next Five Years**

In the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Geothermal Report, ABS Energy Research concluded that although 2009 was a very difficult year for the geothermal industry, the market will grow over the next five years. Only 10 projects were commissioned in 2009. The report expects a 78% market increase between 2010 and 2015. With projects centered in the U.S., the Philippines, and Indonesia. <http://www.energyboom.com/geothermal/geothermal-report-global-geothermal-capacity-will-grow-78-2015>.



**Upcoming events**

**Green Buildings for Cool Cities: Scaling Up Home Energy-Efficiency Retrofits**

*November 15, Pleasanton*

Homes are responsible for up to 40% of our greenhouse gas emissions. Join USGBC Diablo East Bay Branch and the City of Pleasanton as they host presentations from Alameda and CCC to learn about the new Energy Upgrade California Program and what solutions and rebates are available for residential modifications. [http://www.usgbc-ncc.org/index.php?option=com\\_events&type=event&task=details&id=966](http://www.usgbc-ncc.org/index.php?option=com_events&type=event&task=details&id=966).

**Governors' Global Climate Summit 3: Building the Green Economy**

*November 15-16, Davis*

The GGCS 3 promises compelling climate conversations and an increased understanding of our unique environmental and economic challenges as we continue to grow a clean, green economy. GGCS serves as a forum to learn best practices, share ideas and collaborate on projects to see first-hand how our actions at the subnational level can drive national and international climate negotiations. Join various tours throughout the Northern California region. <http://ces.ucdavis.edu/ggcs3/index.cfm?fuseaction=app.agenda>

**Clean Energy and Sustainability as a Local Economic Development Strategy**

*November 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>, Webinar*

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and ICLEI–USA invite you to learn about the role of energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainability in developing successful local economic development strategies. Part I: Saving Money, Expanding Markets, and Building a Talented Workforce (Nov. 16), register here: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/676820555>. Part II: Leveraging Public Resources & Federal Funding (Nov. 18), register: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/400750674>. For more information, contact Jan Mueller at [jmueller@eesi.org](mailto:jmueller@eesi.org) or (202) 662-1883.

**EPA Climate Change Adaptation for State and Local Governments**

*Part One: Climate Impacts & Risk Communication; November 18, Webinar*

EPA's State and Local Climate and Energy Program are hosting a three-part webcast series on climate change adaptation. Participants will gain an understanding of why adaptation to climate change is critical and what actions can be taken at the state and local levels to build support for adaptation and increase community resilience. To register for this webcast, visit: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/289508083>. Part 2 will be held on 12/9, Part 3 on 1/13.

**OTHER**

**STAR Community Index and Sustainability Principles Released**

These tools represent a milestone in the national movement to create more sustainable, livable communities, provide a much needed vocabulary and help local governments effectively strategize. The Goals set a new national standard, and serve as a resource for local governments. These 81 sustainability goals and 10 guiding principles collectively define community-scale sustainability, and present a vision of how communities can become more healthy, inclusive and prosperous across eight categories. Download them here: <http://www.icleiusa.org/programs/sustainability/star-community-index/star-goals-and-guiding-principles>

**New Documentary About Renewable Energy: "Unlimited"**

*Unlimited*, a renewable energy documentary, highlights a group of passionate sixth-graders who call on adults everywhere to take action and address global warming. Experts discuss upcoming and promising technologies like solar, wind, tidal power, and more. Watch here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1UoK-IPfXMw>.