



BEACON
SPOTLIGHT
AWARD
WINNER
BEST PRACTICE
ACTIVITIES



County of Santa Barbara

Sustainability Best Practice Activities









ILG INSTITUTE FOR
LOCAL GOVERNMENTSM
Promoting Good Government at the Local Level

County of Santa Barbara

California communities are leading the fight against climate change. From small projects to large-scale programs, cities and counties are making great strides to create healthy, sustainable and economically prosperous communities. Participants in ILG's Beacon Program serve as leaders in this effort, making measureable contributions to reducing energy and greenhouse gas emissions, and sharing their sustainability best practices.

This document represents a collection of activities your agency has completed in 10 areas of sustainability. While local governments have a wide range of choices available to address climate change, these activities represent the unique opportunities and values in your community. These voluntary actions are essential to achieving California's goals to save energy, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and create more sustainable communities.

SPOTLIGHT AWARD

Areas of Accomplishment		SILVER LEVEL	GOLD LEVEL	PLATINUM LEVEL
	Agency GHG Reductions	2014 (6%)		
	Community GHG Reductions			
	Agency Energy Savings		2014 (11%)	
	Natural Gas Savings			
	Sustainability Best Practice Activities			2014
	Beacon Award			

Cities and counties throughout the Golden State should be proud of the accomplishments made through the hard work, innovation and collective community action. The Institute for Local Government applauds your achievements and thanks you for your continued participation in the Beacon Program.

The Beacon Program is sponsored by the Institute for Local Government and the Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative (SEEC). SEEC is an alliance between three statewide non-profit organizations and California's four Investor-Owned Utilities. The Beacon Program is funded by California utility ratepayers and administered by Pacific Gas and Electric Company, San Diego Gas and Electric Company, Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas Company under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission.



Energy Efficiency and Conservation Activities

Silver

1. The county participates in the Santa Barbara Energy Partnership Program. The program, with assistance from the Community Environmental Council and the Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce, provides a performance-based opportunity from Southern California Edison, PG&E and the Gas Company to access all programs and incentives for the program participants to demonstrate energy leadership in tis community through energy savings action.

Gold

2. In 2013, the General Services Department developed the Santa Barbara Energy Action Plan to establish goals for electricity reduction by identifying actual electricity efficiency projects at county facilities.
3. Since 2011, the county has used Energy CAP to monitor real-time energy use in agency buildings to identify energy usage patterns and abnormalities.

Platinum

4. In 2013, the county created a Benchmarking Policy as a component of the SAP that serves as a decision making tool to identify energy reduction projects that will be implemented between 2013 and 2020. The policy will enable the county to understand the relative energy efficiency of buildings or campuses owned and operated by the county, set energy savings goals and regularly evaluate progress.
5. The county launched the emPower Santa Barbara Program in 2010 (now emPower Central Coast) to help homeowners make energy saving improvements to their homes through incentives, financing and expert energy advice.
6. In 2014, the county's General Services Department prepared a Sustainability Progress Report as an update to the 2010 Sustainability Action Plan. The report provides an overview of the County of Santa Barbara's sustainability goals and accomplishments. Accomplishments include: installing motion sensors, photocells and multi-level switches to control room lighting systems in most county facilities; replacing incandescent lights with more energy efficient lighting, such as compact fluorescents, overhead fluorescent lights or light-emitting diodes (LEDs); upgrading exit signs with LED lighting when bulbs need replacing; adding vending misers to all cold beverage machines; and upgrading pumps, motors and other energy intensive machinery where feasible.
7. The county Parks Division has adopted a water conservation approach to turf management that includes replacing lawn areas with mulch where feasible.





Water & Wastewater Systems Activities

Silver

1. The county's Public Works Department administers Project Clean Water to meet Clean Water Act requirements for urban runoff and to protect the public health and enhance environmental quality in Santa Barbara County watersheds and beaches. Project Clean Water focuses on eliminating pollutants and increasing public awareness through community workshops, Facebook, school education campaigns, and distributing best practices materials to protect water quality from new and redevelopment projects. The program utilizes a webpage to provide education materials such as guidelines for sustainable landscapes and rain gardens, resource recycling guides, greening businesses and information on wastewater treatment plant tours.

Gold

2. Since 2013, the county has been using Energy CAP to monitor real-time water usage in agency buildings to identify usage patterns and abnormalities.
3. Santa Barbara County Regional Water Efficiency Program promotes the efficient use of urban and agricultural water supplies county-wide, and provides information and assistance to the eighteen local water purveyors within the county. Through the RWEP, the county Water Agency coordinates cooperative water conservation efforts among purveyors, co-founds projects and programs, acts as a clearinghouse for information on water efficiency, manages specific projects and programs, and monitors local, state and national legislation related to efficient water use.

Platinum

4. The county's Public Works Department provides clean water education programs to students through Project Clean Water. The program engages students in learning about water pollution through hands-on activities including free classroom presentations and field trips. One such activity is the Creek Kids Series offered to fourth through sixth grades at eligible schools in the county. The series includes two in-class lessons, a half-day field trip to a watershed center and a local creek and an optional service-learning project.
5. The county's Public Works Department assists in organizing and participates in beach and creek clean up and volunteer water quality monitoring.
6. The county General Services and Parks Division assesses, maintains, and repairs existing irrigation systems to minimize water use, including parking lot landscaping, public rest rooms and parks, golf courses, and other recreational facilities.





Green Building Activities

Silver

1. In 2014, the County Board of Supervisors adopted a Zero Net Energy Resolution as part of the county's Sustainability Progress Report (SPR). The actions identified in the SPR focus on the reduction of the county's facility energy consumption, transportation energy consumption, and landfills, and the conservation of county resources and other sustainability activities.

Gold

2. The county has established a Green Building Program, known as Smart Build Santa Barbara (SB2). SB2 is a free, voluntary program that encourages applicants early in the planning process to make their new or existing developments more energy efficient and sustainable. SB2 also promotes development that exceeds Title 24 standards. The ultimate goal of SB2 is to encourage applicants to build developments that use little energy, which are 100% supplied by renewable sources, without forsaking comfort and reasonable building costs. The Board of Supervisors approved the updates to the county's Green Building Program on July 1st, 2014.
3. Participants in SB2 receive free green building advice from the SB2 committee, which is made up of local professionals, including contractors, architects, engineers, energy consultants, and government officials who have a remarkable amount of knowledge in innovative, energy-efficient and green developments. The committee's advice will benefit the design, construction and operation of the development in a number of ways, including increased marketability, increased comfort and reduced utility bills.

Platinum

4. All development plans that meet one of the two voluntary tiers in SB2's checklist and CALGreen's mandatory requirements will receive a Santa Barbara County Smart Building Award Certificate.
5. In 2014, the Board of Supervisors adopted a ZNE Resolution as part of the county's Sustainability Progress Report (SPR). The actions identified in the SPR focus on the reduction of the county's facility energy consumption, transportation energy consumption, and landfills, and the conservation of county resources and other sustainability activities.
6. In collaboration with the South Coast Energy Efficiency Partnership (SCEEP), the county hosted a green building training titled "Title 24: Where We're Headed with the 2013 Standards in September 2013." The free training was held for local architects, builders, planners, mechanical engineers, electrical engineers and inspectors and provided detailed review of the new Title 24, 2013 standards.





Waste Reduction and Recycling Activities

Silver

1. Since 1992, the Santa Barbara County Resource Recovery and Waste Management Division (RRWMD) has administered a Residential Composting Program to encourage households to compost their yard waste, garden trimmings, and food residuals and thereby reduce the amount of trash that they generate. Composting bins are offered for sale year-round for \$40, a savings of over 50 percent off the retail price. The RRWMD also publishes a composting booklet that discusses such topics as the different composting systems and choosing the right one, building a composting system, using one's compost, and describing other types of yard waste reduction. Finally, composting workshops are conducted every spring for people who want to learn how to compost or need a refresher on composting methods.

Gold

2. RRWMD works with schools in the unincorporated county and the cities of Goleta and Solvang to foster waste prevention, reduction, and recycling. Waste audits, recycling containers, outreach materials, presentations, and tours of the South Coast Recycling and Transfer Station (SCRTS) and the Tajiguas Landfill are among the services offered to schools. The RRWMD also contracts with Art from Scrap (AFS), a nonprofit agency, to provide services to schools in the cities of Goleta and Solvang and the unincorporated county.
3. The county started a program in April 2001 to collect and recycle various types of batteries. County employees are encouraged to recycle their used batteries by sending them through inter-departmental mail to the Mail Services Division. Mailroom staff members regularly drop off the batteries at the Community Hazardous Waste Collection Center.

Platinum

4. Unused computers generated by the county are donated to the Computers for Families Program. Under the program, boys at the Los Prietos Boys Camp are taught how to repair and upgrade computers. These computers are then donated to needy families who do not have a computer.
5. Each December, the RRWMD reminds people in Santa Barbara County to recycle their Christmas trees. Advertisements are placed in newspapers and on radio and television stations advising people where they can recycle their Christmas trees. Over half of the county's Christmas trees are processed at a county solid waste management facility.
6. Households may obtain free mulch for their homes and gardens by accessing mulch piles maintained by the RRWMD.





Climate-friendly Purchasing Activities

Silver

1. The county provides a webpage called Rudyslist to streamline the surplus property process. By using this internal webpage, departments can post their surplus items or request surplus items.

Gold

2. In 2001, the county purchased the first of its hybrid vehicles. Since then, as part of the GreenFleet Management Plan, the county is transitioning from conventional gasoline powered vehicles to hybrid powered vehicles, has included 18 hybrid powered vehicles, four electric vehicles and seven neighborhood electric vehicles.
3. In an effort to promote local economic vitality & sustainability, the County of Santa Barbara supports local vendors through their outreach program. The goal of the program is to spend 60% of our discretionary revenue with local vendors. In 2013, the county spend more approximately \$100 million locally.

Platinum

4. The Board of Supervisors has directed the county Purchasing Manager to purchase paper and paper products containing recycled materials and to give preference to the suppliers of recycled paper and paper products, if the bids of these suppliers do not exceed by more than 12% of the cost of the lowest bid or price quoted by vendors offering unrecycled paper or paper products. All bidders shall specify the percentage of recycled paper content in the appropriate space provided in the bid. "Recycled paper" means all paper and woodpulp products containing not less than 30 percent of its total weight of secondary and postconsumer waste and with not less than 10% of its total weight consisting of postconsumer waste.
5. Both waste haulers contracted by the county are required to obtain a Green Business Certification and conduct environmentally responsible business practices.
6. Both waste haulers contracted by the county are required to obtain a Green Business Certification and conduct environmentally responsible business practices. As a result, both of the County of Santa Barbara franchised waste haulers, Waste Management in the North County and MarBorg on the South Coast, have converted their collection fleets to run on compressed natural gas in order to meet the clean air standards in their contracts with the county. Both companies have built natural gas fueling stations. The North County natural gas fueling station is open to the public.





Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels Activities

Silver

1. In 2012, Santa Barbara County successfully installed a one megawatt solar photovoltaic array to feed directly into the utility meter that feeds the facilities located within the Calle Real/San Antonio campus. This campus is the largest user of electricity county-wide. The project provides up to one-third of the electricity usage of the campus through renewable means.

Gold

2. The county installed a one megawatt photovoltaic (PV) project adjacent to the Laguna County Sanitation District (LCSD) wastewater reclamation plant outside of Santa Maria. The project utilizes two separate array systems using approximately 4,100 PV panels and provides electricity to the LCSD wastewater reclamation facility located just to the south. The LCSD photovoltaic project generates an additional 1,786,628 kWh annually for the county.
3. In 2009, the county constructed a parking lot on Pardall Road and Embarcadero del Mar with the goal of encouraging downtown revitalization and private development through providing short-term paid parking for commercial users and off-site parking for nearby residential housing units. The parking lot has a solar photovoltaic installation which powers both the night lighting of the parking lot and Pardall Road.

Platinum

4. The county has installed a landfill gas collection system at the Tajiguas Landfill. The system collects methane, which off-gases from the landfill. The methane is converted into power through the use of an on-site generator. The system creates three megawatts of power, which is enough to power 2,500 homes locally.
5. The county helped install eight electrical vehicle charging stations in the City of Santa Barbara public parking lots at no cost to the city.
6. In 2012, the county installed thirteen charging ports at six different electric vehicle charging station locations throughout Santa Barbara County for use by the public. These stations were provided free through a federal grant and matching funds from ChargePoint, the charging station manufacturer. The county investigated dozens of sites and chose these ones based on highest traffic and least cost install.





Efficient Transportation Activities

Silver

1. The county has a Green Fleet Management Plan (GFMP) based on a series of programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by improving the overall efficiency of the county's vehicle fleet. The GFMP includes policy recommendations, proactive steps towards purchasing more fuel-efficient vehicles, and strategies and goals for fuel reduction. The plan is an on-going effort as Vehicle Operations Division continues to research and evaluate current and future vehicle and fuel technologies.

Gold

2. In 2010, the county launched a car share program in partnership with Zipcar in Isla Vista. The program makes cars available on an hourly rental basis to individuals who do not need a car for everyday travel. Individuals gain access to a car by joining an organization that maintains a fleet of cars in a network of locations.
3. The County of Santa Barbara encourages employees to reduce their "drive alone" commuting by offering several different incentives under the Commuter Benefit Program. This program is directed at those employees who commute into Santa Barbara from North County or from counties to the south of Santa Barbara. The benefit includes a county contribution of ten dollars towards a bus pass and allows County employees to purchase bus passes pre-tax.

Platinum

4. The county also offers a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program to encourage the use of alternative methods of commuting to work rather than driving alone to and from work. Employees earn up to two days of additional vacation each year if they use alternative transportation at least 80% of the days worked in a pay period.
5. The county offers a flexible work schedule for employees that incorporate telecommuting and modified schedules including 9/8/80, 4/10/40, or 3/12/80 work schedules.
6. In 2009, county Planning and Development and Public Works staff worked with MTD staff to identify and fund the installation of benches and bus shelter facilities that best served MTD ridership. The MTD Shelter Improvement Project enhanced existing MTD services and provided additional bus stop locations in order to increase and expand public transportation opportunities for area residents thus decreasing their dependence on autonomous vehicles.





Land Use and Community Design Activities

Silver

1. In 2007, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Isla Vista Master Plan (IVMP). The IVMP contains many goals, policies, and development standards that promote infill development and alternative forms of transportation such as cycling, walking, and public transit. Promoting infill development in IV assists in placing new housing adjacent to the largest job center and keeps commuting down. The IVMP contains specific policies that address limiting parking options, encouraging the use of bicycles and walking as alternative modes of transportation, maintaining reduced automobile speeds to promote a safe environment for cyclists and walkers, public transit services that encourage ridership, and promoting a car share program.

Gold

2. In 2013, the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) board adopted the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan & Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). The SCS sets out a plan to meet SBCAG's goal of a zero net increase per capita in greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicles by 2020.
3. Santa Barbara County started the Agricultural Planning Program in 2005 to assist the county with agricultural land use decisions and resource protection. As a member of the Planning and Development team, the agricultural planner advises planning staff on development projects and policy matters affecting agriculture.

Platinum

4. The county has created a planning advisory committee to address differing values and planning concerns of neighborhoods and communities in the county through unique policies. Planning and Development (P&D) Long Range Planning Division staff interacts extensively with board-appointed Planning Advisory Committees (PAC) through the update and adoption of various community plans.
5. The county maintains a community-wide database of vacant and underutilized infill sites to monitor the community's growth and change.
6. Over the last five years, County Public Works has been funding the construction of missing links in the Isla Vista sidewalk network. Over \$20 million of sidewalk improvements have been identified and prioritized, with improvements closest to the UCSB campus and the ocean designated as the highest priority. These improvements are intended to improve quality of life as well as support and encourage the pedestrian experience in Isla Vista.





Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities

Silver

1. In 2000, the county's Public Works Department adopted a Street Tree Policy with a goal to provide a guideline for the replacement of existing street trees, designate suitable trees as replacements, and enable the county to cooperate with community groups to seek grants to sustain and nurture the county's urban forest.

Gold

2. The County of Santa Barbara park system has 24 day use parks, two camping parks, 45 open spaces and 12 beach areas, for a grand total of 8,595 acres. To help preserve these resources, the Parks Division offers local non-profit groups, youth groups and schools a program to volunteer to clean up a designated beach or park area.
3. The county's Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measure Department maintains a webpage that provides information on how to register as an organic producer, handler, or retailer as well as information about the Santa Barbara Certified Farmer's Markets.

Platinum

4. The Board of Supervisors passed an Agricultural Buffer Ordinance that implements adopted Comprehensive Plan policies that assure and enhance the continuation of agriculture as a major viable production industry in Santa Barbara County through establishing development standards that provide for buffers between agricultural uses and new non-agricultural development.
5. The county utilizes three zoning ordinances to carry out the policies of the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan and Local Coastal Program by classifying and regulating the uses of land and structures within the county, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Local Coastal Program.
6. The county created an Agricultural Preserve Program to assist in the long term conservation of agricultural and open space lands. The program enrolls land in Williamson Act or Farmland Security Zone contracts whereby the land is enforceably restricted to agricultural, open space, or recreational uses in exchange for reduced property tax assessments.





Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities

Silver

1. The RRWMD administers the Green Business Program. The program was started over 15 years ago and is a certification program that recognizes businesses that go beyond complying with applicable environmental regulations and that make voluntary changes in their facilities and operations in the key areas of energy and water conservation, solid and hazardous waste reduction and recycling, pollution prevention and transportation.

Gold

2. Since 1999, the RRWMD administers the Community Hazardous Waste Collection Center, located on the campus of UCSB for the acceptance of small quantities of hazardous waste. Businesses that qualify as a Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator, as well as households, may dispose of a variety of hazardous waste such as antifreeze, batteries, motor oil, paints, solvents, cleaners, and fluorescent lights.
3. The RRWMD publishes a Recycling Resource Guide for Santa Barbara County in both English and Spanish.

Platinum

4. To develop an Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP), the county engaged the public in a process that provided community education about climate action planning and related implications for land use policy in Santa Barbara County. Methods for education and gathering community input during the planning process included a community visioning workshop, participation in a community event, four facilitated stakeholder meetings, and an online survey.
5. The county distributed an online survey that asked 35 questions about household energy use, sustainability practices, and driving habits to receive community feedback on sustainability, energy efficiency and climate change. The information provided in the survey results were used to help develop the measures, implementing actions, and programs included in the ECAP.
6. The County of Santa Barbara, in collaboration with staff from UCSB and the cities of Carpinteria, Santa Barbara, and Goleta are working with a consultant to model sea level rise and other coastal hazards to identify planning level changes in future Santa Barbara County coastal erosion, county coastal flooding, and fluvial flooding extents looking at Carpinteria Creek.





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