

BEACON
SPOTLIGHT
AWARD
WINNER
BEST PRACTICE
ACTIVITIES



County of San Mateo

Sustainability Best Practice Activities









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

County of San Mateo

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	2015 (5%)		
	Community GHG Reductions	2015 (8%)		
	Agency Energy Savings		2015 (15%)	
	Natural Gas Savings	2015 (7%)		
	Sustainability Best Practice Activities		2015	2016
	Beacon Award	2015		

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. San Mateo County is a participating outreach partner for the Peninsula Sunshares Program. The county organizes workshops and presentations about discounted residential solar panels and electric vehicles.

Gold

2. Currently, the county converts 40% of public/municipal-owned streetlights, 90-95% of traffic signals and 100% of pedestrian signals to energy efficient LED models.
3. The county administers the Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) Program, implementing effective energy saving programs that help single family and multifamily homeowners save energy and make homes more comfortable. Since 2013, the single family program completed 132 Advanced Home Upgrade projects countywide, providing a total of \$37,494 rebates to single family homeowners.

Platinum

4. In December 2015, the county created a Zero Energy (ZE) Strategic Plan draft to highlight the next steps for ZE policy development and implementation of ZE projects in San Mateo County. The goal of the ZE Strategic Plan is to align city and county building code goals with future state goals, to provide working professionals in the county with ZE building code resources and training, and to support municipalities in developing ZE action plans by providing the necessary technical and template support.
5. In 2015, the county adopted the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing option for homeowners and commercial property owners. Currently, the county sponsors five PACE providers (Alliance NRG, CaliforniaFIRST, Figtree, HERO, and Ygrene) that provide commercial or residential financing.
6. Since 2013, the county's Energy Watch Program assisted over 300 businesses in energy efficiency projects. The types of energy efficiency projects included direct install and calculated projects. Direct install projects focus on short-term energy-efficiency retrofit upgrades, while calculated projects focus on long-term energy-efficiency retrofit upgrades. In 2015, the county surpassed the kWh savings goal by 215%, saving approximately 7,600,827 kWh.





Water & Wastewater Systems Activities

Silver

1. The county uses the SeeClickFix app to engage with the community by having them report illicit discharge activities that may lead to stormwater pollution in the community. Once the report is registered, the county takes care of properly disposing the items.

Gold

2. The county improved the water controls to the toilets in the Maguire Jail to reduce water consumption. The water controls manage the number of flushers per minute, which helps conserve water. The county installed new toilets and urinals that reduce water consumption by 0.60 gallons per flush. The upgraded toilets use 1.4 gallons per flush compared to the previous toilets (2 gallons per flush).
3. The county Facilities Department is in the process of replacing handled faucets with spring faucets in all county buildings. The spring faucets timed water usage of 8-10 seconds helps reduce water consumption.

Platinum

4. In the fiscal year 2015-16, the county approved funding for the Resource Conservation District's drought and water storage projects. The projects focus on improving drought response and water supply reliability in watersheds, agricultural water conservation, water security, and drought resiliency.
5. The county's Office of Sustainability centralized coordinated outreach in stormwater projects.
6. The county facilitates volunteer cleanups at Coyote Point, Mirada Surf, and Flood and Huddart Parks to prevent stormwater pollution.
7. The county conducts social media outreach about alternative water sources, such as rainwater, stormwater, foundation drainage, and gray water.





Green Building Activities

Silver

1. The county has approved a stand-alone Green Building Ordinance. The green building measures follow the LEED guidelines for residential, commercial and industrial buildings and Build it Green Point Rated guidelines for single-family and multi-family dwellings.

Gold

2. Conserving energy and water and using reused or recycled materials are important components of the County's Green Building Program. Established in 2008, the program requires a minimum rating for new residential projects, substantial remodels, and commercial and industrial buildings. It also provides expedited permit processing for projects that voluntarily exceed a higher threshold rating.
3. San Mateo County installed a 330kW solar project on the top of a public/employee parking garage that will generate electricity for the adjacent county office building and the development of a new Environmental Education Center at Edgewood Park. In addition, it completed a smaller solar installation on the Coroner's Office/Youth Services Center

Platinum

4. The county's Youth Services Center, built in 2006, integrated many different green building principles.
5. The county has a Sustainable Green Building Policy that requires LEED certification for all county construction projects that meet certain requirements.
6. The county assists with waste management plans and implemented a recycling ordinance that requires contractors to recycle most waste generated by construction and demolition projects. The county's construction and demolition ordinance is applied to demolition projects over \$5,000 and construction projects greater than \$250,000 or 2,000 ft². The county's recycling requirement for demolition or construction is to recycle 100% of inert solids and 50% of all non-inerts.





Waste Reduction and Recycling Activities

Silver

1. The county's diversion rate for the 2014-2015 is 49% for county-operated facilities, 91% for the Parks Department, and 75-80% for Surplus Property Division. Overall, the combined diversion rate of county facilities, Parks and Surplus is about 58%.

Gold

2. Currently, composting programs are implemented in 400 and 555 County Center as well as the Maguire Jail, Youth Service Center, Gateway Community School, Health Center food service, San Carlos Airport, and the Women's Jail.
3. Currently, the county's Office of Sustainability is collaborating with several departments to develop a "go-paperless" toolkit. The "go-paperless" toolkit is a guide that will help interested departments reduce paper use and save money by providing guidance on how to digitize paper files and set up an efficient system to successfully implement scanning projects.

Platinum

4. The county's Surplus Property Program evaluates items and equipment that are no longer in use for potential reuse at other county departments. The available equipment is first offered for reuse to other departments at no cost, and then to the public for a nominal fee.
5. The county provides resources and information on backyard composting and offers free composting workshops taught by certified master composters to its residents and businesses.
6. The county currently offers Master Compost and Solid Waste courses, Resource Conservation 101 webinars, and Hands-On Single-Session workshops to residents, employees, students and business owners in San Mateo County.





Climate-friendly Purchasing Activities

Silver

1. The county's Bottled Water Purchase Ordinance prohibits the use of county funds to purchase bottled water. This move not only has saved the county over \$150,000 per year but has saved the environment the cost of producing and transporting the water, saving CO2 emissions and landfill space.

Gold

2. County policy requires that all paper products purchased by county departments meet EPA guidelines for post-consumer recycled fiber content, and that all food service ware be biodegradable, compostable, reusable or recyclable.
3. The county motor pool uses oil products that are at least 25% re-refined and where practicable uses recycled antifreeze.

Platinum

4. All playground equipment and rubberized surfacing must have the highest possible recycled content. Products with recycled content receive a 10% price preference.
5. Carpets in county buildings are made of recycled materials and use installation compounds with the lowest available volatile organic content.
6. The county's Procurement Department works with vendors to ensure the most effective packaging or products. The department requires items to be bulk-packed if possible and packaging to be reusable, recyclable or compostable.
7. All paint used in the county's facilities contains maximum recycled content where practicable or use remanufactured/reprocessed paint.
8. The county requires all photocopiers and printers acquired to be capable of double-sided copying.





Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels Activities

Silver

1. The county installed 11 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations throughout its facilities with the capacity to charge 22 EVs at any given time. The public can access 6 EV charging stations, while 5 EV charging stations are exclusive to the county employees. In 2015, the electric vehicle charging stations reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 0.769 MT CO₂e.

Gold

2. In 2008, the county adopted a policy to purchase cleaner, fuel efficient cars in an ongoing effort to reduce the county's emissions. Currently, the county vehicle fleet purchased a total of 201 hybrid vehicles.
3. In fiscal year 2015-2016, the average fuel economy of compact and mid-sized cars is 33.7 mpg, and the average fuel economy for all county vehicles is 20.5 mpg.

Platinum

4. The county is participating in the Peninsula SunShares Program, which will aggregate the demand of participants for solar PV in order to decrease the costs involved.
5. The county currently streamlines most small scale solar rooftop permits (over-the-counter approval).
6. The County of San Mateo produced 5,084 MWh of renewable electric energy from solar PV systems install at Crime Lab, county's Parking Structure and East Palo Alto Government Center (223kW) since FY 2010-11. In FY 2015-16, county has produced 1,050 MWh of electricity from its three solar panel systems.
7. San Mateo County launched its own Community Choice Energy program, Peninsula Clean Energy (PCE), beginning in October 2016. All residents and businesses in the County will be automatically enrolled into the default Eco Plus Program in two phases. The default EcoPlus option will increase the renewable energy content throughout county to at least 50%, with 75% carbon free energy. Customers will also have the option to upgrade to Eco100, which will provide 100% renewable energy with a slight rate premium.





Efficient Transportation Activities

Silver

1. In 2015, the county assessed the Alternative Work Schedule Program measure for the Government Operations Climate Action Plan. The results showed that 19.6% of the employees are participating in the Alternative Work Schedule Program. The county continues to encourage employees to participate in compressed work schedules, flextime, and telecommuting to reduce greenhouse gas emissions produced by employee commute.

Gold

2. The county launched a pilot Commuter Shuttle Program, SMC Commuter, in August 2016 and it is expected to provide service to 750 county employees from three locations throughout the Bay Area, including the East Bay, South Bay, and North County.
3. In 2015, the county participated in the Bike and Pedestrian National Documentation Project that provides a consistent model of data collection to established baseline conditions of active transportation mode share. It is a volunteer effort to engage with the community and promote alternative transportation modes other than automobiles.

Platinum

4. In 2016, the county applied for the Bicycle Friendly Community Award under the League of American Bicyclists and was rewarded the bronze level. The award measures and tracks the county's effort to create safer roads and bicycle-friendly communities.
5. In 2016, the county established a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, which provides advice and recommendations to Board of Supervisors on policies, programs, funding, and matters relating to improving and increasing walking and bicycling transportation.
6. In 2015, 1,293, or 22.08% of employees participated in the Commute Alternatives Program. Each month on average, 19 employees bike to work, 170 employees carpool, 20 employees walk, and 1,086 employees take public transit. Through this program, employees receive one of two types of commute subsidies. A \$20 monthly subsidy is available for carpooling, vanpooling, walking, or biking. A separate monthly subsidy of \$75 can be applied towards public transit options, such as CalTrain, BART, and SamTrans and is the option used by most CAP participants.





Land Use and Community Design Activities

Silver

1.

Gold

Platinum





Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities

Silver

1.

Gold

2.

Platinum





Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities

Silver

1. The county is participating in a local government collaboration that is developing a climate change website portal to share information about best practices and provide the San Diego region with information on government adaptation strategies that are planned in their area.

Gold

- 2.

Platinum

- 4.





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