



BEACON  
 SPOTLIGHT  
 AWARD  
 WINNER  
 BEST PRACTICE  
 ACTIVITIES



# City of Santa Clarita

## Sustainability Best Practice Activities



**ILG** INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT<sup>SM</sup>  
*Promoting Good Government at the Local Level*





# City of Santa Clarita

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			
	Community GHG Reductions			
	Agency Energy Savings			2013 (26%)
	Natural Gas Savings		2018 (11%)	
	Sustainability Best Practice Activities		2013	2016
	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 city is a member of the Community Energy Partnership, a collaboration between seven cities in Southern California, Southern California Edison, Southern California Gas Company and the Energy Coalition. Its mission is to deliver effective energy efficiency programs that forge positive relationships, motivate communities to reduce environmental impacts and promote sustainable cities. The partnership brings energy efficiency benefits to many different individuals and communities including homeowners, renters, business owners, senior citizens and cities.

## Gold

2. Over the past several years, the General Services Division has implemented several programs to upgrade energy efficiency strategies in the existing city hall facility. To date, 66 incandescent bulbs have been replaced with more energy efficient lighting in the city council chamber and in various conference rooms. This results in approximately \$7,500 in energy savings per year.
3. City hall has installed over 30 light-sensors in offices and conference rooms throughout the facility. The city is currently considering the purchase and installation of 106 additional sensors.

## Platinum

4. The city worked with the Community Energy Partnership to benchmark three facilities in Energy Star Portfolio Manager.
5. In 2010, the city undertook a significant program to reduce the energy consumption of municipal operations in the field. Included in this program was the replacement of high pressure sodium and metal halide lights for energy efficient induction lighting at selected locations throughout the city. The program replaced 756 lights total including: 110 lights over 11 city bridges, 158 lights in city parking lots and 488 lights in 17 different city parks. The total estimated annual savings from these improvements is nearly 284,000 kilowatt hours translating into an annual savings of approximately \$32,100.
6. In 2010, the city received funding via the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant. The city allocated \$175,000 of these funds towards a grant program to provide assistance to businesses interested in making energy efficiency related improvements. Called the Green Energy Partnership, the city-administered program provided individual businesses with as much as \$25,000 for solar-related projects and up to \$10,000 for all other types of energy efficiency projects.







# Water & Wastewater Systems Activities

## Silver

1. Starting in 2007, the City of Santa Clarita began to transition its irrigation controls in Landscape Maintenance District areas from timed control to an internet based central irrigation management and control system. As of 2010, approximately 35% of all irrigation controls in the city's LMD areas (over 170 units) have been replaced with new, internet-based "smart" controllers.

## Gold

2. In 2008 the city installed smart irrigation technology network throughout the parks system. The system utilizes the Oasis Software package that provides real time network communications between on-site weather stations and the irrigation controllers. This provides the optimal irrigation of green space within the parks and results in a dramatic reduction in annual water usage.
3. On January 1, 2010, the city formally adopted a Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance in compliance with Assembly Bill 1881. The new ordinance establishes a maximum landscape irrigation water budget that cannot be exceeded, requires the installation of smart irrigation systems to ensure efficient water application of landscaped areas and adopts a comprehensive verification and auditing system for irrigation performance post-construction.

## Platinum

4. The city partners with the local water retailer and water purveyors for all verification and auditing services. Similar to the verification and auditing process for new development, the city partners with the local retailer and water purveyors to monitor, verify and audit these affected landscaped areas.
5. The city is also part of a Santa Clara River Watershed collaborative, a stakeholder process with local water purveyors, local sanitation districts, the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and Los Angeles County. The goals are to integrate planning and implementation efforts and facilitate regional cooperation with the goals of reducing water demands, improving operational efficiency, increasing water supply reliability, improving water quality and protecting the river as a natural resource.
6. The City of Santa Clarita is not a utility. As a result all power, gas and water services are provided by other parties. The city partners with these organizations to provide information on water saving programs and strategies to residential, commercial and industrial customers.





# Green Building Activities

## Silver

1. In 2005, the city council adopted the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy (EPPP). A portion of the EPPP requires that all municipal construction projects for new buildings achieve a LEED Silver certification or equivalent.

## Gold

2. In 2006, the city completed the state-of-the-art Transit Maintenance Facility. As the headquarters for Santa Clarita's Transit Division, recent improvements to the complex, including additional onsite solar generation, have resulted in providing 97% of the building's power needs.
3. Design features that were incorporated in the Transit Maintenance Facility include: straw bale insulated exterior walls, under-floor heating and cooling systems, recycled building materials, water efficient landscaping, day lighting features, facility shading devices, high-efficiency lighting fixtures with motion sensors and daylight dimming controls, and compressed natural gas fuel technology.

## Platinum

4. Consistent with its effort to operate in an environmentally conscious manner, the City of Santa Clarita received its first "Gold" rating from the LEED Green Building Rating System in 2006.
5. The Old Town Newhall Library received a LEED Gold certification.
6. The city adopted an energy building management system in the city yard.





# Waste Reduction and Recycling Activities

## Silver

1. The city adopted a mandatory Residential and Commercial Recycling Program. A complete list of waste reduction and recycling programs and strategies available to the community can be viewed in the Santa Clarita Green Guide.

## Gold

2. The city offers programs for household hazardous waste collection, e-waste collection, tire recycling, sharps disposal, clothing reuse, bulky item pickup, composting workshops and manure recycling.
3. In 2005, the city council adopted the Construction and Demolition Ordinance. The ordinance requires all projects valued at over \$100,000 for demolition and \$500,000 for new construction to recycle a minimum of 50% of their construction and demolition waste. To date, approximately 600 projects have been processed with a diversion rate of 91% totaling 46,000 tons.

## Platinum

4. As part of the Commercial Solid Waste Franchise Agreement, Burrtec Waste Industries, Inc. is contractually obligated to construct and operate a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). An MRF is a solid waste facility where solid wastes or recyclable materials are sorted or separated for the purposes of recycling, processing or composting. The City of Santa Clarita retains the ability to direct the solid waste stream collected under the franchise agreement to the MRF for processing and/or transfer.
5. Santa Clarita uses recycled or reused materials in its capital improvement projects whenever and wherever practical. In addition to using these materials in new buildings, the city also uses these materials in other areas as well.
6. Six roadway resurfacing projects have been completed on city-owned right-of-way over the past 5 years. The city estimates approximately 8 tires are diverted from landfills per ton of resurfacing material. The six resurfacing projects used between 10,000 and 30,000 tons of material per job, resulting in an estimated diversion of 960,000 tires.
7. In early 2011, the City of Santa Clarita's Planning Division began a paperless plan submittal process called ePlans. The program calls for all paper plan submittals to be provided electronically.







# Climate-friendly Purchasing Activities

## Silver

1. The EPPP was adopted by city council. The goal of the EPPP is to conserve natural resources, minimize environmental impacts, eliminate toxics, support strong recycling markets, reduce reliance on landfills, identify environmentally friendly products and distribution systems, reward vendors who reduce environmental impacts, and create a successful model for environmental purchasing.

## Gold

2. The EPPP recommends the purchase of products that minimize environmental impacts, toxics, pollution, and hazardous to worker and community safety.
3. The EPPP institutes practices that reduce waste and minimize environmental impacts whenever practicable and cost-effective by increasing product efficiency and effectiveness, but without reducing safety or workplace quality while promoting fair treatment of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to this policy.

## Platinum

4. The EPPP recommends the purchase products that include recycled content, are durable and long-lasting, conserve energy and water, use agricultural fibers and residues, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, use unbleached or chlorine free manufacturing processes, area lead-free and mercury-free, and use wood from sustainably harvested forests.
5. The EPPP encourages vendors, contractors and grantees to implement this program for all products and services provided to the City of Santa Clarita.
6. The City of Santa Clarita has purchased natural gas and electric vehicles.





# Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels Activities

## Silver

1. The city maintains a fleet of 91 buses that provide mass transit opportunities to residents within the city and surrounding unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. In 2010, approximately 3.7 million riders utilized services offered by Santa Clarita Transit, including local service, commuter services to locations outside the Santa Clarita Valley, and dial-a-ride services. This has resulted in reducing the number of vehicle miles traveled within the city by an estimated 1.6 million miles, with an estimated fuel savings throughout the community of 34,000 gallons.

## Gold

2. The Transit Maintenance Facility contains a public compressed natural gas fueling station. Not only is the public welcome to use the station, but all of the solid waste collection vehicles that serve the City of Santa Clarita refuel at the station as well.
3. The city franchises solid waste collection to Waste Management and Burrtec Waste Industries, Inc. The franchise agreement requires collection vehicles be powered by alternative fuels and currently 47 of the 53 collection vehicles owned by the two franchisees operate on either compressed natural gas or liquefied natural gas.

## Platinum

4. The City of Santa Clarita currently operates and maintains 93 small cars and light trucks in its on-road vehicle fleet. Of the small vehicle fleet, 14% are powered by alternative fuel, including 12 CNG vehicles and one traditional hybrid.
5. In order to provide additional opportunities for residents and businesses to take advantage of alternative energy generation, the city is in the process of revising its current Small Wind-Energy Ordinance.
6. The City of Santa Clarita is participating in the County of Los Angeles' Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program.





# Efficient Transportation Activities

## Silver

1. In 2008, the city council approved the Non-Motorized Master Plan (NMMP). The purpose of the NMMP is to guide the future development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, paseos and trails within the city. The plan focuses on the city's bicycle and pedestrian network, planning and policies related to bicycling and walking, non-motorized connections to transit, and safe routes to schools. The NMMP intends to make bicycling and walking integral modes of transportation in Santa Clarita.

## Gold

2. Even before the advent of Senate Bill 375, the City of Santa Clarita has been dedicated to a land use pattern that offers a diverse housing mix, provides access to a variety of alternative transportation modes and seeks to reduce vehicle miles traveled via mixed used and a reduced dependence on the automobile.
3. A recent example of this is the City of Santa Clarita's Downtown Newhall Specific Plan. Adopted by the city council in December, 2005, the plan is developed around an existing Metrolink station, and seeks a variety of housing options mixed with shopping and entertainment amenities. The city's new General Plan, adopted in June of 2011, furthers that commitment by providing more opportunities for Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

## Platinum

4. Approved by the city council in June, 2011, the city's new General Plan builds upon this dedication in a manner that is consistent with both AB 32 and SB 375. Of the 840 goals, objectives and policies contained within the new General Plan, 16% (approximately 135 policy items) call for TOD in future development projects.
5. The City of Santa Clarita received a bronze certification for being a bicycle friendly community from the League of American Bicyclist.
6. The city celebrated its 11th annual "Dump the Pump Day" on June 16th 2016. On this day, city staff encourages residents to take a pledge and to explore public transportation by raffling off local prizes.





# Land Use and Community Design Activities

## Silver

1. The purpose of the Santa Clarita Community Character and Design Guidelines (CCDG) document is to guide the creation of new residential and non-residential developments and give clear direction for the renovation and redevelopment of built areas. Adopted by the city council in March 2009, the intent of the guidelines is to retain and encourage architectural variety, promote quality development and address both existing and new development.

## Gold

2. The CCDG is an exhaustive text that covers a variety of design features for each community within the city, as well as for residential, mixed use, commercial and industrial development types.
3. The CCDG document expands its focus from green building to green site development. A number of green guidelines are identified for each type of development and address each community on a context-specific basis. For ease of reference, green items are identified within the document with an oak tree icon. It is important to note that the city has incorporated many of these design features in its development review process well before the current CalGreen code became effective in 2011.

## Platinum

4. The city adopted a Parks Master Plan. The purpose of this plan is to provide a realistic guide for the creative, orderly development and management of parks, recreation facilities and programs for the city, now and into the future. The plan is an implementation tool of the General Plan, providing strategies for addressing the General Plan's Vision Statement, as well as goals and policies based on current analysis and community input.
5. The Master Plan includes a section on open space that summarizes various recent open space studies the city has undertaken. There is a strong connection between open space and recreation in Santa Clarita and the plan reflects the multiple roles of natural open space, from recreation to preservation of natural, visual, and cultural resources. Natural open space is also strongly connected to community identity in many ways, including as reinforcement of the areas "western" or early days heritage.





# Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities

## Silver

1. On July 17, 2007, the city council adopted a resolution forming the City of Santa Clarita Open Space Preservation District. The Open Space Preservation District represents a significant step forward in the city's ongoing efforts to acquire, preserve and protect open space.

## Gold

2. Since incorporation, the City of Santa Clarita has acquired 6,100 acres of open space. Approximately 1,850 of those acres utilized funds generated by the Acquisition District.
3. The City of Santa Clarita's Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department currently operates 24 parks throughout the community. In all, the city's parks cover approximately 295 developed acres.

## Platinum

4. The city passed the Ridgeline/Hillside Preservation Ordinances to preserve ridgelines within city limits for the public health, safety, and welfare for the long-term benefit of the community.
5. The City of Santa Clarita has been designated a "Tree City USA" by the Arbor Day Foundation for 22 years.
6. The purpose of the Parks Master Plan is to provide a realistic guide for the creative, orderly development and management of parks, recreation facilities and programs for the city, now and into the future.
7. The purpose of the Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance is to protect and preserve oak trees in the city and to provide regulatory measures designed to accomplish this purpose. The ordinance indicates that it will be the policy of the City of Santa Clarita to require the preservation of all healthy oak trees, unless compelling reasons justify the removal of such trees. The ordinance applies to the removal, encroachment upon and pruning of oak trees.







# Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities

## Silver

1. In July of 2009, the City of Santa Clarita launched GreenSantaClarita.com, a website dedicated to providing information to the entire community about local, regional, state and federal sustainability issues.

## Gold

2. GreenSantaClarita.com provides access to the Enhanced Watershed Management Plan (EWMP) and the Climate Action Plan (CAP) reports so that citizens can take part in improving water and air quality.
3. The website, which was created and is maintained entirely in-house at no cost, consists of the following basic elements: "green storefront", community calendar, sustainable development, and residents and businesses opportunities.

## Platinum

4. GreenSantaClarita.com is featured on the Institute for Local Government's page for Best Practices of Promoting Community and Individual Action and in 2010, the website won an American Planning Award of Merit from the Los Angeles Section, California Chapter for Innovative Green Community Planning. In the two years since launch, the site has received over 41,000 hits from users in 76 countries and met with significant community support.
5. The City of Santa Clarita hosts a series of annual events designed to highlight and promote various environmental and sustainability issues. Many of these events are advertised on the Community Calendar page of GreenSantaClarita.com.
6. In addition to community events, the city also partners with College of the Canyons, a local community college, by providing direct links from GreenSantaClarita.com to classes offered at the college that provide environmentally-oriented curriculum.







© 2019 by Institute for Local Government  
1400 K Street, Suite 205  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916-658-8208  
[www.ca-ilg.org](http://www.ca-ilg.org)

