

BEACON

SPOTLIGHT  
AWARD

WINNER

BEST PRACTICE  
ACTIVITIES



# City of Santa Rosa

Sustainability Best Practice Activities



INSTITUTE FOR  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT<sup>SM</sup>

Promoting Good Government at the Local Level



# City of Santa Rosa

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

SPOTLIGHT AWARD		SILVER LEVEL	GOLD LEVEL	PLATINUM LEVEL
Areas of Accomplishment				
	Agency GHG Reductions	2013 (8%)		
	Community GHG Reductions			2018 (21%)
	Agency Energy Savings	2015 (8%)		
	Natural Gas Savings	2018 (5%)		
	Sustainability Best Practice Activities	2013	2014	2015
	Beacon Award	2018		

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. Completed an Integrated Energy Audit for the City of Santa Rosa Laguna Wastewater Treatment Plant (LTP) in March 2012. This multi-month long study was exhaustive and comprehensive. While the LTP was found to be among most efficiently run, several valuable improvements to increase energy efficiency were identified. These improvements have been implemented.

## Gold

2. Conducted a number of formal energy efficiency audits for the myriad of city operations and buildings including participation in the PG&E financed Sonoma County Energy Watch Program (SCEW). This program has helped the city to retrofit their lighting in city office buildings and in businesses in and around Santa Rosa with the result being reduced energy costs, fewer emissions and a very short payback period; usually less than a year.
3. In 2013, the Sonoma County Energy Watch Program (SCEW) helped the city complete the lighting retrofit at Brown Farm.

## Platinum

4. In 2014, the city retrofitted 2,500 high pressure sodium streetlights with LEDs.
5. In 2014, the city council amended its cooperative agreement to participate in the Sonoma County Energy Independence Program (SCEIP). Resolution 28564.
6. In 2014, the city commenced its combined heat and power project at the Laguna Treatment Plant, and replaced it with an existing digester gas generation system. While this project is not currently generating savings, there are plans to install selective catalytic reducers which will allow greater utilization of natural gas.





# Water & Wastewater Systems Activities

## Silver

1. The Santa Rosa Water Use Efficiency Program has been in effect since 1992. Each year the program helps users become more water efficient in their residence and business. This program not only reduces water use and saves money for our customers, it also reduces the need to deliver, collect, treat and reclaim over 1.4 billion gallons of water annually. This significantly reduces our energy use, costs and GHG emissions related to that energy use.

## Gold

2. In 2014, the city received an official Environmental Management System certification by the National Biosolids Partnership. This certification denotes an on-going commitment to state-of-the-art management of municipal sewage biosolids. This designation required a third-party verification and regular internal and external audits for maintenance.
3. The city is currently exploring the best methods to produce energy and beneficially reuse biosolids with a consultant including ways to improve and extract more energy from our digestion system. The collection and introduction of fats, oils and greases (FOG) to the digesters will improve waste water collection by reducing time, money and energy required to maintain this infrastructure. It will also allow the city to introduce this waste stream directly into the digesters and enhance methane production.

## Platinum

4. The city manages a sub-regional wastewater treatment and beneficial reuse system. The city reclaims all of the wastewater it receives. Over 11 million gallons of the reclaimed water a day is pumped to the Geysers Steam Field located north of the city. Introduction of reclaimed water is responsible for an additional 185 megawatts of clean, green geothermal steam energy annually.
5. The city offers businesses and residents with awards for outstanding water use efficiency efforts.
6. The city offers free graywater workshops to educate residents on the advantages of such systems.
7. The city offers savings for customers who replace lawns with climate appropriate and native plantings. The annual water savings, resultant energy savings and GHG reductions are significant. The city estimates residents have saved 6,242 megawatt hours of energy and 832 metric tons of GHG emissions, as a result its water-efficiency programs.





# Green Building Activities

## Silver

1. In 2009, the city council established initial direction to ramp up the GreenPoint rated residential system from the 2007 version and to adopt the LEED 2009 non-residential program and to incorporated the new version of Title 24 energy requirements.

## Gold

2. In 2014, the city council adopted an ordinance making the Santa Rosa Build it Green (SRBG) Guidelines mandatory for new residential construction in 2006.
3. In 2014, the City of Santa Rosa adopted CalGreen Tier One green building standards.

## Platinum

4. In 2014, the city launched the voluntary Santa Rosa Build It Green (SR BIG) Program. SR BIG followed the US Green Building Councils' Build it Green Guidelines for residential construction in 2002.
5. In 2014, the city began requiring any new city buildings to meet LEED Gold performance standards for new construction and remodels.
6. The city offers information regarding green building practices on its website.





# Waste Reduction and Recycling Activities

## Silver

1. In 2010, the city hosted a free electronic recycling event at the Senior Center.

## Gold

2. Santa Rosa Recycling and Collections provides free collection service for bulky items for single family residential customers in Santa Rosa.
3. Santa Rosa offers a holiday tree drop off location the week following the Christmas holiday to help residents dispose of their trees in an environmentally-friendly way.

## Platinum

4. In 2014, the city placed blue recycling bins in every city office and conference rooms in an effort to promote office recycling.
5. In 2014, the city staff established a library of dishes and cutlery for city functions and events to eliminate the use of single-use plates and utensils. The city receives requests to use the library on a weekly basis. One city event in which over 200 people were served resulted in only six pounds of waste going to the landfill. This is a small but fun step in illustrating what is possible and helping people internalize the impact of what can be done to reduce waste. The library was established with donations from city staff.
6. On February 11, 2014, the city council adopted an ordinance prohibiting single-use carryout bags. A retailer may make a recycled bag available for customers for 10 cents each.





# Climate-friendly Purchasing Activities

## Silver

1. Adopted Environmentally Preferred Purchasing Policy (EPP) in 2007.

## Gold

2. The EPP is dynamic and is annually updated to accommodate the most current thinking, products and purchasing practices which promote repair, recycling, waste reduction, local products/services and worker safety. Updated in 2013 to strengthen the extended producer responsibilities, provide life-cycle cost analysis which includes environmental impact and inclusion of the Community Climate Action Plan as a fundamental tenet of the EPP.
3. The city established a “connection” service to reuse office equipment. The City of Santa Rosa has 20+ work sites; all of which purchase and use things like notebooks, furniture, file folders and many other items which are re-usable. Prior to this inter-office connection, 3-ring binders were used once and tossed out. Now they are put up for adoption; hopefully multiple times.

## Platinum

4. The EPP was updated and adopted by the city council (effective January 29, 2013).
5. The city offers environmentally friendly purchasing tips on its website; such as information about green appliances, green paper products, green office supplies and agricultural, bio-based products.
6. The City of Santa Rosa’s Parks and Recreation Department has an Integrated Pest Management Policy, which specifies use of least toxic pesticides.





# Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels Activities

## Silver

1. Installed new combined heat and power system at the Laguna Wastewater Treatment Plant. Santa Rosa can now use all of the methane produced in the bio solids digesters with room for expansion. This facility also allows the city to improve the digestion process to produce and use more methane from the existing feedstock of waste.

## Gold

2. The city has a current portfolio of 11 photovoltaic (PV) arrays which produce nearly one megawatt of solar-generated energy for city operations.
3. Established a unique and award-winning Fuel from Aquatic Biomass (FAB) Project at the Laguna Treatment Plant.

## Platinum

4. In 2014, the City of Santa Rosa established a partnership with Sonoma Clean Power to deliver a portfolio of 33% renewable energy to all energy users in the city who do not want to voluntarily opt out of the program. Users can also pay higher rates to receive energy from a 100% renewable energy portfolio.
5. On October 7th, 2014, the city council adopted a resolution authorizing enrollment of all municipal electricity accounts in Sonoma Clean Power's "Clean Start" standard service.
6. The City of Santa Rosa purchased four electric vehicles in 2014, replacing four gasoline-powered vehicles in the city's fleet.





# Efficient Transportation Activities

## Silver

1. Bus fleet is a mix of natural gas and clean diesel fuel. As busses are retired, newer cleaner busses are added to the fleet.

## Gold

2. City vehicle fleet contains an ever-increasing percentage of hybrid and all-electric vehicles. The fleet currently features 100 vehicles which are hybrid or all-electric.
3. Rideshare programs to enhance carpooling and reduce car trips have been in place for a decade. Special premium parking spaces are awarded to participants.

## Platinum

4. Any city employee can ride on the city bus system busses for free by showing their employee ID badge.
5. Encourage the use of webinars and teleconferencing to reduce the use of vehicle trips.
6. Installed ten charging stations or plug-in electric vehicles for employee and public use. These stations are part of a regional Plug –in Vehicle Charging Network. This network is coordinated program with other Sonoma County partners to place these stations strategically to promote All-electric vehicle use and reduce “range anxiety.”
7. During 2014, the My Santa Rosa CityBus Real-time Transit Information Program launched, offering riders a variety of platforms for accessing real-time bus arrival information by bus stop. This program is also used by CityBus customer service staff to provide improved service to customers, and by transit system managers to monitor and respond to conditions in the system.
8. The Learn to Ride CityBus Travel Training Program provided 21 training classes to 254 persons in 2014. These sessions provide information to special needs youth, human service organizations, and senior residents on how to utilize the bus. The class includes classroom instruction and a ride on the bus, along with a 31 day free pass to ride.
9. The Santa Rosa Free Ride Trip Reduction Incentive Program provides incentives to encourage people to use a commute alternative to get to and from work.





# Land Use and Community Design Activities

## Silver

1. Adopted Community Action Plan (CCAP) which contains goals and strategies which promote in-fill development and transit oriented development practices.

## Gold

2. Adopted a Station Area Specific Plan, which incorporates housing, neighborhood-serving retail, recreational facilities and mass transit to reduce the need for vehicular travel.
3. Price the fee for on-street parking so that it is relative to congestion.

## Platinum

4. Adopted a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in 2010.
5. Adopted the Downtown (2007) and North Station (2012), which are specific plans around two future Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit stops to provide opportunities for transit supportive development.
6. Adopted the Municipal Climate Change Action Plan in August, 2013.
7. Santa Rosa is participating in the Climate Action 2020 Program, which is developing climate action plans for all the cities and the county.
8. The city has conducted three community workshops to outreach to the public regarding the Community Climate Action Plan.





# Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities

## Silver

1. The City of Santa Rosa partners with local farmers and helps them to stay in farming by offering low-cost irrigation water and the infra structure to maintain the irrigation systems. This helps provide a green-belt of agriculture land around the City of Santa Rosa.

## Gold

2. The city promotes local agriculture in many forms including residential fruit and vegetable gardens, community gardens, and revised city codes to allow raising of chickens and bees in the urban areas.
3. Santa Rosa's city council adopted a Climate Action Plan in June of 2012.

## Platinum

4. The city is part of Sonoma County's Community Climate Action Plan, spearheaded by the Climate Protection Campaign. This group is working together with other local cities to facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions by 25% below 1990 levels by 2015.
5. The city adopted a Municipal Climate Action Plan in August of 2013.
6. The city's General Plan 2035 outlines a variety of policies and practices aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.





# Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities

## Silver

1. Developed an educational coloring book describing the award-winning Fuel from Aquatic Biomass (FAB) Project at the Laguna Treatment Plant to help children and others understand how it works.

## Gold

2. Since 2010, the city has organized an annual Earth Day celebration. This event provides a fun, entertainment, creek clean-ups and activities for all people to celebrate our natural environment. Last year, over 2,000 people attended. The event is solar-powered.
3. In November 2012, the City of Santa Rosa hosted a conference entitled Sonoma County's Strategies for Sustainability, which focused on reducing greenhouse gases in Sonoma County by inspiring innovation, economic vitality and collaborative action between community, business and government.

## Platinum

4. In 2013, the city attended various community events, including the Sonoma County Fair, the Water Smart Expo and the Home Show to outreach to the community regarding information on how to reduce greenhouse gas emission, promote water efficiency, water quality, the treatment of the city's water waste and its recycling uses.
5. Through the Take it From the Tap Program, the city reaches out to youth by providing interactive and fun informational presentations regarding the importance of consuming water and the health benefits of drinking water verses sugary beverages. Each child is provided with their own reusable water bottle.
6. The Water Department hosted a booth at the summertime Wednesday Night Market Water Expo to highlight water saving techniques and water efficiency.
7. The Water Department hosted six greywater workshops in 2014 to provide residents information on how to design, install, use and maintain a laundry to landscape greywater system. Participants were eligible for a \$75 rebate for indoor plumbing parts following the completion of the workshop.
8. The City of Santa Rosa partnered with the Sonoma County Water Agency to host a community-wide Drought Drive-through, which was attended by over 3,000 participants.







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