

Welcome to the Foster City Environmental Sustainability Task Force's (ESTF) 2nd quarterly e-Newsletter! Our goal is to keep you informed about environmental sustainability activities in Foster City.

EVENTS

- New recycling, compost and trash service begins January 1st. Get up-to-date by attending some or all of our educational events:
 - As part of our bi-monthly "Go Green" speaker series event, ESTF is co-hosting an event with RethinkWaste and Recology. Join us on **Wednesday, November 10th from 6:30 PM to 8 PM** in the City Council Chambers, 620 Foster City Blvd and get answers to your questions about the new services coming January 1, 2011. Light refreshments will be served.
 - Want to help educate your community about the new recycling, compost and trash service? Volunteer for the Green Team Block Leader program! A volunteer training will be held in Foster City on **Thursday, October 21st at 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM** in the Emergency Operations Center, 1040 E. Hillsdale Blvd. Refreshments will be provided. Visit: <http://rethinkwaste.org/residents/cartsmart/green-team-block-leaders> for more information and a complete schedule of trainings. Email volunteer@rethinkwaste.org by October 20 to RSVP for a training session.
 - Can't make the events? Learn about the new services by watching the CartSMART videos on demand at <http://www.fostercity.tv/>. These videos also air on Foster City TV (Comcast ch. 27 & AT&T ch. 99) every day at 10 AM and 3 PM. There are customized videos for Single Family Residences, Multi-Family Dwellings and Commercial Customers.
- Alternatives to Lawns – Seminar with Deva Luna

Tired of watering, mowing and weeding your lawn but don't know what to plant instead? Appropriately replacing your lawn reduces water and maintenance costs, encourages habitat for birds and butterflies and does not contribute to global warming. Recycleworks San Mateo County is holding a FREE class on **Wednesday, October 6th from 7 PM to 9 PM** at the San Mateo Garden Center, 605 Parkside Way, San Mateo. You'll come away from the talk with dozens of ideas illustrated by pictures worth more than a thousand words. Guest Speaker Deva Luna combines her passion for plants with a desire to enhance the environment. Luna is a gardening instructor and coordinator for the Santa Clara Teaching Garden and a Landscape Designer/Horticulturist for EarthCare Landscaping. Call (650) 599-1498 for more information or visit http://recycleworks.org/compost/sustainable_lectures.html.

- Fall Compost Giveaway

Compost is great for your garden and reduces the amount of yard waste going to landfills. Pick up your FREE compost on **Saturday, October 9th from 8 AM to 5 PM** at Boat Park on the Corner of Foster City Blvd and Bounty Drive. Foster City residents can take up to 1 cubic yard of compost free of charge. Bring your own shovels, gloves and containers. For more information, view the press release at http://www.fostercity.org/news/press_releases/Prepare-Your-Garden-with-Free-Compost-2010.cfm, call 650-802-3500 or email info@rethinkwaste.org.

- "Green-it-Yourself at Home Depot"

Is your home working too hard? Learn simple projects that you can do in a weekend that will make your home healthier and more comfortable as winter approaches, all while saving you energy and money! San Mateo County Department of Green Building will be at the Foster City Home Depot, 2001 Chess Drive, to answer questions about projects and financing options on **Saturday, October 9th, from 11 AM to 4 PM**. Stop by and get ready to love your home even more!

- Go Green Series continues in 2011

Mark your calendars for the first Go Green event of the New Year: **Wednesday, Jan 19th 2011 from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM** in the City Council Chambers, 620 Foster City Blvd. This event, *Case Study of a Creative and Clever Re-user: How one person simplified her life and bought nothing new for a year*, will give you a unique perspective on recycling, reusing and decreasing your impact on the environment. Light refreshments will be served. Visit www.fostercity.org for more information as the date approaches.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Foster City TV launches Green Footprint series!

Green Footprint is a fresh and practical Foster City TV original production produced in conjunction with ESTF that features eco-trends to help consumers recognize and understand a variety of environmental and sustainability efforts that they can undertake for themselves and their homes. Each episode focuses on green alternatives to minimize negative environmental effects and offer sustainable solutions. Geared toward consumer education, Green Footprint showcases methods to conserve and reduce consumption, gives tips on best practices in the home, and suggests options for making minor or noticeable changes for the better. Watch the first episode, *Home Performance 101* on demand at <http://www.fostercity.tv/>.

- Rebates now available to make your home more energy efficient

Through grant funding by Energy Upgrade California™, PG&E is now offering rebates of \$1,000 to \$3,500 to pilot program participants who perform a variety of home energy upgrades. During the pilot program phase, work must be completed by an approved Energy Upgrade California™ contractor. The contractor can help you meet all the requirements to receive your rebate. Visit <http://www.cbpc.org/> for more information.

Launched in April, 2010, the California Cash For AppliancesSM program also offers rebates for a variety of appliances, including, but not limited to refrigerators, clothes washers, dishwashers, water heaters and HVAC systems. Visit <http://www.cash4appliances.org/> for more information and rebate applications.

- Energy Upgrade CaliforniaTM needs you!

Energy Upgrade CaliforniaTM is an unprecedented, statewide collaborative effort to create a new industry and transform the market for energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades to existing buildings. The overarching goal is to create a sustained market for a home performance approach to upgrading homes, leading to long-term behavior change and the creation of local jobs. The Energy Upgrade CaliforniaTM effort in San Mateo County is seeking examples of homes that have undergone home performance retrofits and testimonials from homeowners who have benefited from these improvements. The case studies will be featured on the County's Energy Upgrade website that is currently under construction. These case studies from local energy champions will help educate and motivate other residents of San Mateo County to participate in this program. If you are willing to have your house featured as an Energy Upgrade CaliforniaTM in San Mateo County case study, please email mgrant@co.sanmateo.ca.us to request an application or for more information.

UPDATES

- Creating Energy Smart Homes Symposium a success!

Over 150 people attended ESTF's Creating Energy Smart Homes Symposium on August 11, 2010 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Attendees got a preview of the newly launched Energy Upgrade CaliforniaTM rebate program offered by PG&E (see below for more details) and presenters from Recurve (formerly Sustainable Spaces) informed the audience of the wide range of improvements that can be made throughout the house and the myriad energy efficiency gains that can be obtained with either incremental improvements or a complete retrofit.

You can view the presentations from this symposium at <http://www.fostercity.org/news/Go-Green.cfm>.

- "Go Green" Speaker Series continues to educate residents on energy and water use

The "Go Green" Speakers Series consists of bi-monthly educational events for Foster City residents that highlight practical, cost-effective and environmentally beneficial actions for the home. The first two events focused on water and energy use.

- *Water-Wise Ways: Stopping the Drain on your Wallet* on Wednesday July 21, 2010. Participants learned about the most typical indoor water use patterns, what products can improve efficiency and what rebates are available to save money and water. Speakers were Geno and Anthony Caccia, troubleshooting accredited green plumbers on HGTV network's *House Detectives* and co-owners of James Caccia Plumbing in San Mateo.
- *The Energy Roadmap: Making Cost-Effective Efficiency Upgrades to Your Home* on Wednesday, September 15, 2010. The audience learned what an energy audit evaluates, how practical

improvements can be made, and discovered available rebates, credits and incentives available to help pay for them. Speakers were Suzanne Emerson from Emerson Environmental, Tyler Lewis from Energy Beyond Design and Michael Carpol from Sustainable San Mateo County.

If you are interested in attending future “Go Green” speaker series events, view the tentative schedule at

http://www.fostercity.org/city_hall/committees/upload/ESTF%20Speaker%20Series%20Launch%20PR%20FINAL.pdf,

If you missed any of our events, don't worry! You can view the presentations at

<http://www.fostercity.org/news/Go-Green.cfm> or watch the Green Footprints video version at

<http://www.fostercity.tv/>.

- City studies Connection Shuttle rate and service options

Do you ride the Foster City Connections Shuttle? You may have been asked to take a survey while onboard. The surveys are part of the City of Foster City's shuttle study. Recent budget cutbacks forced the elimination of westbound Red Line route, and the city has conducted a comprehensive study of options to maintain service while reducing cost to the city. If you did not get a chance to fill out an onboard survey, you can still make your opinion heard by contacting Teresa Whinery at twhinery@fostercity.org.

- Learn how to improve your landscape and reduce storm water runoff

The State of California's Water Board Training Academy and the Storm Water Program jointly produced a film, *Slow the Flow: Make Your Landscape Act More Like a Sponge*, to educate homeowners, community associations, and local governments on the multiple benefits of slowing down storm water runoff using techniques commonly called Low Impact Development (LID) and Green Infrastructure (GI). Visit <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/stormfilm/> to watch the film or order your own FREE copy.

ARTICLES

Take Steps to an Energy Smart Home

By Tyler Lewis | Energy Beyond Design Inc.

Are you thinking of remodeling? Have you ever wondered how you can SAVE MONEY both short-term and long-term through remodeling? Did you know that there are thousands of dollars in rebates now available for simply remodeling your home with energy efficiency in mind?

The focus today is on energy efficiency in buildings. Why? Because today's carbon footprint problems are largely due to residential homes and apartments. In fact, there are nearly two times the carbon emissions from residential homes than there are from passenger cars! How's that for a wake-up call? You can do something about it!

There are four basic steps toward achieving an energy saving home. Here's how:

1. **Get an energy audit:** Perhaps the most important step as an energy audit takes the guesswork from the picture. Sophisticated equipment is used to measure the draftiness, insulation quality, electricity, fossil fuel use (gas), and other factors that influence your home's performance. The necessary data is gathered and diagnosed to determine the precise causes of energy loss, health problems, and discomfort in your home. That's right; energy efficiency remodeling can *also* improve health and comfort!
2. **Determine what upgrades to do:** You may already think that you need insulation, new windows or a new furnace, but are you sure those are the right first steps to take? Because the components in homes work systematically, an energy audit will let you put a road map in place to outline the most beneficial upgrades and the ones that work together first.
3. **Conduct a remodel:** The word remodel can actually be used loosely here. Some call this process a "home energy upgrade," or a "home performance retrofit," but either way; you haven't achieved change until you've taken action.
4. **Test-out:** This step is nearly as important as the first as it provides the proof that the remodel worked for you and achieved desired results. The safety of the home is checked, the achievement of energy reduction to meet targets is confirmed, and the client is left with a much improved home! This step is also necessary for some rebate programs.

There are specialized companies out there who can do nearly all of these steps for you. These companies are generally called Home Performance Contractors. They will perform the energy evaluation, design a remodel plan, provide the contracting services and then help you tackle the rebate process (which can be quite tedious). You can also hire contractors to handle the various components of the job.

Let your curiosity roam! Think about how much you can save on your bills. Consider what an energy efficiency remodel will do for your comfort and health. Decide to take the first step and then take action!

You don't have to give the shirt off your back to save the environment. But it'll help.

By Ashley Mork, ESTF member

Clothing is a durable product, and one that can be re-used easily. So when you consider the negative impact its manufacture could have had on the environment, throwing away your used clothing just doesn't make sense. Polyester is the most widely used manufactured fiber, and the total demand for man-made fibers has nearly doubled in the past 15 years. In order to make synthetic fabrics, producers use a lot of energy and release toxic emissions such as volatile organic compounds, particulates, and acid gases like hydrogen chloride. The total health effects are largely un-studied but have been confirmed to contribute to respiratory disease. Cotton clothing is a better option than its synthetic cousin, however cotton is not without its downsides -- a quarter of all the pesticides used in the United States go into cotton production.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency Office of Solid Waste, Americans throw away more than 68 pounds of clothing and textiles per person per year, and clothing and other textiles represent about 4% of the municipal solid waste. So where does this garbage go in San Mateo County? Our county has 1 active landfill: Ox Mountain in Half Moon Bay. But we can deal with the problem closer to home.

Think “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.” There are lots of ways to re-use the stuff you no longer need. When I was in high school, my friends and I would swap clothing on almost a weekly basis. When you grow out of something, give it to a younger cousin. Have a positive impact on the environment while strengthening community and family relationships! Alternatively, donate your clothing. Not only will you be reducing your individual load on the landfill system, you’ll be helping people in need. There are some great organizations out there that would love to have the clothing you no longer want.

Goodwill: Always a classic; and while you’re there, you can even pick up some cheap dinnerware to use instead of disposable plates.

28 W 25th Ave, San Mateo, CA 94403

(650) 293-8500

St. Vincent de Paul Society:

40 North “B” St. San Mateo, CA 94403

(650) 347-5101

PARCA: A personal favorite of mine because they will pick up your good-condition used clothing and shoes directly from your house. To schedule a pick-up, visit their website at www.parca.org

Career Closet: Donating your professional women’s clothing could help someone make a good first impression in the workplace.

1163 Chess Drive, Suite A, Foster City

(650) 572-1368

Don’t you feel good already, knowing that next time you clean out your closet, you don’t need to contribute to our growing garbage problem? By donating (i.e. re-using) your old polyester track suit, you can prevent a manufacturing plant from making new clothes and contributing foreign compounds to our air and water supply. You could even reduce the pesticide load in the soil by simply giving away your old cotton towel. That’s certainly cheaper than buying only organic cotton.

Sources: Claudio L 2007. Waste Couture: Environmental Impact of the Clothing Industry. Environ Health Perspect 115:A449-A454.

ESTF is an ad hoc citizen task force established by the City Council in 2008 to develop a recommended action plan for community-wide environmental sustainability in Foster City. We completed our plan in 2009 (follow this [link](#) to see our plan). The plan is composed of recommendations in four main categories – energy, water, air quality, and solid waste. ESTF was re-commissioned by the City Council for a 3 year term (through June 2012) to continue to promote environmental sustainability within our community. We are working with the City to implement our recommended actions and to engage in

public outreach and education. In 2010, ESTF is focused on water and energy conservation. To learn more about ESTF, follow this [link](#).

The ESTF mailing list SOLELY consists of quarterly ESTF e-newsletters and announcements on ESTF or ESTF- related events. If you do not wish to continue to receive emails from ESTF, please reply to this email with the subject header: UNSUBSCRIBE. Thank you for your interest.