

THE COUNTY CHRONICLE



A Quarterly Publication of San Joaquin County
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San Joaquin County
Board of Supervisors

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a quarterly publication
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The Chairman's Challenge ...Reduce your Carbon Footprint



Leroy Ornellas, Chairman
San Joaquin County
Board of Supervisors

As a Supervisor, a businessman, and a member of a community, I believe San Joaquin County is a great place to live, work, and raise a family. I also believe that each of us is responsible to do what we can to ensure future generations have the same opportunities and benefits that we enjoy today.

As a Supervisor, I serve on several boards and commissions. One such board is the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. The District is made up of eight Central Valley counties. Its core values include continually strive to protect the health of Valley residents, work to adopt cost-effective air pollution control measures, provide incentives for reducing emissions and develop creative alternatives for achieving emissions reductions. Through serving on this particular board, it has reinforced in me the importance of all of us actively taking steps to reduce our "carbon footprint". [-See Challenge, page 2-](#)

A Message from the County Administrator



Manuel Lopez
San Joaquin County Administrator

It is my pleasure to present you with the inaugural issue of San Joaquin County's newsletter, The County Chronicle. This quarterly publication will highlight the latest news, accomplishments, and events from the various departments throughout the County.

San Joaquin County is comprised of 29 departments and employs well over 6,200 people. We are very proud of our dedicated workforce and that it reflects the diversity of San Joaquin County. Through good times and bad, our staff continue to do the best job possible.

It was only appropriate, with the importance the Board of Supervisors places on the environment, that this issue have a "green" theme. Our hope is, that through this newsletter and the ones that follow, you will develop a better understanding and knowledge of the departments, the individuals who staff those departments, and the services they provide to you... the residents of San Joaquin County.

Thank you and please enjoy our first issue.



San Joaquin County Administration Building located at 44 North San Joaquin Street in Stockton

Open for Business

After nearly ten years in the making, on August 21, 2009, elected officials, County employees, business leaders, and area residents celebrated the official opening of the County's new administration building located in downtown Stockton.

The building is quite impressive with its signature glass atrium that encompasses the main public lobby on the ground floor and rises six stories to the chambers of the



Board of Supervisors. The shape of this design is intended to evoke images of stone formations of nearby Yosemite National Park, while the glass signifies open and transparent government.

The polished granite floors depict the County's agricultural land uses and waterways of the Delta. Wood paneling and a backlit glass image of the County seal surround the lobby with a grand staircase leading visitors to the second floor.

Beyond the unique beauty of the building are the green features which earned the County a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Certification from the United States Building Council.

The building's green features include; recycled construction and furnishing materials, high-performance roof and window materials for superior insulation, environmental controls and sensors for temperatures and lighting, drought-resistant landscaping, a solar-powered generation system, an air filtration system which removes fine particulates from the air, interior design to maximize natural daylight, and furnishings that reduce the amount of contaminants released into the atmosphere.

[-See Building, page 3-](#)

When you use a manual push mower, you're cutting down on pollution and the only thing in danger of running out of gas is you! - Grey Livingston

Green Purchasing...Caveat Emptor (Let the Buyer Beware!)

By: David Louis, Director of Purchasing

Most of us have heard of the seven deadly sins. You know...greed, gluttony, etc. But have you heard of the seven "sins" involved with "green" or environmentally-friendly products? In December 2007, environmental marketing firm 'TerraChoice' gained national press coverage for releasing a study called "The Six Sins of Greenwashing" which found that more than 99% of over 1,000 common consumer products randomly surveyed for the study were guilty of greenwashing.

Greenwash defined...a blending of green and whitewash; verb: the act of misleading consumers regarding the environmental practices of a company or the environmental benefits of a product or service.

A later study added a seventh "sin". According to the study, the seven "sins" of greenwashing are:

Sin of Hidden Trade-Off...e.g., energy efficient electronics that contain hazardous materials. 998 products and 57% of all environmental claims committed this sin.

Sin of No Proof...e.g., shampoos claiming to be certified organic but with no verifiable certification. 454 products and 26% of environmental claims committed this sin.

Sin of Vagueness...e.g., products claiming to be 100% natural when many naturally-occurring substances are hazardous, like arsenic and formaldehyde (doesn't sound appealing, does it?). Seen in 196 products or 11% of environmental claims.

Sin of Irrelevance...e.g., products claiming to be CFC (Chlorofluorocarbons)-free. Even though CFC's were banned 20 years ago, this sin was seen in 78 products and 4% of environmental claims.

Sin of Fibbing...e.g., products falsely claiming to be certified by an internationally-recognized environmental standard like 'EcoLog', 'Energy Star', or 'Green Seal'. Found in 10 products or less than 1% of environmental claims.

Sin of Lessor of Two Evils...e.g., organic cigarettes or environmentally-friendly pesticides. This occurred in 17 products or 1% of environmental claims.

Sin of Worshipping False Labels is committed by a product that, through either words or images, gives the impression of third-party endorsement where no such endorsement exists.

Most all of us want to make the right choices in identifying acceptable environmentally-preferable products. Our County, in adopting Administrative Policy 2737 in February 2008, has made a formal commitment in establishing purchasing practices to promote sustainability of the environment. We do a good job of it now, but we know we can do better. Education, awareness, and continuous review and measurement will help us to improve.

-See Green, page 3-



Challenge...continued from page 1

So, here's is my challenge to you...take steps to reduce your "carbon footprint" by 5% over the next six months and 10% in the next year. Now what? Well, first of all, discover the size of your "footprint". There are several websites out there which can help you determine the size of your "footprint". One website, www.nature.org, provides a "carbon footprint" calculator so you can take a few minutes, answer a few questions, and find out exactly how big your "footprint" is. When I did it, I was truly surprised at the results.

Okay, so now you know. Are you going to take my challenge and commit to reducing your "footprint" by 5% over the next six months and an additional 5% at the end of a year? I believe you can do it. I think you need to do it. We all need to do this for our children, grandchildren, and the generations that will follow. I want the future generations to look back at us and thank us for the steps we took to protect the environment and their future.

Make sure you read the **Ways to Go Green** article on page three for some great tips for reducing your "footprint". - [Return to Page 1](#) -

Greening the Fleet

By: Dan McCann, Fleet Services Manager



In San Joaquin County and across the nation, fuel costs continue to be one of the largest operational costs to a vehicle fleet. Our Public Works Fleet Services Division has included Hybrid vehicle purchases in its vehicle replacement plan for several years now.

Over the years, federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funding has provided \$462,000 for the purchase of 77 Hybrid vehicles, along with another \$108,000 from the local San Joaquin Valley Air District. A new grant beginning in 2011 will support the purchase of another 60 Hybrid vehicles over the next three years. Although Hybrids are initially more expensive than conventional vehicles, the grants have covered the incremental costs of the vehicles, and are expected to do so through 2014. Electric-gasoline Hybrid vehicles have nearly zero emissions and improved fuel economy, which are obvious benefits of "greening the fleet". Additionally, lower overall maintenance costs and higher sales values are anticipated.

Of the 842 vehicles in the County fleet, 200, or 23.8%, are currently alternative-fuel vehicles; 8 are Bifuel, 49 are dedicated Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), and 143 are Hybrid (electric-gasoline). Over the expected life of the "green" fleet, the County anticipates an operational savings in excess of \$325,000.

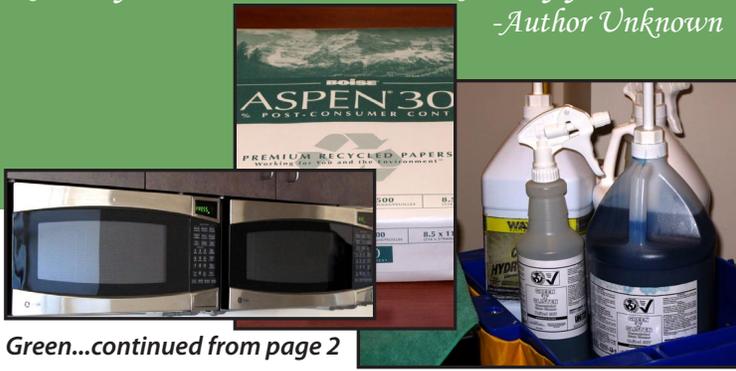
So, next time you're in the market for a new car, think Hybrid. Your wallet, the environment, and future generations will thank you.

Take care of the Earth and she will take care of you

-Author Unknown

When we heal the Earth, we heal ourselves - David Orr

We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children - Native American Proverb



Green...continued from page 2

Being aware of greenwashing in reviewing products and materials we consider for purchase both as part of a large contract and on an individual basis is just one important aspect of "green" purchasing practices. Great strides have been made recently to ensure that products advertised as green are indeed environmentally-friendly. However, with new products being introduced daily, it's important to know how to look for key evidence that products do indeed meet green standards. The County's Purchasing, Public Works, Facilities Management, Information Systems departments and others are all working hard to improve and share information and put in place contracts that include verified green products so that it takes some of the guesswork out of the equation for you. Let the buyer beware!

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Reducing, Reusing, and Recycling

Recycling is important, but first and foremost, use less. The things you do use can often be used over and over again - either for the same purpose or for something totally new. Be creative. Not only are you cutting back on your resource use, you'll also end up with some cool eye-catching conversation starters.

Set aside bins in your home to separate and collect recyclable materials, including newspapers, white paper, clear and colored glass, plastic water and milk bottles, aluminum, cardboard, batteries, and fluorescent light bulbs. Find out what recycling services are available in your area.

Packing peanuts and other loose fill sit in a landfill for centuries! But, there are several places you can bring them for recycling. Call the Peanut Hotline at 1-800-828-2214 for more information.

Many computers, monitors, cell phones and other electronics include toxic materials that should not sit in landfills. You'd probably be surprised how many retailers and other companies will take those items for recycling. You can also recycle other items, such as athletic shoes, mattresses, dry-cleaning hangers and plastic.

Cleaning, Transportation, and Personal Practices

Use non-toxic, environmentally-safe, and biodegradable cleaning projects, including laundry products.

Rather than driving to work, try walking, riding a bike, taking the bus or carpooling if you can. Even if it's just a day or two a week, it will help. You'll be cutting down on air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and oil consumption.

Buy locally-grown products when possible. It reduces the amount of fossil fuels required to transport the things you buy from other parts of the country or world. It also reduces the amount of plastic and paper products for packaging. When shopping, use your own reusable tote bags. They're sturdier than plastic or paper bags and don't end up in a landfill.

Unplug the "secret energy addicts"...the TV's, DVD Players, VCR's, cable boxes, computers, printers, video game consoles, microwave ovens, digital cameras, and AC adapters for cell phones. Most electronic equipment is designed to consume electricity when it is turned off. The "off" setting is really a "standby" or "idle" mode. Standby power in the average household consumes 1,000 kilowatt hours of electricity annually. That's enough energy to power an entire home for two months or more! Use compact fluorescent lamps, and check with your power company about using "green" power such as solar, or wind turbines. Green...the way to go!

Information courtesy of U.S. Green Building Council



Building...continued from page 1

The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors established an art committee in November 2007 to conduct research and recommend original art to be placed in the new administration building. The Board wanted to ensure that the art would be representative of the diversity of the residents of the County. That goal was realized.

Artists selected included renowned glass sculptor Dale Chihuly whose work is exhibited in several U.S. cities as well as abroad; Stockton photographer Steve Pereira who designed the building's elevator door artwork. Also showcased is work from Tracy artist Frank Cameron specializing in metal art, and painters Ray Roberts, Gregory Kondos, and Gil Dillinger. The fountain located at the corner of Weber Avenue and San Joaquin Street was the creation of Laddie Flock, Jeffy Gamboni, and Scott Runion. Also on display are the mammoth bones which were discovered during construction.

The new administration building currently houses over 400 employees. Departments now located in the building include; Board of Supervisors, County Administrator, County Counsel, Facilities Management, Purchasing and Support Services, Auditor-Controller, Information Systems, Human Resources, Labor Relations, Registrar of Voters, Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk, and Treasurer-Tax Collector.

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