

Guide to Green Resources

So you've thought about changing your habits and trying to treat yourself and the environment better ... but where to start? We have compiled this list to help you get going—so read on to learn where to recycle, how to be green around the home and at work, where to get involved in the green movement, how to eat better and how to calculate your carbon footprint, as well as where to go to celebrate Earth Day.

CITY, COUNTY AND STATE ORGANIZATIONS

Alameda County Green Business Program

ACGB, coordinated by the Association of Bay Area Governments, a regional planning agency, certifies environmental performance in businesses and public agencies, promoting them based on their commitment to operate in more environmentally responsible ways. (510) 464-7961, pamela.evans@acgov.org. www.greenbiz.ca.gov

Bay Area Air Quality Management District Spare the Air

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District regulates the stationary sources of air pollution in the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, southwestern Solano and southern Sonoma. Its Spare the Air Program disseminates information about air pollution and encourages citizens to change behavior patterns—like forego driving in favor of public transportation—to prevent it. *Air quality forecasts and advisories:* (800) HELP AIR, 939 Ellis St., San Francisco, (415) 749-4900. www.baaqmd.gov, www.sparetheair.org

Bottles and Cans.com

Visit this Web site, an educational tool of the state's Department of Conservation, to find out information on the California Refund Value bottle- and can-redemption program as well as why, what and where to recycle CRV beverage containers plus tips on starting a recycling program and more. www.bottlesandcans.com

City of Oakland Public Works Agency Environmental Services Division

This city division oversees everything from creek and watershed protection and energy efficiency to environmental compliance and green building practices, and it's all summarized on this Web site that also lists other environmental organizations, online periodicals and information on local lecture series. 250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Suite 5301, Oakland, (510) 238-7283. www.oaklandpw.com

Flex Your Power

Flex Your Power is California's statewide energy-efficiency marketing and outreach campaign, a partnership among California's utilities, residents, businesses, institutions, government agencies and nonprofit organizations to save energy. The campaign includes a comprehensive Web site with a searchable database of money-saving rebates, grants and loans that local utilities offer customers to help offset upfront costs for many energy- and water-saving measures. 2183 Union St., San Francisco, (866) 431-FLEX (3539), www.fypower.com

INS AND OUTS OF RECYCLING

Alameda County Computer Resource Center

The ACCRC disposes of electronic waste, including computers and monitors or anything "that plugs into an outlet." Residents of Berkeley can arrange for free curbside pickup. 1501 Eastshore Highway, Berkeley, (510) 528-4052, info@accrc.org. www.accrc.org

Alameda County Household Hazardous Waste Facility

Throwing batteries and fluorescent lights in the trash is illegal, so dispose of them and many other hazardous items at this facility, open 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Thu.-Sat. 2100 E. Seventh St., Oakland, (800) 606-6606. www.stopwaste.org/home/index.asp?page=577



Alameda County Industries

ACI collects solid waste and recyclables from Alameda and San Leandro residents and businesses. 2307 Blanding Ave., Suite B, Alameda, (510) 483-1400. www.alamedacountyindustries.com

East Bay Municipal Utility District

EBMUD, the publicly owned utility that supplies water and provides wastewater treatment for portions of Alameda and Contra Costa counties, offers information on water conservation and recycling, such as rebates on low-flow toilets, appliances and landscaping, as well as data on water irrigation, water-conservation devices, self-survey kits and on-site water surveys. 375 11th St., Oakland, (866) 403-2683, custsvc@ebmud.com. www.ebmud.com

EcoHaul

This Bay Area company specializes in landfill diversion, particularly socially and environmentally responsible waste removal and disposal solutions, such as reuse, recycling and donation. (800) ECOHAUL (326-4285). www.ecohaul.com

Waste Management

Waste Management, the private Houston-based waste-management corporation, collects and disposes waste and provides recycling and environmental services for residential and commercial customers. 172 98th Ave., Oakland, (510) 613-8710. www.wastemanagement.com

BE GREEN AT HOME AND WORK

California Green Builder

CGB is a certification program for green builders. 1215 K St., Sacramento, (866) 340-8912. www.cagreenbuilder.org

Oakland Sustainable Community Development Initiative

This city initiative was conceived to produce sustainable community-development recommendations and action steps to make Oakland greener. The working group's annual reports can be read online. 250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Suite 4314, Oakland, (510) 615-5566. www.sustainableoakland.com

Pacific Gas & Electric Energy Center

This PG&E center offers technical assistance, training in energy conservation and efficiency, and information on incentive programs for consumers and businesses. Replace your appliances with Energy-Star-rated ones to earn a rebate from PG&E (www.pge.com/res/rebates). 851 Howard St., San Francisco, (800) PGE-5000, pecinfo@pge.com. www.pge.com/myhome

StopWaste.org

StopWaste.org, the Alameda County Waste Management Authority and the Alameda County Source Reduction and Recycling Board operating as a public agency, runs this Web site of green resources on topics from recycling, hazardous waste disposal and green gardening to environmental purchasing, green building and more for residents, businesses and industries, schools and local governments. 1537 Webster St., Oakland, 877-STOPWASTE, (877) 786-7927. www.stopwaste.org

Sustainable Business Alliance

The Sustainable Business Alliance, a membership organization of sustainable companies, promotes sustainable business practices, nurtures environmentally savvy businesses, advocates for environmentally progressive policies and programs and seeks to improve the environmental profile of Easy Bay economic activity. P.O.Box 11944, Berkeley, (510) 931-6560, info@sustainablebiz.org. www.sustainablebiz.org

The Institute of Urban Homesteading

Founded by artist, activist and "kitchen hack," K. Ruby, the Institute of Urban Homesteading is a new educational project offering classes on a wide range of topics, including gardening, beekeeping, handmade lotion preparation and bodywork. The premise of the Oakland-based school is a return to a simpler, more pleasurable and more sustainable way of life. Class locations vary. (510) 277-1023, iuh@sparkybeegirl.com. www.sparkybeegirl.com/iuh.html

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Ecology Center

The Ecology Center is an environmental nonprofit advocate and ecology center dedicated to increasing environmentally sustainable living practices. It offers classes, handles Berkeley's curbside recycling pickup, produces a magazine and does demonstration projects and more. 2530 San Pablo Ave., Suite H, Berkeley, (510) 548-2220, erc@ecologycenter.org. www.ecologycenter.org

Ella Baker Center for Human Rights

The Ella Baker Center utilizes public advocacy and outreach and has formed a Green Jobs Corps to ensure that new "green-collar" jobs in construction, technology, agriculture and energy go to those who most need those jobs. The Green-Collar Jobs Campaign fights for eco-equity for the poor and underserved. 344 40th St., Oakland, (510) 428-3939. www.ellabakercenter.org/gcjc



Green California

California is under gubernatorial mandate for its public buildings to be 20 percent more energy efficient by 2015, and the state encourages the private sector to follow suit. This Internet portal, under the auspices of the state's Division of General Services, explores green building and energy-efficiency practices across the state. green@dgs.ca.gov. www.green.ca.gov

Grid Alternatives

Since 2001, GRID Alternatives has been working to bring the power of solar electricity and energy efficiency to low-income homeowners, and to develop renewable energy solutions that are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable. The Oakland-based organization also provides community members with training and hands-on experience with renewable energy technologies. 1610 Harrison St., Suite C, Oakland, (510) 550-8535. www.gridalternatives.org

FARMERS MARKETS

California Federation of Certified Farmers' Markets

CFCFM is a statewide membership organization whose participants are Certified Farmers' Markets, meaning the county agricultural commissioner has approved the site as a place where farmers sell only products they grow themselves. Such CFMs in California must follow California Department of Food and Agriculture standards. P.O. Box 1813, Davis, (800) 949-FARM (3276). www.cafarmersmarkets.com

Edible East Bay

A magazine-like, community-oriented foodie newsletter published quarterly, *Edible East Bay* advocates bringing fresh, healthy, affordable food to the masses and publishes a list of East Bay farmers markets. It's one of dozens of similar franchise products produced by Edible Communities Inc. and is circulated free in Alameda and Contra Costa counties or is available by subscription. 5245 College Ave., No. 836, Oakland, (510) 654-5492. www.edibleeastbay.com

GREEN FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

Oakland EarthExpo: The Sustainable Urban Environment

More than 100 businesses and organizations exhibit 10 a.m.–2 p.m. April 16 at this downtown fair on sustainable urban environment. Check the Public Works Agency's Web site for special Earth Day events on April 19. Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, 14th Street and Broadway, Oakland, (510) 615-5566. www.oaklandpw.com/Page291.aspx

38th Annual Berkeley Earth Day

This family-oriented green event 11 a.m.–5 p.m. April 19 supports environmentalism with cultural performances, inspirational speakers and hands-on resources. Civic Center Park, Allston and Martin Luther King Jr. ways, Berkeley, (510) 654-6346, ext. 2. www.hesternet.net/event.htm

San Francisco Green Festival

San Francisco hosts one of the largest Green Festivals in the country, with more than 200 speakers and exhibits by more than 400 green businesses Nov. 14–16. San Francisco Concourse Exhibition Center, 635 Eighth St., San Francisco, (415) 255-0598. www.greenfestivals.org

EMISSIONS CALCULATORS

These carbon calculators will help you quickly determine the impact your everyday life has on the environment. The amount you drive, fly, forget to recycle—it all adds up:

Clean Air, Cool Planet

www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/OfficeFootprint.php

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/ind_calculator.html

CARBON OFFSETS

Balance your carbon emissions by purchasing special "offsets." A few worth noting:

TerraPass

568 Howard St., Fifth Floor, San Francisco, (415) 692-3411. www.terrapass.com

Carbon Fund

1320 Fenwick Lane, Suite 206, Silver Spring, Md., (240) 293-2700. www.carbonfund.org

Sterling Planet

3295 River Exchange Drive, Suite 300, Norcross, Ga. (877) 457-2306. www.sterlingplanet.com

Bonneville Environmental Foundation

240 SW First Ave., Portland, Ore., (866) 233-8247. www.greentagsusa.org ■

