

# Green County



## Green County website launched

San Bernardino County residents and businesses can learn about meaningful steps they can take to protect the environment and actions the County and others have taken to go “green” when they visit a comprehensive Website ([www.greencountysb.com](http://www.greencountysb.com)) launched in September. “We collected information from a number of sources and selected the best ‘green’ tips and local projects we could find to create a Website that will be both enlightening and useful to residents,” said Supervisor Paul Biane, who proposed a series of policy initiatives dubbed Green County San Bernardino in August 2007.

The program, which was unanimously approved by the Board of Supervisors, included waiving County building fees when home or business owners install renewable energy systems or energy-saving air-conditioners or tankless water heaters. In addition, new home developers can get moved to the front of County’s final inspection line if the homes meet stringent California Green Builder standards. The new website features more information about Green County San Bernardino as well as details on how other local agencies and private businesses are reducing their impacts on the environment through renewable energy and sustainable design. Visitors will also find a variety of “green” tips including how to find a carpool partner, how to reduce junk mail, and how to conserve water through the use of water-efficient landscaping.

## Cities applauded for “Going Green”

In February, Supervisor Paul Biane commended San Bernardino County cities that had implemented “green” policies to promote alternative energy, sustainable development and recycling in their communities. For example, Barstow adopted a landscape ordinance requiring desert adaptive landscaping for all new construction, Chino installs artificial turf instead of grass in medians and provides low-flow toilets to residents, and Loma Linda provides expedited plan checks for energy-efficient developments. Additionally, several cities have adopted resolutions to become Green Valley Jurisdictions through the Green Valley Initiative, an unprecedented movement designed to address the regional jobs/housing imbalance by attracting and developing “green” technology companies and jobs to the Inland Empire.

## Facilities Management creates water-wise demonstration garden

In a continuing effort to incorporate green business practices into daily operations and conserve natural resources, the county Facilities Management Department turned what was originally 27,000 square feet of turf into a water-wise demonstration garden and turf test center. The garden is an opportunity to showcase the beauty and diversity of drought-tolerant California-friendly and -native plants. It also provides living examples of options for homeowners in their own yards and other county facilities for their landscaping. The turf test center features plots of five different types of turf, selected for their drought-tolerance, aesthetic appeal, and durability. The plots are being monitored

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and water consumption is being tracked to determine which type of turf offers the most durable and appealing lawn while using the least amount of water. Additional features of the garden to promote the most efficient use of resources include ambient light irrigation controls, mulch, and drip irrigation systems. The mulch used by Facilities Management is green waste diverted from landfills. The installation of a more efficient drip irrigation system, as compared to traditional sprinklers, and in conjunction with plants suited to the climate of San Bernardino County and the measures described above has resulted in a projected annual water savings of 80 percent or 1.8 million gallons annually for this project.

### County launches Disposal Site Diversion Program

In 2008, the county's Solid Waste Management Division created the Comprehensive Site Diversion Program to substantially increase the rate at which reusable materials are diverted away from landfills and sent to facilities where they can be recycled. The program is in effect at all six of the county's regional landfills and three of the county's transfer stations. As customers enter the facility, a load checker identifies loads containing potential divertible materials such as wood, construction and demolition debris, yard waste, metals, plastics, glass, tires, mattresses, paper and cardboard. Customers with loads containing these materials are directed to the recyclable and bulky item storage area. All recovered/recycled items are stored in this area for later removal by a contract recycler. Items that cannot be recycled are used on-site – for instance, yard waste is ground and used to cover daily waste. Since the program's implementation, the county has seen a significant increase in the percentage of the waste stream that is diverted. As an example, the busiest landfill, Mid-Valley in Rialto, diverted 6,000 tons in August of 2008, compared to 1,390 tons of waste in August of 2007.

### Green library opens in Highland

May saw the dedication of the first-ever library and environmental learning center, the Sam J. Racadio Library & Environmental Learning Center in Highland. This 30,000-square-foot facility hosts an interesting and entertaining collection of creatures of all kinds: snakes, lizards, frogs, turtles, fish, insects and small mammals. Patrons are treated to a number of educational exhibits on solid waste management, conservation and other environmental themes. Children have an interactive trash truck exhibit that teaches them how to sort and recycle while they're young, preparing them for more responsible stewardship of their planet as they grow up. There's an open-air atrium-amphitheater for outside events and the roof includes a garden with specialized plantings selected for drought-tolerance, along with solar electric panels and solar-tube lighting that brings natural sunlight down into the library proper, providing big savings in energy costs. All the building's concrete and steel are recycled. The flooring is almost entirely recycled tires. Even water run-off is set to be captured and allowed to filter back down into the water table.

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### Board adds “silver” lining to Crestline library project

In March, the Board of Supervisors increased the design budget for the planned Crestline Library so architects can incorporate Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver standards in the building design. The additional \$90,500 approved by the Board will also cover the cost of creating a three-dimensional library rendering for use during public presentations. The Board of Supervisors has shown a commitment to delivering county facilities that adhere to rigorous green building standards to conserve resources such as energy and water and lessen impacts on the environment.

### County totes green for NASCAR

The Green County San Bernardino movement picked up speed in February as a program offering eco-friendly reusable shopping bags took the green flag at the Auto Club Speedway of Southern California in Fontana. The Board of Supervisors provided green reusable shopping bags to infield race fans during NASCAR events at the speedway. The bags can carry up to 22 pounds and are recyclable once they are no longer usable. About 12 million barrels of oil and 14 million trees are used to produce billions of plastic and paper bags each year in the U.S.

### Board moves to form permanent oversight of preserve

In May the Board of Supervisors approved a formal application to create a single entity to permanently oversee the North Etiwanda Preserve, which encompasses 1,200 acres along the foothills between Fontana and Rancho Cucamonga. The application to the Local Agency Formation Commission calls for the consolidation of two community service area open space districts that were created to maintain the preserve using endowment funding. Since 1994, developers and public agencies have purchased land for the preserve as mitigation for other projects, such as the construction of the 210 Freeway. In addition, the entities set aside funding for maintenance of the mitigation lands.

### County purchases “green” dump trucks

In January, the Board of Supervisors approved the purchase of three compressed natural gas-powered dump trucks to replace pollution-producing diesel trucks. These natural gas trucks are part of the County of San Bernardino’s concerted effort to use ‘green’ technology to lessen impacts on our environment. The County has already added about 50 electric-hybrid vehicles to its fleet over the past three years, and the County will continue to invest in environmentally friendly vehicles as it continues moving forward. The Department of Public Works recommended purchasing the three compressed natural gas-powered trucks to replace aging and difficult-to-maintain diesel units in the Flood Control District’s vehicle fleet.