



# The SLO Green Scene

SLO GREEN BUILD'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

Winter 2010

## SLOGB Meetings:

### GREEN PEER REVIEW

Free Review of Projects by Local Green Building Professionals

Jan. 19th, Feb. 16th, & Mar. 16th, 2010  
5:00-6:30 PM

Location: Ludwick Comm. Center, Room A  
864 Santa Rosa Street, San Luis Obispo  
Contact: [peer-review@slogreenbuild.org](mailto:peer-review@slogreenbuild.org)  
(Dates and times subject to change, verify before attending)

### USGBC C-4 OPEN MEETING

Jan. 15th, Feb. 19th, & Mar. 19th, 2010  
12:00-1:00 PM

Bring your lunch to discuss LEED topics  
Location: RRM Design Group,  
3765 S. Higuera Street, Suite 102, SLO  
Contact: (No RSVP necessary) Andy Pease:  
[andy@inbalancegreen.com](mailto:andy@inbalancegreen.com)

### SLOGB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jan. 13th, Feb. 10th, & Mar. 10th, 2010  
6:30-8:30 PM

Location: Air Pollution Control District  
Conference Room, 3433 Roberto Ct., SLO  
Contact: Lana Adams @805.286.0072  
or [admin@slogreenbuild.org](mailto:admin@slogreenbuild.org)

### GREEN BUILDING ALLIANCE

Jan. 6th, Feb. 3rd, & Mar. 3rd, 2010  
5:00-6:30 PM

Location: The Club House at This Old House  
740 W. Foothill, San Luis Obispo  
Contact: Judy King, [judy@phatenergy.com](mailto:judy@phatenergy.com)

### APPROPRIATE TECH. COALITION

Jan. 20th, Feb. 17th, & Mar. 17th, 2010  
6:30 PM

Location: 547 B Marsh St. San Luis Obispo  
Contact: Ken Haggard [slog@slonet.org](mailto:slog@slonet.org)

*Green Scene editing and graphic layout by Jessie Skidmore, [www.jessieskidmore.com](http://www.jessieskidmore.com)*

## BREAKING IT DOWN: ENERGY SAVINGS

By Tom Murray

### Q: WHAT ARE THE THREE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE THINGS I CAN DO TO REDUCE MY UTILITY COSTS?

**A:** The most cost effective change you can make is actually free! Simply changing your behavior can save you hundreds even thousands of dollars a year. By adopting habits that use fewer resources you can expect to save between 10 to 20% on your utility bills.

If you want to change the habits that cost you money, you first have to become aware of them. We all take it for granted that power will be available when we flip a switch, water will always come out of the faucet and a warm house and a hot shower will always be available. We don't even think about it.

Try an experiment: over the next week see if you can find ten ways you waste water or energy in your home. My guess is you will be surprised at what you find. Do you leave lights on when you don't need them? Do you need all the lights on? Do you leave doors or windows open when the heat is on? Do you run the hot water when you aren't using it? Do you turn the heat off when you aren't at home? Do you turn the sprinkler system off during the rainy season? Have you checked your programmable thermostat to make sure it is set correctly? Do you turn off the TV and computers when not in use? Do you unplug phone chargers when you are not using them? Many modern electronics silently suck energy when they appear to be off.

Once you are aware of the opportunities for conservation in your home, you can work on changing the habits that waste energy.

It saves money, makes you feel good and best of all it is free!

You will probably want to reward yourself for saving all that energy by saving even more energy. Your next step is to begin exchanging your old-style incandescent light bulbs for energy efficient CFLs (compact fluorescent lights).

The new CFL is not your daddy's fluorescent light. CFLs now come in configurations that fit almost any fixture including spot and flood lights, standard bulbs and in a variety of warmer colors that are far more pleasing to the eye. Each bulb you exchange can save you \$30 or more over the life of the bulb. They use 75% less energy for lighting and generate 75% less heat. PG&E along with manufacturers frequently offer rebates and local hardware stores such as Miners Hardware offer sales on a regular basis. With sales rebates and discounts you will find offers you can't or at least shouldn't refuse.

As you select your new CFLs, look for the Energy Star label. Remember that the bulbs need to be disposed of properly. They contain very small amounts of mercury and should not be put into the garbage. Many retailers provide recycling services for their customers. Bulb selection and other information are available at [www.energystar.gov/cfl](http://www.energystar.gov/cfl).

Once you have changed wasteful habits and your old incandescent bulbs you will see immediate savings. Properly motivated, you will want to continue the "virtuous



Excerpt from City of SLO/ Utilities/  
Solid Waste Management &  
Recycling:

In 1989, the State of California passed into law Assembly Bill 939 (AB939). This law requires all cities and counties to reduce waste to the local landfills. The waste reduction requirements are based on weight. There are two tiers of required waste reduction. Tier one is to achieve a 25% waste reduction by the year 1995 and tier two is to achieve a 50% waste reduction by the year 2000. Both goals have been met, thanks to the increased recycling efforts by the citizens of the city and county. The City is committed to maintaining or increasing this level of waste reduction.

Learn more at:  
City of San Luis Obispo Utilities Department  
[www.slocity.org/utilities/recycling.asp](http://www.slocity.org/utilities/recycling.asp)  
or by calling SLO utilities Conservation office at  
805.781.7213  
OR SLO County Integrated Waste Management Authority  
[www.imwa.com](http://www.imwa.com)

*register now:*

## LEED Green Associate Course

Cuesta College, San Luis Obispo Campus

This introductory course covers the basics of green building and the USGBC LEED Rating Systems. Upon completion you will be prepared to take the USGBC Green Associate Exam.

Nine (9) weeks, Tuesday evenings from 5pm -7pm.  
Starts March 16th, 2010

**Register now, class does fill up. Registration can be done online:**  
<http://www.cuesta.edu/>

**STARTS MARCH 16**

### The following items are recyclable:

- aluminum, steel & tin cans
- cardboard boxes and chipboard boxes (cereal boxes)
- glass jars & bottles
- greeting cards
- junk mail and magazines
- newspaper and mixed paper (including wrapping paper)
- paper grocery bags
- plant containers
- plastic grocery bags (must be bagged together)
- plastic containers\* #1,2,3,4,5 & 7
- telephone books
- office paper

\*Remove beverage caps from plastic bottles. Make sure all bottles are rinsed and DRY when recycled.

### Allowable Green Waste

- grass
- leaves
- shrub trimmings
- weeds
- tree prunings
- construction wood

All items must be less than 6" in diameter, no more than 4' in length, and weigh 100 lbs or less. No painted, stained or treated wood. No other items.

There is no additional cost, so if you are one of the 35% who have not yet recycled green waste, why not get on board today? You will need to obtain a special wheeled container by calling San Luis Garbage at 543-0875.

### The following items are NOT recyclable:

- aerosol cans
- aseptic packages (square liquid drink cartons)
- ash
- auto glass
- batteries
- ceramic materials
- clothing
- coat hangers
- fluorescent tubes
- juice boxes
- kleenex
- leaded crystal
- light bulbs
- liquids
- mirrors
- needles & syringes
- packing peanuts
- paint containers
- paper plates (if used)
- paper towels (used or not)
- paper coated with plastic
- polystyrene
- PVC piping
- rubber bands
- styrofoam
- waxed milk and juice cartons
- window glass

Curbside recycling for used motor oil is available for City residents. Please call San Luis Garbage at 805-543-0875 for information on this service.

## SLOGB Programs:

### LEARN BUILD SAVE

Free public educational series featuring local Green Building professionals on topics directly relevant to sustainably-minded homeowners on the Central Coast.

### ROADSHOW

Educational presentation by local Green Building professionals including a short history of green building, local green projects, and green tips.

### GREEN BUILDING ALLIANCE

Networking and education opportunities for industry professionals, including certification and training.

### PEER REVIEW

Free review of projects by local Green Building professionals.

### APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY

Resources and technology appropriate to sustaining a society of finite resources at

### NET ZERO AND CARBON NEUTRAL (FORMERLY THE 2030 CHALLENGE)

Working toward carbon neutral and zero net energy new construction and remodels in the County by the year 2030.

## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS; *Make them Green!*

While we continue to promote sustainable **Building** practices, join us in demonstrating sustainable **Living** practices. Grow healthy environments and conserve natural resources by resolving to change to these greener habits:

**Green Up Your Laundry:** Wash most, or all, of your clothes in cold water. Install a retractable clothes line in your yard and line-dry your clothes. Gas bills and stress levels will plummet! Switch to eco-friendly detergents, and if it's time for a new washer, get a front-loading model which uses about 15 gallons per load, vs. 35 gallons or more for a top load.

**Lighten your Load! Save time! Save the Earth!** The average American receives more than 41 pounds of junk mail a year, resulting in more than 100 million trees being destroyed to produce it, and wasting about 70 hours per person per year dealing with it. Rid yourself of this nuisance with free services such as Catalog Choice: [www.catalogchoice.org](http://www.catalogchoice.org) and other services available for a small cost including: 41 Pounds: [www.41pounds.org](http://www.41pounds.org).

**Buy Local, Buy Organic:** By adding transport and packaging to food the energy use of our current food system puts tremendous stress on the environment. Shop at your local markets and buy organic foods that are pesticide free.

**Save Water:** It's simple. Turn off the faucet when brushing your teeth. Capture the bath water that goes down the drain while you are waiting for it to warm up and use it to water your plants. Take two minute shorter showers and save 150 gallons per month.

**Shop Smart:** Buy recycled products. Consider if a products packaging is recyclable before you purchase. Buy things in bulk. It saves you money and requires less packaging materials. Always use your reusable canvas bags- not just for groceries. When you have a light load refuse a bag.

Happy New Year! -SLOGB

## ENERGY SAVINGS from page 1

cycle" you've started. Next steps depend upon what opportunities are present. For example, if your refrigerator is about to croak, a new efficient Energy Star unit may be just the ticket. Old refrigerators can be the biggest electrical consumer in the home. Just make sure you to retire the old fridge. Parking it in the garage as a beer cooler is an expensive energy loser. If your house is un-insulated and the attic is accessible, a blanket of blown-in recycled cellulose insulation can be cost very effective and environmentally friendly. In addition, a properly insulated home is dramatically more comfortable year-round.

You may want some help in deciding which improvements will generate the greatest savings for each dollar spent. A

home audit by a professional home auditor is a smart investment. A self-guided home audit is available at [www.pge.com](http://www.pge.com) on the "for my home, analyze your energy use" page for those who enjoy doing things for themselves.

Tax credits are available for many energy saving home improvements. Windows, heaters, insulation and new appliances may all qualify for rebates or tax credits. Detailed information is available at [www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=tax\\_credits.tx\\_index](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=tax_credits.tx_index)

Rebates from the federal government are expected to be available in the next few months. These can be additional incentives to invest in new Energy Star appliances.

The great thing about saving energy is each kilowatt saved is the most costly kilowatt billed. That is because electrical rates are tiered. Many water purveyors also use tiered rates. This means that beyond a baseline level, each additional unit costs more and conversely, each unit saved comes right off the top of most expensive tier.

While there is a warm fuzzy feeling associated with conserving scarce resources, nothing beats the warm fuzzy feeling that comes with a comfortable house and lower utility bills. Especially in this time of tight budgets.

Tom Murray is Owner of *Clean Cut Construction* and a SLOGB Director. Contact him at [tmurray2slognet.org](mailto:tmurray2slognet.org)



[www.slogreenbuild.org](http://www.slogreenbuild.org)

**Your local nonprofit organization** dedicated to minimize construction-related waste, create healthier, more durable buildings, reduce operating costs, and support local businesses.

**SLO Green Build is on Twitter and Facebook!**

Join the more than 1500 followers for exclusive content and interact with other SLO Green Build fans.

**Receive this newsletter via email!**

Help us go even greener by reducing our printing quantity. Please make requests to [admin@slogreenbuild.org](mailto:admin@slogreenbuild.org)

*join us for:*

**SLOGB QUARTERLY MIXER**

Find out about local businesses that support green and healthy living in SLO county

Hosted by Semmes & Co.

Call for location  
805.286.0072

**JANUARY 21, 2010  
5:30-7:30 PM**

**Annual memberships to SLO Green Build are available at the following levels (please check one):**

- Cypress \$50**     **Student/Senior \$25**  
Window decal, monthly Green Inside newsletter, access to SLOGB member logo
- Manzanita \$100**  
Above + listing as member on SLOGB website
- Bay Laurel \$250**  
Above + one featured insert in *Green by Example\**
- Madrone \$500**  
Above + listing in Green Building professionals Resource on SLOGB website; brochures displayed at applicable SLOGB events\*
- Coastal Live Oak \$1000**  
Above + four additional featured inserts and logo displayed on sponsorship page in *Green by Example\**
- Sycamore \$2500**  
Contact SLOGB, [admin@slogreenbuild.org](mailto:admin@slogreenbuild.org)
- Redwood \$5000**  
Contact SLOGB, [admin@slogreenbuild.org](mailto:admin@slogreenbuild.org)

**YES! I support SLO Green Build. Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ . SLO Green Build is a nonprofit organization.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Profession \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make your check payable to: SLOGB**

Detach and mail to: SLO Green Build  
P.O. Box 12043  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

**NEW: Join online! [www.slogreenbuild.org](http://www.slogreenbuild.org)**

*\*Green by Example* features SLOGB members' sustainability case studies and are on display at SLOGB kiosks located throughout the county and at SLOGB events. Please contact [admin@slogreenbuild.org](mailto:admin@slogreenbuild.org) for specifications and other information.

Business members will be asked to sign a SLO Green Build "Commitment to Green Business Practices" agreement prior to being added to the Green Building Professionals Resource website listing (Madrone level and above)

For questions or more information, contact SLO Green Build by email at "[admin@slogreenbuild.org](mailto:admin@slogreenbuild.org)" or by phone at (805) 286.0072