



The SLO Green Scene

SLO GREEN BUILD'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3

Summer 2009

SLOGB Meetings:

GREEN PEER REVIEW

Free Review of Projects by Local Green Building Professionals

July 21st, August 18th, & Sept. 15th, 2009
5:00-6:30 PM

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

LEED RESOURCE GROUP

July 17th, August 21st & Sept. 18th, 2009
12:00- 1:00 PM

Bring your lunch to discuss LEED topics
Location: RRM Design Group, 3765 South Higuera Street, Suite 2, San Luis Obispo
Contact: Andy Pease:
andy@inbalancegreen.com

SLOGB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

July 8th, August 12th & Sept. 9th, 2009
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

GREEN BUILDING ALLIANCE

July 1st, August 5th & Sept. 2nd, 2009
5:00-6:30 PM

Location: The Club House at This Old House
740 W. Foothill, San Luis Obispo
Contact: Turko Semmes @805.466.6737
x202 or Kevin Hauber @805.459.8844

Visit slogreenbuild.org for our full
Events Calendar, including:

SLOGB QUARTERLY MIXER

August 20th, 2009

Location: Sage Eco Landscaping
1188 Los Osos Valley Road, Los Osos

Send your events to: admin@slogreenbuild.org

Green Advantage® Training a Success

By Christopher O'Brien, "Obie"

I recently attended the Green Advantage Training and Certification Seminar hosted by SLO Green Build. After 20 plus years of being in the construction industry, it was like a breath of fresh air listening to the guest speaker David Johnston. He breathes new life into an industry of lumber, hammers, nails, paint and roofing. David has been a leader of the green building movement for the past few decades. His extensive knowledge of every industry and trade of construction intermixed with an uncanny sense of humor made the event not only extensively informative, but quite entertaining as well. The two-day seminar flowed quite smoothly through subject materials based out of David Johnston's book, *Green from the Ground Up*. We started with concept discussions like Sustainability (ability to replace resources used without depleting them), Healthy Environments (non-toxic and low VOC products), and Energy Efficiency (solar design, appliances, natural heating and venting). These concepts in new and remodeled buildings are proven methods to combat things happening to our planet like overpopulation,

peak oil, global warming, resource depletion, air and water pollution, and economic depression. Our society, in a cultural shift happening right now, is viewing these practices as common sense and demanding them of our industry.



David Johnston gets a laugh from the crowd.

If you are not building green in the near future, you will be out of a job. If you are interested in being greener in your trade, check out David Johnston's book, and join the SLO Green Build Alliance. The next time this seminar is offered, don't miss it!

Obie O'Brien, General Contractor and owner of O'BRIEN DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION, has been doing new and remodeled green building in San Luis Obispo County since 1991.
Contact: obriendesigns@charter.net

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Sustainable Landscaping: Et Tu, Kermit?

By Rick Mathews

Could it be that Kermit the Frog was wrong? His song “It’s Not Easy Being Green” has been replaced lately with a deluge of corporate twitter on how easy it is to be green now. That’s good, but just retain a healthy skepticism when exposed to so much noise coming from greed mongers that have never given a rat’s tail about anything but profits. (Sorry, I’m a recovering cynic.)

All that aside, I really am grateful for the acceptance that these ideas are now getting. And in particular, going green in the Green Industry has never seemed more right. We’re talking about Sustainable Landscaping, which can amount to simply emphasizing principles and practices that have always been involved to some degree.

What is sustainable landscaping?

- Low-impact landscaping
- Resource efficient
- Minimally polluting
- Stable over time
- In harmony with local environment
- Reducing energy inputs and outputs

To achieve good results, we should start with a plan. This plan should include an analysis of the site, which considers the various environmental factors involved, such as soil, exposure, wind, slope and drainage, water and existing vegetation.

The proposed use of the site is obviously vital to consider, including the users. Here also is the wish list regarding the functions of the landscape. Like veggies and herb gardens, play areas (consider reducing or replacing turf with less thirsty alternatives) hardscape elements, such as patios, fencing, walls and benches, water features, storage areas, pet areas, etc. Also consider drainage and erosion control. And of course, smart plant choices, which for many is a lot of fun.

So many things one can do in the landscape...and along with the functional features, one must consider the materials needed to create your landscape. This has to do with style, as well as function, not to



A recent Madrone Landscapes exhibit of sustainable landscape practices at San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden

mention budget. It also has much to do with resource efficiency, a cornerstone of the sustainable landscape.

Re-used materials, or materials found on site can often be incorporated into the landscape to beautiful effect. For example, used brick, urbanite(broken concrete), used and recycled lumber, boulders and rocks. Recycled products are making huge strides into the landscape and construction industries. One can get the feeling that we’ve only just scratched the surface of finding uses for recycled materials.

So when thinking about what materials you may want to use, consider the ‘embodied energy’ of the materials: the total energy that is required to produce and deliver the material to you. Ask where things come from and consider the impact your purchase will have at the source.

In the coming months, I hope we can continue this discussion of sustainability in the landscape. In the meantime, check out You Tube for Kermit and Ray Charles singing “It’s Not Easy Being Green.”

Rick Mathews and Madrone Landscapes have been creating quality, sustainable landscapes on the Central Coast for over 30 years. In fact, they’re looking for some great projects right now!

www.madronelandscapes.com

Atascadero Embraces Solar Energy with AB 811

By Claire Hodgkins

The city of Atascadero has proven to be a leader in solar energy in the past. The city endorsed the Mayor’s Climate Protection Agreement, ICLEI, and PG&E’s Climate Smart program. Now, with its recent support of AB (Assembly Bill) 811, Atascadero has proven once again its commitment to leadership in energy-efficiency and the use of renewable energy.

AB 811 promotes energy improvements such as energy-efficiency retrofits and solar energy, which has been recognized as a reliable technology that provides clean and renewable electrical power. This assembly bill gives owners of single family residential

homes and businesses the opportunity to install energy improvements without paying a large upfront cost. Through AB 811, the installation costs are funded with bonds that are repaid as part of the property taxes over a 20-year plan.

The adoption of AB 811 makes Atascadero one of few cities in California that has chosen to move forward with this progressive program, though many grassroots organizations and large companies in support of energy efficiency are continuing to endorse its implementation in more cities nationwide. The plan is expected to be one contribution to reducing harmful gas emissions

such as CO2 levels by 2020 and cutting GHG emission 80% by 2050 as required by state law under AB 32.

All cities have the authority to establish the optional benefit program offered by AB 811. Atascadero’s support for this program brings San Luis Obispo County and SLO Green Build one step closer to accomplishing the mission of making every building a green building.

Claire Hodgkins is an intern in the Governmental Relations division at Pacific Gas & Electric. She can be contacted at crhq@pge.com.

A LETTER FROM SLOGB'S PRESIDENT

With a dramatic number of programs initiated by a relatively young group, SLO Green Build has forged new relationships and brought itself into the forefront as the “go to” group when questions of sustainable development are being considered by lay, professional and government people. This recognition of SLO Green Build is in no small way attributable to the hard work and perseverance of our past Board President, Andy Pease.

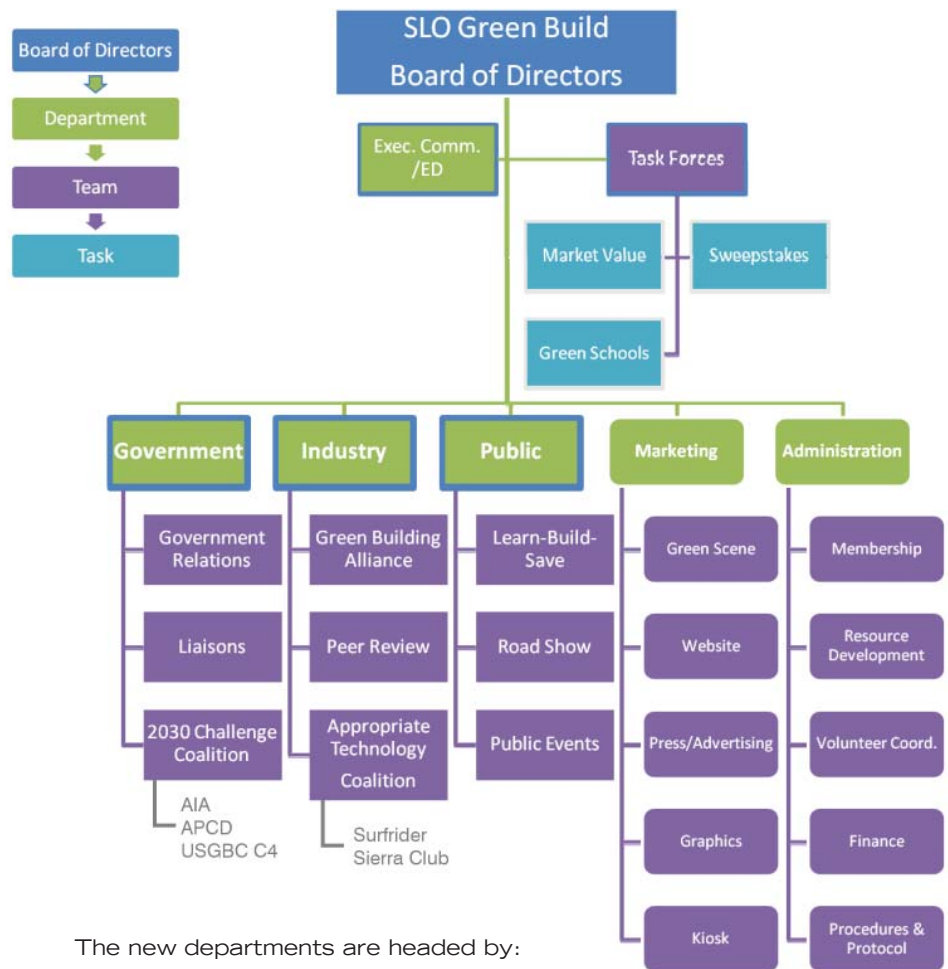
Andy provided SLO Green Build with clear leadership, a keen ability to find her way through the maze of decision making, while keeping her eye on the goal of bringing green building to the forefront of designing and planning for our future. Articulate and committed to the goals of the “2030 Challenge” – for all new construction and renovation to be carbon neutral and fossil free by the year 2030 – Andy has been successful at combining the resources of our diverse membership to create alliances and advance our common cause.

I look forward to “standing on the shoulders before me” as we move forward this year in the continued implementation of our strategic plan and refinement of our organizational structure. With a solid Board of Directors, our growing membership and the continued counseling of Andy Pease, SLO Green Build is set to move forward toward “every building being a green building.”

Looking Forward

John Ewan
SLO Green Build Board President

SLO Green Build recently reorganized to more closely align its programs and activities with its three primary constituencies – local governments, the building industry, and the consuming public - and to strengthen support in marketing and administration. The new organization replaces a committee-based structure with a department-based structure more suited to the needs of SLO Green Build's future direction and growth, as laid out in its 2009-2013 strategic plan. The formation of teams and task forces within the new structure is meant to focus the organization better on key areas of activity, and to attract the interest of volunteers, whose participation and help are very much sought.



The new departments are headed by:

- Nick Alter, Government
- Turko Semmes, Industry
- Jessica Steely, Public
- Beth Fillerup, Marketing
- Lana Adams, Administration

Join the team that keeps this powerful engine running

VOLUNTEER TODAY!



LEARN • BUILD • SAVE

For more information contact:

P.O. Box 12043
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
 tel: 805.286.0072
 fax: 805.466.6739
 admin@slogreenbuild.com

www.slogreenbuild.org

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

join us for:

**SOLSTICE GREEN MIXER
 THURSDAY JULY 9TH**

**SLO GREEN BUILD
 is this month's donation recipient!**

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

Mixers are free to all those in the Directory. There is a \$10 donation for all others, which will be donated to:

SLO GREEN BUILD

Sponsored by REC Solar.

Where: Avila Bay Athletic Club,
 6699 Bay Laurel Place, Avila Beach

When: 5:30pm to 7:00pm

Food & Beverages donated by: Avila Bay Athletic Club



805 • 473 • 5064

www.slosolstice.com

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

- Cypress \$50** **Student/Senior \$25**
 Decal, newsletter, and one complimentary copy of the Green Building Guidelines book
- Manzanita \$100**
 Above + member website listing
- Bay Laurel \$250**
 Above + one featured insert in the Green by Example binders*
- Madrone \$500**
 Above + member resource listing and website link + member brochures displayed at SLOGB-tabled events*
- Coastal Live Oak \$1000**
 Above + four additional featured inserts in the Green by Example binders + member logo displayed on binder's "sponsors" page*

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

*Green by Example binders are on display at SLOGB kiosks located throughout the county, and at SLOGB events. Please contact "admin@slogreenbuild.org" for insert, resource listing, and brochure specifications.

Business members will be asked to sign a SLO Green Build "Commitment to Green Business Practices" agreement prior to being on the Web site resource listing.

For questions or more information, contact SLO Green Build by e-mail at "admin@slogreenbuild.org" or by phone at (805) 286.0072