



Sacramento-Sustainable-Business.org



### Issue #16 - November 2009

#### Guest Commentary

### Put Some Green in Your Business

By Nichoel Farris

Small businesses are what make America great. Everyone knows that "green," "eco," and "sustainable" are the catch phrases of the 21st century. For existing small businesses, going green can be anything from a wellness program for your employees to reducing your energy consumption to making a green (or greener) product. Or perhaps it means committing to a sustainable business model.

If you're looking into going "green," figure out what that means for you and what makes sense for your business. Then go to the **Sacramento Sustainable Business** web site to learn how you can get your Sacramento area business certified green! It is a easy-to-follow program with a patient and supportive staff. I should know: my business went thru the certification program in 2008.

#### Here are 10 simple **Go-Green** Steps to green-up your business:

##### 1. Ask your employees for green ideas first.

Ask the people who always have the best ideas - your team. After all, if they have to implement these plans, it's smart to get their buy-in from the start.

##### 2. Buy everybody a mug.

Giving each employee the gift of a ceramic, reusable mug engenders goodwill - and it will save you a fortune on those nasty Styrofoam cups. The average office worker uses up to 500 disposable coffee cups per year - and Styrofoam takes about one million years to fully decompose.

##### 3. Buy green coffee - and green cleaning products - while you're at it.

Coffee with the Rainforest Alliance Certified seal of approval has been produced by companies committed to sustainable practices and treating their workers decently. Stock the kitchen and bathrooms with natural, organic hand soap, detergents and dish soaps that are kind to employees' busy hands - and the environment.

##### 4. Replace the office refrigerator, microwave - and all your equipment - with energy-efficient models.

Newer Energy Star-Rated appliances use up to 40 percent less energy than older versions. Look for star ratings on fax machines, copiers, printers and everything you use.

Duane O'Donnell, REHS  
Sacramento Sustainable Business Program Coordinator  
BERC, 3331 Peacekeeper Way, McClellan, CA 95652  
Phone: (916) 649-0225 Email: SSB@sacberc.org

##### 5. Recycle Paper - this is a big one - and easy, too

About 40 percent of the garbage in our landfills is paper that could have been recycled. \* Buy recycled paper - along with biodegradable paper plates and napkins. Put up a memo board and send emails to reduce extra printing.

##### 6. Apply the 3 R's to electronics and office equipment

The eco-mantra - reduce, reuse, recycle - doesn't stop at paper. You can refill ink cartridges. Recycle electronics safely - Staples and Office Depot are getting into the recycling act. When in doubt, go to **Earth911.com** or call **1-800-CleanUp** to see where to recycle - or donate - in your area. You may even qualify for a tax credit for donations to local schools or non-profits.

##### 7. Replace bottled water with a water filter

Bottled water costs two-to-three times as much as gasoline. Americans spend more than \$8 billion a year on bottled water - and generate over 1.5 million tons of plastic that will not break down in landfills for tens of thousands of years. A water filter costs pennies per gallon.

##### 8. Get audited

SMUD and PG&E offer free business energy audits. And the water company will conduct a water audit as well. There are many public and private programs and some funds available to help businesses become more efficient and sustainable.

##### 9. Consider laptops - instead of desktops - for staff

A laptop's LCD screen uses 1/3 the energy of a typical cathode ray tube. And employees can take laptops with them - at night or when they travel - to get more done. Win-win.

##### 10. Change your lights to CFLs

If every American installed five Compact Fluorescent Lamp (CFL) bulbs, we'd save close to \$8 billion each year in energy costs - and prevent greenhouse gases equivalent to the emissions from 10 million cars, according to the EPA Energy Star site [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

#### What are you waiting for? There's gold in going green!

\* \* \* \* \*

Nichoel Farris is a LEED AP, HERS Rater, Certified Green Building Professional, Sustainable Sacramento Business Member, and a member of the US Green Building Council.



She is a Green Consultant at Davis Energy Group in Davis, CA.

Her work has been profiled by high visible media including HGTV, Green Builder Magazine, TIME, Newsweek and many others.

[www.nichoelfarris.com](http://www.nichoelfarris.com)

The **Hyatt Regency Sacramento Hotel** has been certified sustainable in all 5 categories—Energy, Water, Solid Waste, Pollution Prevention, and Green Building!



Hyatt Regency Sacramento  
1209 L Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Tel: 916 443 1234



## Sustainable Business of the Year Award Winners Honored at September 24th Ceremony



- ✓ Cal Trans Division of Rail "Amtrak California" Locomotive Emission Upgrade Project partnership of Cal Trans Division of Rail, Amtrak & the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, California Air Resources Board, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, USEPA & Electro Motive Diesel
- ✓ Campbell Soup LLC - Sacramento
- ✓ Los Rios Community College District - Sacramento
- ✓ Mechanics Bank - Elk Grove, El Dorado Hills, Rocklin, Roseville, Sacramento
- ✓ Kikkoman Foods Inc. - Folsom CA
- ✓ Paragary Restaurant Group - Davis & Sacramento
- ✓ Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) - Sacramento
- ✓ Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District Biogas Enhancement Project partnership with Sacramento Municipal Utility District, Brown & Caldwell, Sacramento Rendering, Dr Pepper Snapple Bottling Group and The Pepsi Bottling Group
- ✓ Radisson Hotel, Sacramento CA
- ✓ Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District E85 Program partnership with SMUD, DMC, City of Sacramento Dept of General Services' Fleet Management, Scotties Gas Station, Interstate Oil, Flyers, Pearson Fuels, Propel & Green Wave Fuel

Over 300 people joined host Leonard Robinson from CalEPA to honor the top 10 sustainable businesses and projects in the Sacramento area. Matt Mahood, CEO of the Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce was the keynote speaker for the September 24 event held at the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) headquarters in Sacramento.

This years awards event was sponsored by:



Earth-friendly solutions  
[www.smud.org](http://www.smud.org)



### The Drought is Real... Be water smart and increase your bottom line

Call your local water utility for a FREE Water Wise Survey of your business to help lower your water bills today:

- ✓ Get a FREE Water Survey of your property for a walk-through by trained water utility staff for specific recommendations on saving water.
- ✓ Find out if there are specific incentives from you water utility, such as rebates up to \$125 per toilet for replacement of higher than 1.6 gallons per flush models

The Regional Water Authority can help you lower expenses, which means higher profits.



To schedule a Water Audit  
call: **888-987-8477**

[www.rwah2o.org](http://www.rwah2o.org)



Listen to 'Enviro Bro' Leonard Robinson's **Going Green Radio Show** every Thursday from 10–11a.m. on Sacramento's KDEE 97.7 FM or online at



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

Discuss Greening Your Business; Green Collar Jobs, Pollution Prevention; Environmental Justice; Green Chemistry and more. Call in during the show at (916) 631-8599.

Sacramento Green Expo



April 24 & 25, 2010  
Free Admission

The Sacramento Green Expo 2010 at CalEXPO will bring together businesses, civic, and non-profit organizations that are helping make the green lifestyle accessible, affordable, and convenient.

[SacramentoGreenExpo.com](http://SacramentoGreenExpo.com)



November 19, 2009  
7pm–9pm

Sacramento Sustainability Forum

Guest speaker for November 19th is Panama Bartholomy, advisor to the Chair of the California Energy Commission



Modoc Hall, CSUS  
3020 State University Drive  
Sacramento, CA 95826

[sacamentosustainabilityforum.com](http://sacamentosustainabilityforum.com)