



NEWS RELEASE

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ORANGE COUNTY IS TAKING ENERGY REDUCTION SERIOUSLY

Cities Are Taking Actions To Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Save Taxpayer Dollars

ORANGE COUNTY, CA – As world leaders prepare to tackle the next stage of international negotiations addressing carbon emission limits and trading, city leaders in Orange County, California are not waiting for a mandate. Results from a forthcoming report by the Orange County Global Warming Committee of the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club shows that cities across the county, both large and small, are taking actions to reduce energy consumption which in turn reduces the County's carbon footprint.

"Results are in from 26 cities in the County. Large and small, city governments are looking for creative ways to decrease their energy consumption", said Paul Carlton, Co-Chair of the Orange County Global Warming Subcommittee.

Overall, the survey found that cities are tackling the low hanging fruit to reduce energy consumption and costs where possible. For example, nearly all survey respondents are using LED and CFLs in city facilities, street lights and traffic lights. Also, cities are engaging in modest civic education about how taxpayers can reduce their carbon footprint and build greener. Highlights of the findings are noted below:

- 80% of respondents have taken or are in the process of conducting an energy audit. An energy audit is the first step for a city to assess how much energy it consumes and to evaluate what measures to take to make the city more energy efficient.
- 76% of respondents have identified a responsible party for energy efficiency. Of the 19 cities with parties identified, seven have committees and eleven have individual city staff assigned to the duty. One has both an oversight committee and a city official working on energy efficiency.
- 83% of respondents have installed motion detectors in city buildings to turn of interior lights when they are not needed. Nearly all cities noted that they have employee policies to turn off lights and electronics over night and weekends.
- Nearly all respondents are tracking fuel and investigating hybrid or alternative fuel vehicles. Today, less than 25% of most city fleets are green vehicles.
- 40% of respondents have implemented city green purchasing policies, where city purchasers evaluate goods and services with reduced environmental impacts compared to those with baseline impacts.
- 31% of respondents have an employee telecommuting policy that is one strategy to decrease employee carbon emissions from commuting to and from work.

Chuck Buck, Co-Chair, Orange County Global Warming Subcommittee, further noted, "I am highly encouraged by our findings so far. The results show us that local leadership isn't waiting for Sacramento or Washington, DC to dictate how we can curb carbon emissions. In light of the recent California Air Resources Board's proposed cap and trade program, we are reporting some real actions by city governments as we consider how their efforts will play into the state program."

The Orange County Global Warming Committee plans to release the full report in Spring 2010. For additional information, please visit <http://angeles.sierraclub.org/ocglobalwarming>.

About the Sierra Club

The report is the culmination of the Juicing Orange County campaign which is an effort to engage city leaders in Orange County to enact responsible, climate aware policies and programs. This program is led by the Orange County Global Warming Committee of the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club. Since 1892, the Sierra Club has been working to protect communities, wild places and the planet itself.

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