



THE BOTTOM LINE

New BEA Program Promoting Water Efficiency to Sonoma Valley Businesses

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*A project developed by the
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The Business Environmental Alliance has announced the creation of a new program geared toward the promotion of water-efficient practices and reduced utility costs for Sonoma Valley businesses. The Sonoma Valley Business Water Project will offer a free incentive program to the area's highest water users, helping to reduce their water use and wastewater production. The Project is targeting commercial, industrial, and institutional customers of the Sonoma Valley Sanitation District as potential participants in this voluntary program.

The Business Water Project will offer free water-usage assessments to participating businesses, as well as the opportunity for each business to choose a contractor to conduct its assessment. Assessments will focus on ways of reducing water use and wastewater production using cost-effective strategies. Following its assessment, each business will be provided with a voluntary action plan detailing ways the business can cost-effectively reduce its inflow and outflow of water, hopefully generating more profit for the

business while reducing strain on local utilities.

Of course, the only way to produce the beneficial results that the Business Water Project seeks is to see that action plans are put into action. To accomplish this, the Business Water Project will assist each business in making desired parts of its action plan a reality. Examples of this assistance may be providing informational literature, references to contractors, or guidance in applying for cost-sharing measures.

According to Sonoma Valley Business Water Project coordinator Joseph Sherman, "The last thing we want is to have businesses that show interest and take the time to participate in the assessment then feel pressured by an action plan that they feel they have to follow through with. We want this

to be a no-pressure proposition. I'm confident that most participants will find that they want to implement some aspects of the plan, because they can benefit from them. But we certainly don't expect anyone to do something they aren't comfortable with simply because we recommend it."

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For more information on the Sonoma Valley Business Water Project, visit the Project website at www.sonoma-county.org/bea/water or contact project coordinator Joseph Sherman at (707) 565-6455.

WORKING NAKED IN SONOMA COUNTY

Sonoma County is a great place to live and work.

In recent years, one of the only drawbacks to life in Sonoma County has been the ever-increasing amount of traffic, especially on highway 101. According to a report from the Texas Transportation Institute, Bay Area commuters spent 168 million hours last year sitting in traffic, costing them an estimated \$3 billion annually in wasted fuel and lost time.

On average, North Bay drivers spend more than five hours a week behind the wheel in commute traffic. Sonoma County drivers face an average 20-mile one-way trip, which takes them 34 minutes. Annual round-trips cost Sonoma drivers 272 hours a year (equivalent to a two-week vacation). If Sonoma County commuters spent one day week working at home instead of driving to the office, they could earn a time rebate of 54 hours a year simply by staying out of their cars! **Telework**, an alternative work structure designed to do just that, is gaining popularity in Sonoma County.

"Telework is a cost-effective solution for traffic gridlock," says John Edwards, president of the International Telework Association and Council (ITAC). "In fact, traffic delays fall by three percent for every one percent of workers who telework."

One North Bay organization is doing its part to help mitigate the issue of congestion on our roads: The North Bay Technology Roundtable (NBTR) teamed up with the International Telework Association and Council and recently brought a Telework America Summit to Sonoma County. The conference, entitled *What Telework Can Do for Your Bottom Line*, took place on Thursday, October 25th at the DoubleTree hotel in Rohnert Park.

The North Bay Technology Roundtable has made telework a priority in their action plan because of their commitment to reducing (NAKED continued on page 2)

PROFITABILITY THROUGH SOUND ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICE

<http://www.sonoma-county.org/bea>



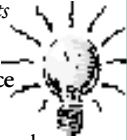
Pacific Energy Center:
The Center hosts over

100 practical classes per year. Sample offerings include:
Nov. 27 *Lighting for Offices and Schools: retrofits, upgrades, new construction, remodels*
Nov. 28 *HVAC retrofits*

• **PG&E's Food Service Technology Center:**

Provides restaurateurs and equipment manufacturers with information to make sound, economical decisions about commercial appliances and their energy use. The FSTC encourages visitors and helps answer such questions as:

- *How much will an appliance cost to operate?*
- *Is one piece of equipment really more efficient than another?*



TELECOMMUTING RESOURCES

Books:

- ◆ **Work Naked**
by Cynthia Frogatt
- ◆ **The Future of Work**
by Dr. Charles Grantham
- ◆ **The Telecommuter's Adviser**
by June Langhoff

Websites:

- ◆ Bay Area Telework Association
www.baytelework.org
- ◆ International Telework Association & Council
www.telecommute.org
- ◆ Telwork Collaborative
www.telwork-collaborative.ca.gov
- ◆ National Environmental Policy Institute www.nepi.org
- ◆ Telework Analytics Int.
www.telework.com
- ◆ Telecommuting Resource Center www.langhoff.com
- ◆ Gil Gordon Associates
www.gilgordon.com
- ◆ AT&T Telework Webguide
www.att.com/telework
- ◆ North Bay Technology Roundtable www.nbtr.org

PROACTIVE APPROACH TO ENERGY CRISIS TAKEN BY AREA BUSINESSES

Twenty-two percent of area businesses have changed their hours of operation or level of production. Thirty-eight percent have undertaken lighting retrofit and removal activities. Seven percent have implemented employee and/or consumer education programs. Nine percent have adjusted temperature settings.

Despite setbacks and challenges, area business have responded proactively to the power emergency, implementing solutions throughout the county. While immediate threats of rolling blackouts have eased during recent months, energy availability and consumption continue to be major focus points for local businesses, governments, and communities.

To understand the effects of the energy crisis on Sonoma County businesses and organizations the Business Environmental Alliance (BEA) conducted a county-wide baseline energy survey.

- *57% of organizations do not have back-up generation capacity.*
- *100% of organizations consider the cost of electricity of moderate to high priority compared to other costs of doing business.*
- *86% of Businesses report voluntarily curtailing their electricity use.*

The BEA conducted the Baseline Energy Survey, during the summer of 2001, to determine: how the energy crisis has been affecting the "bottom line" for Sonoma County businesses and organizations, how they view the crisis, and how they are responding to it. Survey results reveal a number of key themes. First, electricity is an important issue that can, and will affect business relocation and expansion decisions. Second, over 50% of respondents do not have back-up generation capacity, nor plans to increase generation capacity. Third, Sonoma County businesses are beginning to reduce electricity consumption, however many conservation opportunities remain. The full text of the report is available at www.sonoma-county.org/bea or by calling the Business Environmental Alliance at (707) 565-7257.

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the amount of traffic on 101 and improving the quality of life in the North Bay through voluntary sound business practices.

The NBTR states that "telecommuting can benefit both employers and employees through reduced costs and improved working conditions. We want to know if telecommuting is a viable option for North Bay commuters." To determine North Bay residents' opinion of telecommuting, the NBTR conducted a survey throughout September and October. The survey was divided into three target audiences: employers, teleworkers, and the general public. The goal was to explore the economic benefits of telework, determine the interest and awareness of telework in the North Bay region, and to identify the most common issues posed to employers and teleworkers.

The results of the survey were released in conjunction with the results of the National Telework Survey at the telework conference on October 25. The NBTR is also using survey information to put together a comprehensive database of resources on telecommuting. Many members of the NBTR, including Cisco Systems and Schurter, Inc., have active telework programs and are assisting in this process.

Even Sonoma County's beloved cow "Clo" has gotten involved with telework. Clover Stornetta Farms assisted in the promotion of the conference by offering space on their famous billboards: red banners were visible on three signs, advising drivers to "telecommute." Telecommuting was appealing to the dairy, as well as to many local businesses, because of the quality of life benefits associated with the alternative work structure. Employees

that do not have to leave the home to go to work are able to spend more time with their families. Children no longer have to wait until dinnertime to see their parents, and if a child is sick, the teleworking parent is available to pick him or her up from school. Telework is also a way for employees to save money on both gas and clothing (hence the "work naked" motto).

However, telework is not simply a nicety for employees. It is a sound business practice that reduces overhead costs for employers, and, according to 73% of NBTR survey respondents, it *improves* productivity. Many teleworkers feel that they are more productive when they are able to close the door to their home office and do not have to take breaks during the day for meetings, co-worker interruptions, and other common office distractions.

"The explosion of digital technologies has led to tremendous advances in the way consumers can access information," said Gary Shapiro, President and CEO of the Consumer Electronics Association, a major sponsor of the ITAC/NBTR Telework Conference. "Companies and their employees are realizing that productivity and job satisfaction can be greatly enhanced through teleworking."

In addition to keeping employees happy while improving productivity and saving time, telework is an excellent avenue for improving air quality and overall environmental quality in Sonoma County. To calculate the amount of air pollution caused by your daily commute alone, visit www.teltrips.com.

For more information on the North Bay Technology Roundtable, including resources for Sonoma County teleworkers and managers, visit www.nbtr.org.

Innovative Research to Reduce Ruminant Methane Emissions:

projected to reduce greenhouse gases and improve quantity and quality of animal products.

Methane is currently the second most problematic greenhouse gas, according to The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. 80 million tons (29%) of methane emitted on earth is ruminant methane, methane produced by the digestive process of ruminant animals like cattle, sheep, buffalo and goats. While this methane has, of course existed for much longer than other methane producing sources such as fossil fuels and landfills, the number of methane-producing animals is rapidly increasing. Additionally, the possibility of reducing ruminant methane to compensate for the great increases in other types of methane has emerged as an encouraging possibility in the battle against greenhouse gases.



Australian sheep have been fitted with methane-catching "backpacks" to measure the efficacy of vaccinations. The vaccinations are intended to reduce populations of methane-producing micro-organisms in sheep.

Two companies have begun to look for ways of reducing methane-producing flatulence in livestock, most notably sheep and cows. A Canadian energy company, Transalta, in conjunction with the Global Livestock Group, is developing a feed supplement designed to reduce livestock gas emissions. This supplement, currently being tested in Uganda, would remove some 45,000 tons of methane from the atmosphere per year.

While this is a small percentage of the overall annual amount of methane currently produced worldwide, the numbers would rise significantly if the program were to successfully spread outside of Uganda. Transalta claims that additional benefits of this feed supplement include a greater quantity and better quality of milk and meat produced by the animals. There is much experimentation to be done with this program still, but it may be a promising method of reducing

ruminant methane worldwide.

Another possible method for the reduction of ruminant methane comes from experimental vaccines currently being employed in Australia. The Commonwealth Scientific Industrial & Research Organization has developed vaccines for use in sheep and cattle, aimed at reducing the number of methane-producing microorganisms in the animals' rumens. These vaccines, currently in the testing phase, are expected to begin distribution in 2004. Like the feed supplements being developed by Transalta, CSIRO expects some benefits to quality and quantity of the animal products. However, a few years of development are still required before these vaccines can be widely released.

Hopes are high that within the next few years options will exist for decreasing the levels of ruminant methane that are released into the atmosphere. However, it will be important that these methods be widely available and inexpensive. If researchers' claims of better quality and quantity of animal products prove to be true, it will be simpler to convince ranch owners who show little concern for greenhouse gas emissions. These claims seem to make sense, as CSIRO reports that between 2 and 12 percent of gross energy intake is converted into methane. If these numbers could be reduced, the additional intake would presumably be converted to mass, and thus result in larger, healthier animals. Results such as these could be a great boon to agriculture in Sonoma County and elsewhere, as its effect on the dairy and cattle industries could be significant, while additionally reducing greenhouse gas emissions, for the benefit of all of us.

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Economic Development Board Executive Director Ben Stone says, "The Sonoma Valley Business Water Project makes good sense for businesses. They don't assume that businesses will become more water-efficient for altruistic reasons. The project promotes practices that quickly pay for themselves, so that within a year or two a participating business is already reaping the benefits of reduced costs, while also knowing it is doing what is best for the Sonoma Valley."

In addition to the financial and environmental benefits of participation in the Sonoma Valley Business Water Project, businesses also will benefit through the project's public awareness campaign. Sherman says, "We feel it's important that the community know that Sonoma Valley businesses are interested in being more water efficient. Businesses that participate in the Business Water Project unequivocally prove that, and we certainly intend to see that their efforts are recognized." Since the program's inception, numerous organizations have expressed support and offered assistance to the program, including the City of Sonoma, the Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Sonoma County Water Agency, the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District, the Valley of the Moon Water District, and the Sonoma County Economic Development Board.

The Business Water Project expects assessments to begin taking place this winter.

NEW High Efficiency Lights Without Total Retrofit

Has the energy crisis affected your bottom line? Do you wish you could reduce your energy costs but do not want to do major lighting retrofits? In answer to this dilemma there is a new full-spectrum energy saving light available. Litetronics International www.litetronics.com has developed a new T10 lamp which is so efficient that it could cut your energy consumption by up to 50%. What's more the powerful light only requires one T10 to replace every two removed T12's.

Lighting retrofits, changing from T12's to T8's, have been a major efficiency and cost-saving tactic for businesses since before the power crisis. There are many high efficiency lights on the market. This new product is different for two major reasons.

First, light quality of fluorescent lights is often not ideal for retail or human service locations. Light quality is important because color is critical in retail locations where a product's appearance determines how well it will sell. In offices, hospitals, hotels, schools, and other interiors, full spectrum light creates more pleasant, comfortable surroundings and reduces discomfort for individuals who are light sensitive.

Secondly, to install high efficiency lights a business must normally replace not only the light but the light ballasts and wiring. With the new T10's the only component that needs to be replaced is the light. Thus, if you operate your lighting system for 12 hours every day, at a cost per kWh of \$0.10, and you switch out 100 fixtures you could save up to \$3,635.40 annually.

A number of local companies have been buying into this new light, including Rohnert Park based Hydro-Tech Environmental Systems.

PROFITABILITY THROUGH SOUND ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICE

<http://www.sonoma-county.org/beat>

BUSINESS RESOURCE GUIDE

Mission Statement:

The Business Environmental Alliance (BEA) works to promote the voluntary adoption of good environmental practices by local businesses and farms as a means of improving their financial performance and preserving Sonoma County's environment.

The Business Environmental Alliance was founded on the premise that most businesses want to do the right thing environmentally, but many don't have the experience and the expertise to access the kinds of programs that might help them to improve profits while helping maintain our quality of life.

The programs detailed here are a few of those available in this county. Please visit our website www.sonoma-county.org/bea for more information.

Business Hazardous Waste Disposal

If your business generates less than 100 kilograms (27 gallons or 220 pounds) of waste per month, excluding motor oil, you are eligible to participate in waste collection events. Call 1-800-207-8222 for an appointment.

Eco-Desk Hotline

Do you have a question about waste reduction, recycling, hazardous waste disposal, or recycling? For timely answers call the Sonoma County Waste Management Eco-Desk at 527-3375.

Attention Businesses

We want to hear from you. We're interested in sharing your stories about your success in increasing profits through good environmental practices. We want to know what you think of our publication.

Name _____
Business Name _____
Address _____
City, Zip _____
Phone _____ Fax _____

____ I'm enclosing some details about good practices at our business that may be useful for a future issue of *The Bottom Line*. Please contact me.
____ Put me on your mailing list for future publications, seminars, etc.
____ If you would prefer to receive this newsletter via e-mail.

Please fax to 565-7310, e-mail to bea@sonoma-county.org, or mail to BEA 401 College Ave., Suite D, Santa Rosa, 95401-5119.

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<http://www.sonoma-county.org/bea>

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