



Bay Area Green Business Program

Environmental Values At Work



An artificial turf playing field was installed to reduce water and pesticide use



The Arastradero Preserve Interpretive Center was built using straw bale construction, solar panels, and salvaged building materials



City departments collect unwanted mail and notify mailers for removal from mailing lists

City of Palo Alto

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cityofpaloalto.org

Certification Date: October 2002, Recertification 2007



The City of Palo Alto has been practicing environmental stewardship since the early 1970s, so it is no surprise that it was the first government agency in the region to become certified as a Green Business in 2002. “The certification process helped us distill and communicate where we were meeting our environmental performance goals, what we wanted to improve, and helped leverage existing and backburner projects,” said Julie Weiss, Environmental Specialist and lead for the certification process.

In 2002, the City’s certification accomplishments included the use of less toxic cleaning products, a city facility-wide lighting retrofit which reduced energy use by 17 percent, low emission vehicles, a water efficient irrigation system in its parks, an extensive recycling program, and an unwanted mail reduction program that reduced incoming mail by 33 percent. Since their first certification, the City began the installation of four photo voltaic systems at various facilities, installed shade cloth barriers as a non-toxic method to reduce ground squirrel damage on golf course greens, and built an interpretive center at Arastradero Preserve using energy efficient straw bale construction, solar panels and reclaimed wood. The City developed a Zero Waste Plan for the community and city facilities to send as little waste to landfills as possible by 2021 and a Climate Protection Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve climate neutrality by 2050. The City is also preparing a purchasing plan that incorporates sustainability into purchasing choices and has an interdepartmental Sustainability Team working on a variety of projects.

“While the Green Business Program’s priority is environmental stewardship, it can also save a significant amount of money, improve communication across departments, and recognize the terrific efforts of the staff making these projects happen,” says Weiss.

For more information on the City of Palo Alto’s green efforts contact Julie Weiss.