



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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PRESS RELEASE

Date: April 18, 2017

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LOCAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION IN SHARP DECLINE

Since 2005, residential and commercial emissions from electricity and natural gas consumption have declined 18 percent, according to an update of the Santa Cruz County Climate Action Strategy presented to the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday.

The development means Santa Cruz County is ahead of schedule to meet emissions-reduction targets contained within the Climate Action Strategy (CAS), which sets community-wide goals for minimizing climate change and was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2013. The CAS sets an ambitious target of reducing local greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent compared to 1990 levels by 2050.

"I would like to commend our Santa Cruz County residents and businesses for their heroic efforts in leading the charge against climate change by significantly reducing their personal consumption," Board of Supervisors Chair John Leopold said. "As we approach Earth Day, California has become a global leader when it comes to protecting our environment, and our local successes will contribute greatly to these efforts."

The report also analyzed electricity and natural gas emissions reductions under Monterey Bay Community Power CCE, a regional green energy agency recently joined by the Board of Supervisors and expected to begin serving most Monterey Bay residents by Spring 2018. If Monterey Bay Community Power had been in place since the baseline year of 2005, local energy-related emissions would have been reduced 28 percent.



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Local energy reductions are attributable to energy conservation and energy efficiency efforts, and a commitment on the part of local residents to restrict personal energy consumption. These efforts are part of a statewide push to combat climate change, with Gov. Jerry Brown recently signing legislation setting California greenhouse gas reduction targets at 40 percent below 1990 levels.

County government has also taken significant steps to help meet to the goals of the Climate Action Strategy, including joining Monterey Bay Community Power, participating in a regional solar procurement initiative that will result in solar installations at many county facilities, the production of electricity from captured landfill gas its Buena Vista Recycling and Solid Waste Facility, the installation of electric vehicle charging stations on County property and more.

The County also recently adopted a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan which addresses the impacts of sea-level rise, a phenomenon that represents a continued threat to coastal communities such as Santa Cruz County. According to the Climate Action Strategy, residential coastal property, wastewater treatment infrastructure, coastal roads and bridges, beaches, coastal and wetland ecosystems and water supply from coastal wells are most at risk from sea-level rise.

In addition, Santa Cruz County's two top industries – agriculture and tourism – both face significant challenges due to climate change.

The Climate Action Strategy is available for review at:

<http://www.sccoplanning.com/PlanningHome/SustainabilityPlanning/ClimateActionStrategy.aspx>.