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# THE BOTTOM LINE

## *Vintage Greens pioneers recycled water for residential irrigation*

By Richard Ingram and Matt Mullan

One of Sonoma County's greatest treasures is the Russian River. For decades it has been a major source of drinking water, agricultural irrigation, fishing, boating and other recreational uses for hundreds of thousands of residents and tourists each year.

To preserve this resource, annual water exports and wastewater discharges are closely monitored and regulations strictly enforced. Fish and stream preservation projects and flood control measures have been implemented.

The town of Windsor and its 25,000 residents rely heavily on a series of water wells located on the banks of the Russian River. These wells have been serving the Windsor community with high quality water for two decades. Recently, Windsor has been searching for new and innovative ways to conserve water in an effort to minimize current and future impacts on the river.

The town also operates a sewer system that utilizes a major tributary to the Russian River for seasonal discharge of its treated wastewater effluent. Strict regulatory standards for wastewater treatment and effluent discharge into the Russian River and its tributaries requires

Windsor's wastewater to be treated to tertiary standards and limits discharge to a dilution rate of 1% of the natural water flow from October 1 to May 15 each year when the river and streams are usually swollen from rainfall and runoff. The result is that Windsor must reclaim and reuse an average of 1000 acre-feet of its wastewater effluent annually.

In response to more stringent regulatory requirements, limitations on water supply, wastewater effluent disposal and an ongoing commitment to preserve the quality and uses of the Russian River, Windsor has become a leader in water conservation and recycled water usage. The latest example is the Vintage Greens Residential Recycled Water Project, one of the first subdivisions in California to offer recycled water in place of potable water for watering front and backyard lawns and other landscaping in new single-family homes.

Watering the lawns and landscaping in the new homes with recycled water instead of potable water provides environmental benefits in two important ways. First, millions of gallons of potable water that would normally be used for outdoor watering in these homes

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## *Rebates available for water-efficient landscapes in Santa Rosa*

The City of Santa Rosa Water Conservation Program announces a new rebate program for efficient landscape water management.

Eligible commercial, industrial and institutional customers can earn \$500 for each acre-foot (325,851 gallons) of water savings below their Efficient Irrigation Goal each year (approximately \$1.53 per 1,000 gallons of water saved).

Using landscape and weather data, City of Santa Rosa staff can calculate the landscape water requirements of each site (the Efficient Irrigation Goal).

City of Santa Rosa Water Utility customers irrigating with city water can apply each

year. Applications are due by February 1 for the previous calendar year. To earn a rebate, actual irrigation water use must fall below the Efficient Irrigation Goal for that year.

The City of Santa Rosa's Water Conservation Program provides free water conservation information, brochures, and advice to all customers. Additionally, large site irrigation audits are available to any Santa Rosa utility customer.

Even before the irrigation season begins, Water Conservation staff can help by providing information and technical assistance such as:

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**PROFITABILITY THROUGH SOUND ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES**

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

## BEA Steering Committee

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A project developed by the  
Sonoma County Economic  
Development Board

## Buy Recycled Paper to Save Trees, Energy

Did you know that more than 90 percent of the printing and writing paper made in this country is still made from trees instead of recycled paper? Every ton of recycled paper substituted for non-recycled paper saves 17 trees - a significant amount of energy and water - and reduces air pollution.

Buying recycled paper is a simple and convenient way for businesses to help the environment.

“Our senior management realized the environment is a strategic business issue that is here to stay,” remarked Candace Skarlatos, Senior Vice President of Environmental Initiatives at Bank of America. “With the recent merger, Bank of America made a commitment to use recycled paper, set a baseline for the new merged company and agreed to report progress annually.” In the first year of the merger, the bank converted 40% of their paper use to recycled.

High quality recycled paper is readily available and priced competitively with non-recycled brands. Recycled paper performs as well as non-recycled sheets and can be used successfully in a wide variety of uses from office copiers to high-end graphics printing. Inexpensive copier paper is also available with recycled content. Ask your paper supplier to

explain your options.

What you can do:

1) Specify at least “30% post-consumer recycled” when ordering any paper product, including printing and copy paper, envelopes, Post-It notes, adding machine tape, forms, business cards, checks, letters, file folders tablets, note pads, index cards, letterhead – even janitorial paper products.

2) Request recycled paper on all print jobs, and label communications with “Printed (or Copied) on Recycled Paper.”

To learn more about using recycled paper, visit the Bay Area Buy Recycled Paper Campaign website at [www.BayAreaRecycling.org](http://www.BayAreaRecycling.org); for a list of local stores that sell recycled paper, visit [www.recyclenow.org](http://www.recyclenow.org) or call the Sonoma County Eco-Desk at (707) 565-DESK(3375).

## Local retailers carrying recycled office and copy paper

**Corrick's**  
707-546-2423  
637 Fourth St., Santa Rosa  
M-Sa 9-5:30  
Retail and catalog sales

**Give Something Back**  
[www.givesomethingback.com](http://www.givesomethingback.com)  
800-261-2619  
M-F 8-5  
Catalog and web site sales. Nonprofit donates after-tax profits to community organizations

**Kinkos Copies**  
[www.kinkos.com](http://www.kinkos.com)  
707-763-6553  
901 E. Washington St., Petaluma  
707-523-0922  
700 Third St., Santa Rosa  
24-hrs. Retail and catalog sales

**Office Depot**  
707-542-2582  
[www.officedepot.com](http://www.officedepot.com)  
1960 Santa Rosa Ave., Santa Rosa  
M-F 7-9, Sa 9-9, Su 10-7  
Retail, catalog and web site sales

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*Petaluma Poultry and Gallo Vineyards Take Significant Step Toward Sustainability*

Petaluma Poultry and Gallo's Coastal Winegrowing Operations have joined Sustainable Sonoma County's newly launched Sustainability Management Systems Coaching Program (SMS).

Two of Sonoma County's leading agricultural businesses are working to improve their "triple bottom line," or environmental, social and economic sustainability. They are the first participants in the initial round of a nine-month program to help organizations systematically implement practices to improve their resource efficiencies, social impacts and financial performance. This program is part of a county-wide effort to create a diverse and resilient local economy which models and attracts sustainable management strategies.

The SMS Program is the result of a collaborative effort by local

businesspersons, non-profit managers and sustainability professionals. Ed Quevedo, Emily Hust and Mary Ann Ruiz of WSP Environmental, pioneers in Sustainability Management Systems, are leading the coaching sessions.

The SMS program is open to all types of organizations including educational institutions, city and county entities as well as businesses. "We've been talking with a number of different organizations in the County and ultimately see organizations from every sector becoming involved for mutual support and benefit as well as to create a widespread regional sustainability movement", says Eric Storm, Coordinator of Sustainable Sonoma County, a convener and fiscal sponsor for the program. The first round of coaching sessions began in March of 2003 with the second round to begin in the Fall.

The Founding Steering Committee for the SMS Coaching program includes Ned Orrett and Grayson James of Resource Performance Partners, Beth Meredith and Eric Storm of Sustainable Sonoma County (SSC), Tom Lanphar of CalEPA, and Trina Dixon of Zainer Rinehart Clarke DFK, a local CPA firm, which is also a sponsor of the program.

SSC is a community-based non-profit organization that has sponsored a number of sustainability initiatives in Sonoma County since 1999. The SMS Coaching Program is part of a regional effort to reduce the ecological footprint of Sonoma County (i.e. the resources the County uses) while increasing the overall quality, satisfaction and economic success of the region.

*Where to find recycled paper products...*

**Office Helper**

707-763-9847  
1330 Ross, Petaluma  
M-F 8-5  
Retail sales only

**OfficeMax**

707-523-7700  
[www.officemax.com](http://www.officemax.com)  
2720 Santa Rosa Ave., Santa Rosa  
M-F 7-9, Sa 9-9, Su 10-7  
Retail, catalog and web site sales

**Paper Plus**

707-542-7012  
986 Airway Ct., Ste. A, Santa Rosa  
M-F 7:30-5:30  
Retail sales only

**Recycled Products Purchasing Cooperative (RPPC)**

800-694-8355  
[www.recycledproducts.org](http://www.recycledproducts.org)  
M-F 9-4  
Web site and phone orders. Competitively priced 30% postconsumer recycled printing and office paper available from nonprofit purchasing cooperative; five case minimum order.

**Sonoma Valley Office Supply**

707-938-1141  
551 Fifth St. W., Sonoma  
M-F 9-5, Sa 10-2  
Retail and catalog sales

**Sprint Copy Center**

707-823-3900  
175 N. Main, Sebastopol  
M-Th 8:30-7, F 8:30-5:30, Sa 10-4  
Retail and catalog sales

**Read the label!**

**Postconsumer waste (PCW)**

Postconsumer waste refers to recycled material that was collected from curbside, office and drop-off recycling programs like ours. Look for paper made with at least 30% postconsumer recycled content.

**Processed chlorine free (PCF)**

In order to make paper white, paper fibers are bleached. PCF means that the bleaching process uses no chlorine or chlorine derivatives, thereby eliminating toxic by-products associated with chlorine, such as dioxins.

## *Environmental resources for the tourism industry*

### Hotel lighting efficiency tips from Michelle Perez and Gene Foley of The Alliance to Save Energy

Online resources from GreenBiz.com

#### **BlueGreen Meetings**

<http://www.bluegreenmeetings.org>  
Offers advice on greening all aspects of meetings and conferences — from location, travel, and accommodations to communications and marketing.

#### **Business Enterprises for Sustainable Travel**

<http://www.sustainabletravel.org>  
Case studies of successful environmental initiatives made by hotels, tour groups, and other travel companies.

#### **Green Conference Initiative**

<http://www.epa.gov/oppt/epp/conference.htm>  
Provides green tips and information for planners of conferences and suppliers of conference materials.

#### **Green Hotels.com**

<http://www.greenhotels.com>  
Provides information for hotels interested in implementing environmentally responsible practices into operations.

#### **International Hotels Environment Initiative website**

<http://www.ihei.org>  
Start here for information on environmentally friendly hotel management.

#### **Sustainable Industry-Travel and Tourism**

<http://www.epa.gov/sustainableindustry/travtour.htm>  
A useful introduction to tourism's environmental impact, this site links to related resources.

#### **Sustainable Travel and Tourism**

<http://www.sustravel.com>  
Informative and thought-provoking reviews and articles on sustainable travel.

While your guests probably are not aware of it, the way your hotel is lit affects their perception of your hotel. Poor quality lighting can make even the grandest accommodations seem shabby and run-down. Furthermore, a well-designed lighting system helps your employees do their jobs efficiently and improves security.

Lighting is the second largest energy-using system in a hotel, after cooling systems, and is probably the easiest and most cost-effective area for reducing energy costs. Not only is it relatively easy to reduce high electricity bills with comprehensive lighting retrofits but it is important in determining the heat which reduces the load on the existing cooling system.

There are several easy steps to begin looking at an energy-efficient lighting upgrade project. First, start in the areas of the hotel where lights are on for 24 hours a day to provide the quickest investment payback that can be used toward successive upgrades. Areas like lobbies, hallways, and support areas are a great start.

Additionally, a by-product of improving your hotel's bottom line with energy-efficient lighting is the reduction of local air pollution and global carbon emissions at the power plant. With a little marketing, these upgrades may afford recognition for your hotel and its cost-effective and environmentally friendly investments.

For more information, a thorough description of each of the above recommended changes, and a chart of payback estimates, please visit the Alliance to Save Energy website at [www.ase.org/programs/lighting.htm](http://www.ase.org/programs/lighting.htm).

Here are a few major suggestions for performing a lighting upgrade:

- Replace all incandescent lamps which are used for more than 3,000 hours per year.
- Replace incandescent lamps with compact fluorescent lamps (CFL) in screw-in fixture systems such as hallways, guestrooms, and offices.
- Replace incandescent lamps with halogen lamps in some spotlight and decorative lighting applications.
- Replace incandescent exit signs, incandescent lamps or fixtures with corresponding light-emitting diode (LED) lamps or fixtures
- Upgrade your T12 fluorescent and magnetic ballast systems to T8 lamps and electronic ballasts.
- Incorporate occupancy sensors in applicable spaces such as meeting rooms, offices, support spaces, public bathrooms and guestrooms.

### *Building materials re-used in Ventura, CA project*

#### *From Recycling Today News*

Much of the wood, concrete and steel in the old Montgomery Ward building in Ventura, Calif., will one day take on new life, thanks to the largest recycling project in city history.

In May, workers demolished the 130,000-square-foot building at Mills Road and Main Street to make way for a new Lowe's home improvement store. Montgomery Ward closed its store in January 2001 after declaring bankruptcy.

Instead of hauling off the tons of debris to a dump, workers separated much of it into piles of different materials, including concrete, wood, steel and glass. City officials say it's the largest such effort ever in Ventura.

Recycling the materials not only will preserve dwindling landfill space, but it also will save the project's contractor an estimated \$200,000.

Dumping fees will be greatly reduced, and the company will sell some of the recyclables.

"It makes environmental sense and economic sense," said Carl Johnson, president of Near-Cal, the project's general contractor.

It seems almost everything these days can be recycled, even drywall.

"The gypsum from the drywall can be mixed in the soil to strengthen strawberry skins," said Marialyce Pedersen, an analyst with the Ventura County's Environmental and Energy Resources Department.

Recycled concrete also is a hot item, Pedersen said. New environmental regulations make it a lot harder to mine the sand and gravel used to make concrete.

Instead of paying \$33 to \$55 a ton to dump concrete at a disposal site, many contractors now give it to recyclers and are charged nothing.

While the Montgomery Ward demolition is complete, the recycling process continues at the site.

Workers first put the concrete through a giant crusher they installed at the site, Johnson said. The crushed concrete is later separated into rock and sand at the recycler's facility, and these materials are then resold.

Johnson said some of the materials also might be reused in the construction of a Lowe's store, scheduled to be built on the 13.5-acre lot later this year.

### *2003 Best Practices Report Shows Environmental Progress*

The BEA has released its second annual report on leading Sonoma County companies that voluntarily implement conservation measures. The Best Practices Report synthesizes the results of an annual survey sent to more than 400 Sonoma County businesses and provides recommendations for action.

This survey received a 21% response rate and had high participation from Sonoma County's three major industries, the tourism, agriculture and high tech industries.

Among other findings, the survey results revealed that almost all responding businesses (88%) have taken steps to reduce energy consumption, and more than half (63%) conserve water through reduced use or water recycling.

A majority (51%) of the respondents share information with other businesses regarding successful environmental practices, yet only 25% have written an environmental policy statement or set specific voluntary environmental goals.

Also featured in the Best Practices Report are 20 local companies from seven different industries with notable or exceptional environmental practices. Detailed information on these pages highlights the financial payoff from the conservation measures of each of these companies.

A full copy of the report with recommendations for action and all BEA publications are available online at [www.sonomabea.org](http://www.sonomabea.org).

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will be saved each year. Second, millions of gallons of high quality recycled water will be reclaimed and reused rather than discharged to local streams that flow into the Russian River.

As one of its major water policy goals, the Windsor Town Council expressed a strong desire to expand the beneficial reuse of recycled water, particularly in urban uses. The recycling of water is not a new idea for the town; irrigation of agricultural lands with reclaimed water dates back more than two decades.

During the planning and design of the Vintage Greens subdivision, its close proximity to the town's existing recycled water storage and distribution system presented a great opportunity to expand recycled water usage beyond irrigation of just the neighborhood park and playfields. The project also required a willingness on the part of the Town Council, staff, developer and regulatory agencies to "think outside the box." Extensive public surveys conducted by the town concluded that there was general acceptance of a residential recycled water project in Windsor.

The highlights of the Vintage Greens project include:

- Developer receives water and wastewater impact fee credits (\$3500 per house) for all costs to design and install new recycled water distribution system throughout the subdivision.

- Town is responsible for design, printing and distribution of all recycled water public information materials used in sales office and for distribution to new homeowners. The Public Information program cost is expected to exceed \$100,000.

- Homeowners receive free recycled water until 2012 and help

protect their homes from future water reductions due to droughts or other water supply shortages.

- Developer allowed to build 75 units per year, up to a total of 474 homes.

- Developer installs front yard landscaping using recycled water, unless declined by new homebuyer.

- Town indemnifies the developer and accepts full liability for the quality, delivery and uses of recycled water just as it does for the potable water system.

- Town is responsible for all monitoring, inspection and enforcement of rules and regulations regarding recycled water uses and prohibitions.

- Town is responsible for obtaining project approvals from Department of Health Services and Regional Water Quality Control Board.

- Town and developer use the same disclosure forms regarding recycled water uses and prohibitions.

- Individual homeowners choosing not to use recycled water must reimburse the town for the \$3,500 in impact fee credits, including added costs to connect irrigation to potable system. Must also use only Xeriscape in front yard landscaping.

- Town offers free purple recycled water pipe, fittings and sprinklers to homeowners who also use recycled water for backyard irrigation.

Sales at Vintage Greens have been brisk in spite of competition from other conventional subdivisions in Windsor. All of the 100 homes sold to date have opted to use recycled water for watering the front yard landscaping installed by the developer. Even though many of the new homeowners have yet to install their backyard landscaping, the town is doing aggressive outreach with these new residents, through personal contact and other incentives, to convince new homeowners of the ben-

efits of using recycled water in their backyards. Most of the homeowners who have installed their backyard landscaping have decided to use recycled water.

During the warm weather months average residential water consumption doubles and sometimes triples due to extensive outdoor watering. Recycled water consumption the first ten months in the Vintage Greens homes has averaged 10,000 gallons per month, nearly double the project estimates. Indoor potable water consumption has also been consistent with winter usage, averaging 5,000 gallons per month.

Based on the current rate of building and the 100% participation of new homeowners opting to use recycled water for irrigation to date, the completion of the Vintage Greens subdivision will exceed the projected water savings of 25 million gallons of potable water annually, most of it during the peak usage summer months. The same amount of recycled water will be reclaimed and reused annually. Virtually all the wastewater generated in the Vintage Greens homes will be collected, purified and reused to water the lawns, landscaping, nearby park and playfields year after year.

With annual reductions of more than 25 million gallons in the town's potable water consumption and the beneficial reuse of the same amount of recycled water, Vintage Greens will help to reduce future environmental impacts on the Russian River and preserve one of Sonoma County's most precious natural resources. Although the financial savings from this project are only minimal, the resource savings for the environment are huge. For more information, contact Matt Mullen at the Town of Windsor (707) 838 - 1000.

*Businesses save money this summer by saving water***Business Water Project helps local businesses recognize cost-saving water conservation possibilities**

What does an irrigation sprinkler at a Petaluma business park have in common with a toilet at a Sonoma Valley health club? According to water audits at these businesses, both devices could be saving these businesses money.

The business park and health club are part of a growing number of businesses in Sonoma, Windsor, Petaluma, and Rohnert Park reducing water use and lowering costs. They are taking part in the free water use consultation program known as the Sonoma County Business Water Project.

All participating businesses receive a free water audit of their facility followed by a report detailing cost-effective methods of lowering water use and wastewater production. Businesses can also choose to receive assistance in the implementation of conservation measures.

The Sonoma County Business Water Project is made possible through a partnership between the Sonoma County Water Agency and the Sonoma County Economic Development Board. Since its inception in the spring of 2002, the Water Project has provided assistance to twelve businesses, including a winery, a food processing facility, a school, and a grocery store. The audit reports have uncovered a wide variety of conservation projects, all of which, if implemented, would enable the businesses as a whole to save \$54,000 each year.

Business owners and facilities directors of companies in Sonoma Valley, Windsor, Rohnert Park, and Petaluma are encouraged to participate in this program. For further information, please call (707) 565-6455.

**Water conservation rebates available to businesses****Santa Rosa**

Santa Rosa offers rebates of \$100 for every 1,000 gallons per month of **sustainable reduction in water use and wastewater flow** that is achieved through measures other than toilet/faucet/showerhead replacement. This program is for commercial, industrial and institutional customers only.

Please contact Diane Lesko, Water Conservation Representative at (707) 543-3986 for further information on how to participate in this program.

Santa Rosa also offers a rebate of \$450.00 per top-loading **coin-operated washing machine** that is replaced with water conserving H-axis models. This is available to commercial coin-operated laundromats as well as coin-operated laundromats in multi-unit residential complexes.

Beginning in December, 2002, the California Public Utilities Commission is funding a portion of the rebate, due to the energy savings associated with these high-efficiency machines. Because of their involvement, applications must be submitted through Energy Solutions, Inc. For more information and/or application materials, click on [www.lightwash.com](http://www.lightwash.com) or contact Gail Chavez at (707) 543-3991.

**Petaluma**

The City of Petaluma offers a **toilet & waterless urinal** replacement program to businesses that utilize the City's water or sewer services. The program provides a rebate of up to \$200 for the cost of purchasing a low-flow toilet, plus up to \$120 for the cost of the first installation and \$60 for any additional replacements.

Petaluma also has a **high-efficiency clotheswasher** rebate of up to \$500 for businesses, multi-family complexes, hotels, and laundromats. For more information, call the Department of Resources & Conservation at (707) 778-4507.

**Sonoma Valley**

Business customers of the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District are eligible for rebates of up to \$260 for each **low-flow toilet or waterless urinal** purchased and installed. To inquire about eligibility, call (707) 547-1933.

**County-wide**

Since June 1999, the Sonoma County Water Agency has distributed over 100,000 free water-conserving showerheads and faucet aerators, retrofitted 33,000 toilets to low flow, and rebated 1,200 horizontal-axis, water-efficient washing machines. Contact Ali Davidson at (707) 547-1933 to ask about free fixtures and rebates for your bathroom, kitchen, or laundry room.



**continued from front page**

- An estimated monthly water budget (to be used as a guideline)
- An analysis of previous water use with comparison to historic weather data
- A site assessment and evaluation of irrigation system performance
- Recommendations for improving system performance, developing efficient irrigation schedules, and implementing water management practices.

To be considered for a rebate or for more information, please call (707) 543-3985 to request an application.

Congratulations to **Petaluma Poultry, Mrs. Grossman's Paper Company, and the Petaluma Veteran's Memorial Hall.** These Petaluma Chamber of Commerce member businesses were recognized by the Business Environmental Alliance for their responsible environmental practices at the Chamber's monthly breakfast event on Tuesday, May 27, 2003 at Kodiak Jack's. These businesses set the environmental standard for other local businesses to follow. The BEA appreciates their leadership and encourages business-to-business communication to spread knowledge about their environmental best practices.

***PROFITABILITY THROUGH SOUND ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES***

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