

## The Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce shows off its green side.

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By Kera Abraham



Carmel Building & Design President Rob Nicely powers a laptop and a light bulb with his pedals.

A light bulb went off at Carmel Building & Design. Literally.

As Andreas Baer of Monterey Green Action pedaled, the back wheel of the bike powered a generator that supplied juice to a 12-volt bulb and a laptop computer. The company financed and Baer built the bike generator, which replaces fossil fuel with human sweat.

The contraption is just one eco-savvy technology that will be on display at the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce's Sustainable Business Showcase, a free event to be held at the Monterey Conference Center on Wednesday, April 30.

Ashley Morrow, CBD's green projects coordinator, is helping line up the showcase's classes, speakers, films, exhibitors and vendors. "We're promoting those businesses that have found something they can do to be less wasteful with resources and create a more healthful environment and community," she says. "People have had the perception that business and environmentalism do not go together, but we're finding lots of people who are making them go together. If we support them, we can make a sustainable economy work."

A dozen break-out sessions will explore topics including energy efficiency, recycling, plastic marine debris, socially responsible investing and sustainable building design. Sarah Graham of SPG Consulting will present National Geographic's effort to make the Monterey Bay area California's first sustainable travel destination – a concept that merits a new word. "Geotourism is embracing all aspects of tourism, anywhere from nature to agriculture to art," Graham says. She hopes to use the showcase to identify potential members for a local Geotourism Stewardship Council.

CSUMB professor Pat Tinsley will discuss the "triple bottom line" of people, planet and profit; Big Sur Land Trust Executive Director Bill Leahy will present on community visioning; and Sustainable Monterey County co-founder Deborah Lindsay will outline the core principles of green business. Three films – one produced by Monterey's Sea Studios and another by Monterey Institute of International Studies students – will highlight the business sense in going green.

Exhibitors have been asked to keep waste to a minimum, use recycled paper, carpool to the event, transport materials in reusable containers and avoid plastic materials. The chamber will provide food vendors with compostable serving ware, and Morrow says she's working to offset the event's carbon dioxide emissions.

The showcase reflects the chamber's own efforts to become more eco-savvy. "We are becoming a green business also," says chamber programs director Georgette Cash. "We've been wasting for too long, and it's going to come back and really affect our lives."

Chamber board member and CBD President Rob Nicely, along with Passionfish restaurant owner Cindy Walter, started the chamber's Sustainability Committee with the goal of incorporating sustainable policy into the chamber's operations.

The sustainable business showcase is the committee's inaugural event. "We've gotten tons of interest and really good content," Nicely says. "It's a matter of getting critical mass to the point that we're making a real impact."

**THE MONTEREY SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS SHOWCASE WILL RUN 3PM-8PM WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, AT THE MONTEREY CONFERENCE CENTER, 1 PORTOLA PLAZA, MONTEREY. FREE. 648-5360**

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