



June 2012
Volume 6, Issue 6

Care for God's Creation

News from the Stockton Diocese Environmental Justice Project

Free tool helps parishes save money, energy

*God showed me a little thing,
the size of a hazelnut, lying
in the palm of my hand. It
was as round as any ball... I
thought, 'What can this be?'
My question was answered
in general terms. ... 'It is
everything that is made.' I
marveled at how this could
be, for it seemed that it
might suddenly fall into
nothingness, it was so small.
An answer for this was given
to my understanding: 'It
lasts and ever shall last
because God loves it. And in
this fashion, all things have
their being by the grace of
God.'*

- Julian of Norwich

In this issue:

- Portfolio Manager helps parishes save money and energy
- American Lung Association annual State of the Air report card
- Help us build a healthy San Joaquin Valley

A free, easy-to-use computer program from the US Environmental Protection Agency can help local parishes cut their energy costs and reduce pollution.

In the May 23, 2012 *National Catholic Reporter* column *Eco-Catholic*, Charles Morris recommends the Portfolio Manager energy performance tool. The on-line software operated by the EPA allows parishes to track their energy savings and their emission reductions over time.

While working at the parish of St. Elizabeth in Wyandotte, Michigan, the program showed Morris that adding a programmable thermostat to the church and properly maintaining the boiler system "reduced our energy use by 11 percent in less than a year and offset 29,000 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions."

Portfolio Manager has become the national standard tool by which energy use is tracked and is now used by over 340,000 buildings nationwide. This simple tool takes weather, equipment, square footage, energy use, hours of operation and utility rates into account to "score" a facility on a 100-point scale. A score of 50 is average – a score of 75 indicates a building in the upper 25 percent of energy-efficiency, making it eligible for the ENERGY STAR label.

The program makes recommendations on ways to save energy, an important thing for the environment as well as the financial well being of individual parishes. Read more at: <http://ncronline.org/node/30467>

Learn more at: www.energystar.gov and type in either "Portfolio Manager" or "Congregations" for ways to start greening your parish.

Take action by ordering a free "Cool Congregations" guide from Interfaith Power and Light at: www.interfaithpowerandlight.org and click on "Get Involved" and then "Be a Cool Congregation."



California approves nation's strongest energy efficiency standards

By Mark Glover, Sacramento Bee, May 31, 2012: The California Energy Commission unanimously approved upgraded building energy efficiency standards that one commissioner called "the strongest in the nation."

The new standards include improved windows, insulation, lighting, air-conditioning systems and other features to reduce energy consumption in California homes and businesses by a projected 25 percent or more... The Energy Commission says that, since 1978, energy efficiency standards it has approved have saved Californians more than \$66 billion in electricity and natural gas costs.

Residential requirements include solar-ready roofs, hot water pipe insulation and independent air-conditioning inspections. For nonresidential buildings, requirements include sensor-based lighting controls and more energy-efficient refrigeration equipment for supermarkets, commercial kitchens and computer data centers. Read more at: <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/05/31/v-print/4529058/california-energy-commission-approves.html>

Environmental Justice Project

1106 N. El Dorado Street
Stockton, CA 95202

Phone:
209/444-5925

Fax:
209/444-5929

E-Mail:
betsyr@ccstockton.org

Website:
www.ccstockton.org

Help shape our Valley's future

As reported in the May 2012 issue of Care for God's Creation news, Catholic Charities is working with a coalition of local planning, health, and environmental justice groups to make sure that traditionally under-represented communities are part of a once-in-a-generation opportunity to decide how San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties will grow in the future.

A new state law, SB 375, encourages local governments and transportation agencies to work together to develop a "Sustainable Communities Strategy," a coordinated regional approach to addressing the transportation, housing and environmental challenges that no single city can tackle on its own.

Are you interested in learning more? Would you like to be involved in shaping the future of your neighborhood, your city, and your county? Please contact Betsy Reifsnider, the Environmental Justice Director at Catholic Charities, at: betsyr@ccstockton.org or call 209-444-5925.

About the Stockton Diocese Environmental Justice Project...

Since 2005, the Environmental Justice Project has worked "to educate and motivate Catholics to a deeper reverence and respect for God's creation, and to engage local parishes in activities aimed at dealing with environmental problems, particularly as they affect the poor." The Project brings a unique Catholic voice to the public policy debate in the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada.

Websites to Care for Creation:

Catholic Charities, Stockton Diocese: www.ccstockton.org

National Catholic Rural Life Conference: www.ncrlc.com

Catholic Climate Covenant:
www.catholicclimatecovenant.org
