



County of Marin Board of Supervisors, District 1

# Newsletter

November, 2013

## *From the desk of....*

We have three departments studying how water moves through our communities, how to recover, re-store, manage and maintain healthy elements of our watershed. In this newsletter, you will see an article on the Marin Watersheds report that was presented to the Board on October 29, which followed a presentation earlier in the month on Vegetation Management by Marin Parks, and most recently, Board approval of a Stream Conservation Area which will provide long studied and long awaited provisions that will help protect and restore our creeks. Healthy habitat, efficient stormwater drainage, and pro-active flood control strategies are interdependent. As we move into the rainy season of 2013-2014, we need to do our own habitat management, drain clearing and flood prevention measures to keep our homes and our neighbors' homes safe during inclement weather. You will probably see our Roads crews out clearing storm drains and culverts, leaf collection trucks on your streets; so as the leaves fall, please do your part in keeping our culverts, curbs and drains on your property clear.

You will see a number of articles on energy efficiency programs, including an update from Marin Clean Energy. Again, there are many organizations working together to help us find ways in our daily lives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce our carbon footprint. With all of the collaborative and forward leaning programs, the best thing individuals can do to reduce the community's carbon footprint is to sign up for Marin Clean Energy "Deep Green" and at the same time continue to find ways to be more efficient in the use of energy at home.

So, get those rakes out! Have a lovely November....

*Susan L. Adams*

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## ***Update from Marin Clean Energy (MCE)***

The last year has proven to be incredibly busy and successful for MCE and we have quite a bit of exciting news to share. Since launching electric generation service to customers in May 2010, MCE's customer base has increased by more than 10 times and we're now procuring a minimum of 50% renewable energy (compared to 25% when we first launched) to over 120,000 customers in Marin and Richmond, serving over 75% of the customer base in both communities.

This month we're celebrating the one-year anniversary of our first local solar project coming online at the San Rafael Airport and there are two other California-based solar projects currently being built for MCE customers. Our rates are more competitive than ever, and we've even launched an energy efficiency program to help community members further reduce their utility bills while simultaneously reducing energy-related greenhouse gas emissions.

Here are some highlights from recent activities to keep you up to date.

### **MCE Community Engagement**

Building strong customer relationships is among our highest priorities. As a community-based organization serving more than 75% of all commercial and residential customers in our service area, we realize the importance of on-the-ground, face-to-face interactions.

We've already participated in over 120 community events and meetings this year, keeping our local staff of 17 very busy! You may have seen us at the Marin County Fair, local business chamber events, or most recently GRID Alternative's Solarthon where solar panels were installed on eight low income homes in Richmond.

### **Introducing MCE's Energy Efficiency Savings Programs**

We've launched a \$4.1 M energy efficiency program focused on energy assessments and retrofits in multifamily, single family, and small commercial buildings with the goal of reducing customer bills and energy related greenhouse gas emissions.

In order to help alleviate the up-front costs associated with energy efficiency improvements, we're also offering a Green Loan financing program in partnership with First Community Bank and River City Bank. Customers can take a low-interest loan out through the bank to fund the improvement and pay it back directly on their PG&E bill. That creates a direct tie between the cost of the project and the utility dollar savings associated with the energy efficiency improvements.

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## District 1 Newsletter

### Rate Comparisons

MCE's standard electric generation product is "Light Green" 50% renewable energy. MCE Light Green generation rates are currently lower than comparable PG&E rates for all commercial customers and most residential customers. With the added cost of the PG&E exit fee (Power Charge Indifference Adjustment), the average MCE commercial customer cost is still lower than PG&E so our customers experience an overall savings.

Customers can also choose MCE's "Deep Green" 100% renewable energy product for a premium of just \$0.01 per kWh, which is about \$5 per month for an average residential customer. More information about Deep Green is available at: [www.mceCleanEnergy.com/deepgreen](http://www.mceCleanEnergy.com/deepgreen).

Cost comparisons for all rate schedules have been created jointly between MCE and PG&E. The cost comparisons, along with a cost calculator, are available on our website at: [www.mceCleanEnergy.com/rates](http://www.mceCleanEnergy.com/rates).

### Electricity Procurement

When MCE launched service in 2010, a short-term contract with Shell Energy North America was executed to provide all initial electricity needs. That contract will terminate in 2017 and MCE has been slowly ramping down the electricity provided by Shell Energy North America. We've entered into 17 different contracts for power supply to-date for solar, wind, geothermal and landfill waste to energy, most of which are long term contracts of 20 years or more. ***All of our long-term contracts are for California-based renewable energy supply.***

In the last 12 months, 4 new California renewable power projects were built for MCE customers. The first was the San Rafael Airport, the largest solar installation in Marin County to-date. The other 3 projects were located in the following Northern California communities: Solano County, Placer County and Yuba County. For more information about our power procurement activity, see our Integrated Resource Plan which is available on our website at [www.mceCleanEnergy.com/power-sources](http://www.mceCleanEnergy.com/power-sources).

### Contact Us

As always, please feel free to contact our team any time at 1 (888) 632-3674 or [info@mceCleanEnergy.com](mailto:info@mceCleanEnergy.com). We also invite you to visit our website at [www.mceCleanEnergy.com](http://www.mceCleanEnergy.com) for more information.

Dawn Weisz, Executive Officer

Marin Energy Authority

## ***Marin Energy Watch Partnership Invites Cities into Friendly Competition***

Marin Energy Watch Partnership (MCEP) will be developing a review of membership jurisdictions including cities and towns through Marin to determine their progress towards Climate Action Plan (CAP) implementation. The final products will include a report and presentations for local officials, presentation of data on MCEP's website and a tool for updating metrics moving forward. PG@E has confirmed this multi-jurisdiction "scorecard" of CAP implementation will be the first of its kind in its utility district. Funds for the partnership are provided by the California Public Utilities Commission's Public Goods Charge energy efficiency funds.

[http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/CD/main/comdev/advance/sustainability/Energy/ewp/Energy\\_Watch.cfm](http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/CD/main/comdev/advance/sustainability/Energy/ewp/Energy_Watch.cfm)

The first and best part of any Climate Change Action Plan is energy efficiency. Secondly, "going Deep Green" with Marin Clean Energy will help Marin County meet its target for 2020 reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. So, if you are already participating in Marin Clean Energy, but haven't taken the plunge, go Deep!

For easy ways to take that first step, see article on the following page.

### ***Marin Watersheds Update***

Flood Control staff made a presentation to the Board of Supervisors 10/29 (agenda item 15, if you wish to watch it online) on the status of the various parts of the Watershed Program.

Of interest to District 1, the design phase of the Gallinas Creek Watershed is on track for a report to be issued mid 2014. Studies include hydrologic modeling, focused hydrologic model of the Santa Venetia community—how water moves through the community, levee evaluation and a sediment study.

How does lower Miller Creek and Gallinas interact? The Coastal Conservancy contributed funds to Marin Parks on the McInnis Marsh study, which will help answer that question. Miller Creek is

home to a genetically unique steehead. The work being done relative to the McInnis Marsh study will serve as a good first step as work begins on the Miller Creek Watershed..

To see the power point presentation, you can go to the website, [Marinwatersheds.org](http://Marinwatersheds.org). You can also subscribe to that page for updates. It is a wealth of information on all of the watersheds, Ross Valley, Stinson Beach, Novato Creek and Richardson Bay/Central Marin.

Flood control depends on an understanding of how the watershed operates, keeping flood control mechanisms operating, reducing sediment and keeping the various parts of the watershed healthy and vibrant. It is a very tall order, but we are very excited to have this program underway!

## ***Energy Efficiency Resources for Marin County Homeowners***

Every home has room for improvement when it comes to saving energy and money. Completing energy efficiency projects in your home can lead to more than just energy and cost savings on your monthly utility bill. By taking the “whole house” approach and ensuring all your systems work together properly, you can:

- Save energy and lower your bills;
- Access rebates and incentives to help offset installation costs;
- Utilize financing to fund improvements;
- Make your home more comfortable in all seasons;
- Improve air quality inside your home;
- Conserve resources and reduce greenhouse gases.

### **What are your options?**

Explore your options—call to speak with an advisor or go online to MCE’s My Energy Tool.

Schedule a Green House Call for the easy stuff, or a home energy assessment to go deeper into your project options.

Complete your upgrades, get your rebates and incentives and if needed, finance the outstanding costs of your projects.

Enjoy!

**Green House Call:** A great no cost way to get started. A trained youth energy specialist from Rising Sun Energy Center will visit your house and install energy and water efficient fixtures such as CFLs, aerators and low flow shower heads. Tel: 1-510-665-1501 ext. 10

**Free Home Advisor:** Home Upgrade Advisors work with you every step of the way before, during and after an upgrade. They can provide one-on-one assistance to inform you about energy efficiency options, help you select a contractor and navigate project installation and financing options. Call 1-866-878-6008

**Find rebates and map out your energy plan:** MCE’s My Energy Tool helps you create a customized plan for your home. You can learn how to save money through behavior change, appliance and home upgrades, find contractors, equipment, rebates and financing. Create an account to track your progress.

[MyEnergyTool.mceCleanEnergy.com](http://MyEnergyTool.mceCleanEnergy.com)

**Finance your upgrade projects:** MCE offers green home loans to help single family property owners finance their energy efficient home improvements and repay the loan on their monthly MCE energy bills. [mceCleanEnergy.com/loans](http://mceCleanEnergy.com/loans)

The County is managing programs for upgrades on multi-family and commercial properties. Contact Dana Armanino, Community Development Agency, Planner, 473-3292 or by email: [darmanino@marincounty.org](mailto:darmanino@marincounty.org)

## Winter Spare the Air Season Begins November 1

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) is announcing the beginning of the Winter Spare the Air season on November 1, making it illegal to burn wood, manufactured firelogs or any other solid fuel, both indoors and outdoors, when a Winter Spare the Air Alert is called.

Like cigarette smoke, wood smoke contains many carcinogenic substances which make the air harmful to breathe inside as well as outside your home. The fine particulate pollution in wood smoke is especially harmful for children, the elderly and those with respiratory conditions, and is known to cause more than 90 percent of the premature deaths related to air pollution.

“The Winter Spare the Air program has successfully helped the public understand the hazards of wood smoke while helping us make significant progress toward cleaner air in our neighborhoods,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “Wood smoke is the other second hand smoke so fewer unhealthy air days means healthier air quality for everyone living in the nine counties of the Bay Area.”

The Air District calls Winter Spare the Air Alerts when weather conditions trap pollution close to the ground and air quality is forecast to be unhealthy. The Winter Spare the Air season runs from November 1, 2013, through February 28, 2014.

Cold temperatures and calm winds during the winter season can cause wood smoke to build up in residential neighborhoods. When air quality is forecast to be unhealthy, a Winter Spare the Air Alert will be called for the next full calendar day. During an alert, the use of wood-burning devices, including fireplaces, pellet stoves, wood stoves and outdoor fire pits is forbidden.

For those living in West Marin who rely on wood stoves for heat, a rebate program is available to assist with the purchase and installation of EPA certified inserts or gas conversions which decrease harmful emissions. You can contact Omar Pena, Community Development Agency, at 473-2797 for more information.

Bay Area residents can check before they burn by:

- Calling 1-877-4NO-BURN
- Visiting [www.sparetheair.org](http://www.sparetheair.org) or [www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov)
- Signing up for automatic e-mail AirAlerts at [www.sparetheair.org](http://www.sparetheair.org)
- Signing up for automatic phone alerts by calling 1-800-430-1515
- Downloading the Spare the Air iPhone and Android apps.

First-time violators of the Wood Burning Rule will be encouraged to take a Wood Smoke Awareness course to learn more about the health impacts from wood smoke and the weather conditions that lead to unhealthy air quality in the winter. Those who choose not to take the course will receive a \$100 ticket. Second violations are subject to a \$500 ticket, with the ticket amount increasing for any subsequent violations. There are also year-round prohibitions on excessive smoke and burning garbage and other harmful materials like junk mail, plastic, wood pallets and more in fireplaces and woodstoves. Residents concerned about wood smoke pollution may call 1-877-4NO-BURN or visit [www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov) to file a complaint or to get more information.

An exemption is available for residents and businesses that burn wood as their sole source of heat and have no other permanently installed heating source.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District ([www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov)) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the Bay Area. For more information about Spare the Air, visit [www.sparetheair.org](http://www.sparetheair.org).

## ***Regional Water Board Continues its Analysis, Draft Report Due December***

Kent Aue, Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), reports that there are currently two efforts underway regarding the site of the former Prosperity Cleaners at Marinwood Plaza.

The environmental consultant for the Marinwood Plaza property owner (Geologica) is conducting fieldwork to the east of Hwy 101, which includes evaluating the subsurface geology at several locations and collecting groundwater samples. Groundwater samples will be sent to a laboratory for chemical analysis. Once the analytical results are re-

ceived by Geologica they will prepare a report to submit to the Regional Water Board. This work will help RWQCB evaluate the extent of contamination in groundwater downgradient of the former Prosperity Cleaners. RWQCB expects to receive the Geologica report in mid-December.

Regional Water Board staff are currently preparing a draft cleanup order for the former Prosperity Cleaners property. They anticipate distributing the draft cleanup order for public comment in mid-December. After receiving written comments on the draft cleanup order they will prepare written responses to the comments and revise the cleanup order, as appropriate. Following final preparations, the revised cleanup order will be presented to the Regional Water Board for adoption probably at their March 2014 meeting.

## ***Bad Habits are Hard to Break—Avoid a Ticket, Stay on the Freeway at Marinwood***

Everyone living north of Marinwood should watch these videos. Feel free to share them with your neighbors and other people you know living north of Marinwood. It could do more than bring a smile to their faces, it could save them a hefty moving violation fine.

Watch this...

Thursday October 3 - KRON segment (Part 1)- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9la4pzskae8>

Monday October 7 - KRON 6:00 news (Part 2) - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xL1JSdJDhE>

Monday October 7 - KRON 8:00 news (Part 3) - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Trx6Pxgo9i4>

Thank you to those that have already stopped using Marinwood as a freeway bypass.

## ***Candy's Park Playground Renovation Community Work Day November 23, 8am-3pm***

Marin County Parks worked with a local moms' group to come up with some exciting new play elements for Candy's Park. Construction has begun and now it's time to put the pieces together! We are looking for 15-20 volunteers; work will be of a physical nature doing such things as sorting and laying up equipment and mixing bags of concrete. Candy's Park is on Adrian Way next to the Korean Presbyterian Church. Call Nancy Peake at 473-2865, or Gina Hagen, 377-3377.

## District 1 Newsletter

### ***North San Rafael Village***

Have you heard about Marin Villages? There is a North San Rafael Village! Marin Villages is a non-profit 501(c)(3) whose mission is to help seniors remain in their homes and communities for as long as they choose. As part of the nationwide Village Movement, Marin Villages recognizes the need to offer older adults an alternative when deciding how and where they would like to age.

Rather than depend on agencies or public services, members and volunteers of Marin Villages lean on each other to make life's simple tasks, which may no longer be so easy - like driving to the store, changing out batteries on a smoke detector, or learning the newest app on your iPad - still manageable.

By matching neighbor to neighbor, not only do we alleviate some daily stress, but we provide the vehicle to build new friendships, develop interests and utilize one's skills and knowledge.

Come join us on the first Thursday of every month for an informal get together for those interested in learning about the North San Rafael Village, which is a new chapter of Marin Villages, the community working to help Seniors stay in their own homes. Meet members, volunteers and neighbors. The next Coffee will be on THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7 at 10 AM. Coffees will all be held at the Club Restaurant at McInnis Park Golf Center.

Members needing a ride may call Marin Villages at 415-457-4633; others needing a ride call Jane at 415-492-8041 or Carole at 415-479-0930.

Directions: From 101, go east on Smith Ranch Road. Drive to the end where there is parking for the Club and golf course.

On FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15 at 10 AM there will be an easy walk at Gallinas Ponds. We'll walk on a level path for about one hour. If you are a bird watcher, bring binoculars. Dogs on leashes are welcome. Bring your walking shoes - and a friend. Rain cancels.

Members may call Marin Villages at 415-457-4633 to arrange a ride. Others needing a ride, call Sue Beitel at 415-479-2514.

Directions: From 101, go east on Smith Ranch Road. Cross the railroad tracks and then immediately turn left at the McInnis Park entrance. Follow the road to the end where there is a parking lot on your left and a Portapotty. We'll meet in the Parking Lot.

If you are intrigued by the idea of a village, want more information, want to be alerted to coming events, check out MARIN VILLAGES online at [marin-villages.org](http://marin-villages.org). or call North San Rafael Village steering committee co-chairs Jane Solomons at 492-8041 or Carole Sherick at 479-0930.

Submitted by Donna Franzblau

### ***Right-of-Way Improvements at Miller Creek School***

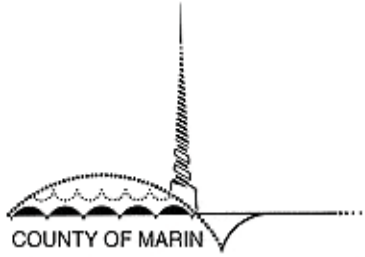
Contract was awarded to perform right-of-way improvements at schools around the county, including Miller Creek. The project at Miller Creek School consists of new curb ramps, striping and other safety improvements.

Construction is scheduled to begin as soon as school is out of session.

You may contact Principal Civil Engineer, Ernest Klock, with any questions. 473-6552



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[www.marincounty.org/district1](http://www.marincounty.org/district1)

**Marin County Civic Center**  
**3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 329**  
**San Rafael, CA 94903**

**Calendar of Board related meetings:**

**Board of Supervisors Meetings**, BOS Chambers, 3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 330, San Rafael: **November 5 and 12**. See cyberagenda for starting time and agenda the Thursday before meeting date: <http://www.co.marin.ca.us/efiles/BS/AgMn/cybagnda.htm>. The cyberagenda will also advise dates, times and agenda for **Marin Housing Authority** meetings.

**Marin Transit District**, BOS Chambers, November 18 at 10:00 a.m.. See website for Marin Transit District agenda and to confirm meeting times: <http://www.marintransit.org>

**Transportation Authority of Marin**, BOS Chambers: **November 21**, 7:30 p.m. BOS Chambers. See website for TAM agenda and to confirm meeting times: <http://www.tam.ca.gov>

**Check out the Master Calendar on the County website:**

<http://www.marincounty.org/main/calendar>

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**Go to our Facebook page and "like" for periodic updates:**  
<http://www.facebook.com/supervisorsusanadams>

**"Try it, you'll like it!"**



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