

green LAGUNA

LAGUNA BEACH OFFERS A HOST OF WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR FOOTPRINT ON THE CITY. *By Michelle Panik*



BEACH CITY MOPEDS ▲

FROM REMODELING SHOWS TO CAMPAIGN SPEECHES TO COFFEE SHOP CONVERSATIONS, sustainable living is on our collective conscious. It's no secret that "being green" is in. What's more difficult to find, though, is useful local information about how we can each live in a way that reduces our impact on the planet.

Thanks to Laguna Beach's mild climate and progressive nature, there's no end to the ways in which residents can make a positive environmental impact. Included here are only a few of the many businesses and organizations within the city limits that are helping residents live greener, cleaner lives.

Two-Wheeling It

For those looking to take the phrase "go green" literally, there are several moped, bicycle, scooter and electric bike businesses that can set you up with a great alternative to the family SUV.

Lee Matigan, owner of Beach City Mopeds (3295 Laguna Canyon Rd.; 949-715-1220; beachcitymopeds.com), says he doesn't want people to reject modern conveniences in the name of environmental good. All he's asking for is a little moderation.

"We're encouraging people to leave their cars home and take an electric bike, scooter or moped to and from the beach or market," he says. Such vehicles get between 80 and 135 miles per gallon. And beyond the environmental and economic reasons, two-wheeled transportation reduces traffic and makes parking a breeze.

Located just off Coast Highway, Laguna Beach Cyclery (240 Thalia St.; 949-494-1522; lagunabeachcyclery.com) is a roadie's dream. With brands like Pinarello, Orbea and Campagnolo, this shop stocks all the best and latest technology. Of course, if you ride a mountain bike, fixed-gear or cruiser, they can accommodate you, too. And if you're new to cycling, the friendly staff will give you a primer and set you up with a great first bike. Rentals are also available.

If you need a motor that's more powerful than your two legs, Electric Cyclery (900 N. Coast Hwy.; 949-715-2345; greenspeed.us) is your shop. Along with rows of electric bikes and scooters, they also carry E-Glide electric skateboards, folding bikes and conversion kits to add some horsepower to your existing 10-speed.

Shining Extra Bright

It used to be that the solar panels you saw on a home's roof probably heated a swimming pool. Now, thanks to a combination of government incentive programs, better technology and increased environmental awareness, more people are installing solar panel systems to help offset their home's energy needs.

While there's a slew of solar companies based throughout Southern California that serve the area, local Laguna Beach companies can also set up residents with a system to reduce their monthly utility bill and tread more lightly on Mother Nature.

Laguna Beach's newest solar company, Lighthouse Solar (30502 S. Coast Hwy.; 949-584-4800; lighthousesolar.com/laguna-beach) is bringing solar to the city, one south-facing surface at a time. Because so many find the cost tough to swallow, the company offers no-money-down leases called purchase power agreements. At the end of each month, customers pay only for the solar energy produced on site, and purchase the remaining needed energy from their utility.

"If you're trying to be a good steward of the earth, there are ways to get solar on your home and make it affordable," says Mike Sadler, the company's general manager.

When outfitting a home, Lighthouse Solar works with an architect to integrate solar into the structure so it doesn't obstruct anyone's much-coveted ocean view. Not only do they install solar

panels on roofs, but carport awnings, canopies and porch coverings as well.

Since 1978—long before our current green craze began—Insoltech Solar (949-497-6300; isoltechsolar.com) has been outfitting residential and commercial buildings with alternative energy systems. For those wanting to be completely sustainable, Insoltech creates off-grid systems designed so that a home uses only the energy it generates. Most customers, though, opt for a grid-tied system that uses energy from both solar and their utility company.

In an effort to customize systems to customer's particular needs and situation, Insoltech also offers wind, thermal and hybrid power systems that can be combined with power from the grid. And should a system experience unanticipated energy needs, a gas, propane or diesel generator can supply backup power. **LBM**



YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD FOUNDATIONS

Those looking to take up an environmental cause can find like-minded individuals and resources at these organizations:



CLEAN WATER NOW:

Dedicated to protecting our beaches, this organization coordinates beach cleanups to ensure that this natural resource persists. (cleanwaternow.com)



GROWERS FIRST

GROWERS FIRST:

The organization teaches sustainability to poor indigenous growers around the world and helps them earn a more livable income through training, education and collaborative efforts. (growersfirst.org)



GreenLagunaBeach

GO GREEN LAGUNA BEACH:

This product of the Laguna Beach Visitors & Conference Bureau provides information on transportation, shopping, restaurants and outdoor adventures. (greenlagunabeach.com)



TRANSITION LAGUNA BEACH:

Building on the "think globally, act locally" aphorism, Transition Laguna is working to create a community that no longer needs fossil fuels. (transitionlaguna.org)

ENDANGERED PLANET FOUNDATION:

This nonprofit seeks to tread lightly on our planet through education, communication and the arts. (endangeredplanetfoundation.org)



LAGUNA CANYON FOUNDATION:

Having successfully saved more than 10,000 acres from development, this foundation now leads education and docent programs on the parklands, as well as other preservation initiatives. (lagunacanyon.org)



LAGUNA GREENBELT:

This group is preserving and protecting the 22,000-acre parkland, the second-largest coastal wilderness and parkland in Southern California. (lagunagreenbelt.org)



ZERO TRASH LAGUNA:

With "Pick it up!" as its motto, Zero Trash Laguna encourages people to dispose of their waste properly and also works with the city to upgrade the existing trash infrastructure. (zerotrashlaguna.org) **LBM**

