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February 2011 E-newsletter

Conservation psychology, the outlook on regional transit, new resources on EquinoxCenter.org and more...

Keeping Up With the Joneses: The Newest Tool in Working Toward Sustainability?

An emerging field of psychology sheds light on why individuals hold certain attitudes about conservation and what messages work to shift people towards more sustainable behavior. It turns out that one of the most effective marketing techniques to encourage people to use less water or energy is to tell them that other people in their neighborhood are doing it. Empirical studies conducted by [Wes Schultz](#), a Professor of Psychology at California State University, San Marcos show that the "social norm" message beats out marketing that tells people that changing their behavior is good for the planet, or that they will save money.

Dr. Schultz works with local water districts, energy utilities like SDG&E and other regional planning agencies to study energy and water conservation behavior. His research helps these organizations to develop and refine their messages to consumers. Dr. Schultz will be conducting a [workshop](#) on conservation psychology and social marketing on March 21st and 22nd at the [California Center for Sustainable Energy](#) in San Diego.

Talking Tomorrow's Transit

For the first time ever, [SANDAG](#) is required to include a [Sustainable Communities Strategy](#) (SCS) in its update of the [Regional Transportation Plan \(RTP\)](#) for San Diego. A draft of the plan is due out in April. The SCS is meant to encourage better coordinated land use and transportation planning to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. One of the questions that arises

when we create new plans to address our growth challenges is how will we know if our plans and policies are working as we implement them.

On February 24, [Move San Diego](#) organized a workshop to discuss the performance measures for the RTP and SCS. Over 100 interested persons turned out for the event, including Congressman Bob Filner who provided an update on how the federal budget situation will affect San Diego's transportation plans. Equinox Center's Ann Tartre spoke as part of a panel about how to measure Quality of Life issues in the region by using Equinox's San Diego Regional Quality of Life Dashboard. Equinox also worked with [Voice of San Diego](#) to organize an [on-line dialogue](#) on February 23 as a lead up to the workshop.

Solana Beach's Clean, Green Sustainability Month


March 4, 2011 marks the kick-off of the City of Solana Beach's 3rd annual March Sustainability Month. Join the City, local organizations and leaders as they bring together the community to help inform youth and the public about the future opportunities and challenges of environmentalism and sustainability. The month culminates with a celebration tied to [Earth hour](#), a global "lights out" event. For more information about all the events planned for this month, please click [here](#).

New Resources Available on EquinoxCenter.org!

Be sure to visit Equinox Center's website for the latest [data](#), [news](#), [reports](#) and [resources](#) related to quality of life here and throughout the Nation. Find out what we're measuring, stay informed and download information for FREE.

Among the newest resources available are [maps and graphs](#) from the 2011 San Diego Regional Quality of Life Dashboard, a [report](#) by the American Public Health Association analyzing the hidden health costs of transportation, and a [study](#) conducted by the Center for Neighborhood Technology that explores the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through transit-oriented development.

Equinox In The News



ABC Channel 10 news showcased Equinox Center's [air quality indicator](#) from our 2011 Dashboard. To see reporter Michael Chen's take on Equinox findings, [click here](#).

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