

Ten Local Innovators Receive Clean Air Awards For Fighting Climate Change



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Breathe California honors local businesses, organizations and individuals at its 18th annual luncheon

San Francisco, Calif. – BREATHE CALIFORNIA recognized ten Bay Area businesses, organizations and individuals with a 2008 Clean Air Award today in honor of their extraordinary efforts to combat global warming. The prestigious awards were presented before hundreds of local air quality advocates at the Breathe California’s 18th annual Clean Air Luncheon held in San Francisco in the Carnelian Room.

“As we learn more about the environmental health risks posed by climate change, it has become absolutely clear that strong and immediate action is needed,” said BREATHE CALIFORNIA’s Rob Lawrence, who chaired the 2008 Green Ribbon Panel of Judges. “We are proud to honor those in our community who have shown the foresight and conviction to address this global challenge head on.”

Since 1991, BREATHE CALIFORNIA’s two Bay Area affiliates have presented Clean Air Awards to local innovators who have gone above and beyond in their efforts to improve air quality in the Bay Area. For the second year in a row, the Clean Air Awards have specifically recognized those who are leading the fight against climate change and helping to make the Bay Area a “green model” for the rest of the country. The 2008 Clean Air Awards were presented to the following 10 recipients (award category listed in italics):

Brent Newell, Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment - Leadership
For implementing a campaign that resulted in regulation of air pollution from agriculture sources in California, an effort which has successfully reduced emissions by thousands of tons

The Maritime Air Quality Improvement Task Force, Port of Oakland – Leadership (Honorable Mention)
For leading a collaboration among diverse stakeholders to develop an aggressive plan to reduce diesel particulates in West Oakland by 85 percent over the next 12 years.

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Kathryn Phillips, Environmental Defense Fund – Transportation

For spearheading efforts to ensure that the California Transportation Commission considers a project's air quality impact when appropriating money from the \$2 billion Trade Corridor Infrastructure Fund

Intel – Greenhouse Gas Emissions

For becoming the largest corporate purchaser of green power in the U.S., decreasing its energy consumption by four percent per year since 2002 and reducing its greenhouse gas emissions to 20 percent below its 2004 levels

Alameda Power & Telecom – Greenhouse Gas Emissions

For utilizing renewable sources for more than 80 percent of its energy portfolio, helping make the City of Alameda one of the lowest greenhouse gas emitting cities (per capita) in the state

Safeway - Greenhouse Gases (Honorable Mention)

For implementing its Greenhouse Gas & Sustainability Initiative which has helped the company eliminate 350,000 tons of CO₂ emissions and conserve 125 million kilowatt-hours of electricity annually

Lew Harrison, SF Greasecycle – Public Awareness

For developing and implementing the SF Greasecycle program to convert used cooking oils into biodiesel, an alternative fuel that produces 78 percent less carbon emissions than regular petroleum diesel

Cleaire Advanced Emission Controls – Technology/Research

For devising and manufacturing the Longview and Horizon emission devices which can reduce particulate matter by at least 85 percent in diesel buses and trucks

Tesla Motors – Technology/Research

For creating improved electric vehicle technology that yields better efficiency, performance and range than other zero-emission automobiles

City of San Leandro – Smart Growth (Honorable Mention)

For adopting a Transit Oriented Development strategy that promotes development in the transit-rich downtown area to reduce driving and encourage the use of alternative transportation

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In addition, the luncheon featured a keynote speech by James Goldstene, recently appointed Executive Officer of the California Air Resources Board and a special video presentation by Mary Nichols, Chair of the California Air Resources Board. In recognition of its Centennial Anniversary, BREATHE CALIFORNIA also presented special recognition awards to two longtime champions of air quality issues: San Mateo County Supervisor Jerry Hill, who was honored for his 20 years of exemplary leadership on critical air quality and tobacco control legislation at the state, regional and local level; and community activist Lee Jones, who was recognized for his courageous and diplomatic efforts to reduce air pollution and improve community health in North Richmond.

Air pollution and global warming present a significant danger to the environment and to public health. Exposure to high levels of air pollution has been linked to the onset of asthma, the development of lung cancer and premature death. Short-term exposure can cause shortness of breath, trigger an asthma attack or cause serious complications in people with heart disease or diabetes. In addition, global warming can create a prime environment for health risks such as greater air pollution, extreme weather conditions (such as floods, droughts, heat waves and natural disasters) and the spread of infectious diseases.

The 2008 Clean Air Awards Luncheon was sponsored by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Kaiser Permanente, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Port of Oakland and numerous other supporters.

Celebrating its 100th year in the Bay Area, BREATHE CALIFORNIA is dedicated to fighting lung disease and advocating for clean air. As one of California's oldest voluntary health organization, BREATHE CALIFORNIA addresses the most critical lung health threats through prevention, education, patient support, research and advocacy. For more information about BREATHE CALIFORNIA, the Clean Air Awards or the award recipients, visit www.cleanairawards.org or contact one of Breathe California's two Bay Area affiliates by calling (650) 994-5868 or (408) 998-5865.

The 10 Bay Area Winners including Brad Edgar, Cleaire's President, back row, far right.

