



# Volunteer Guidelines for Office of Sustainability Tabling Events

## Contents

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Guidelines .....  | 2 |
| What is my role as a County Volunteer? .....                                  | 2 |
| What are the general expectations of County Volunteers? .....                 | 2 |
| Do I have any special authority as a County volunteer? .....                  | 3 |
| What do I do if I get in an accident or get injured while volunteering? ..... | 3 |
| Tips.....   | 3 |
| Volunteer Signature.....  | 3 |
| Key Messaging Worksheet.....  | 4 |
| Planning Your Shift.....  | 5 |
| Prior to Your Shift.....  | 5 |
| During Your Shift.....  | 5 |
| After Your Shift.....   | 5 |
| Questions.....  | 5 |
| Office of Sustainability Programs and Talking Points.....                     | 6 |

## Guidelines

The County of San Mateo Office of Sustainability (OOS) welcomes you as a volunteer! We are excited to have you join us in serving the community and thank you for your time and energy. Your dedication, professionalism, and expertise will be essential to carrying out our shared goals of public service. The following general information should be reviewed carefully. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the County employees who are supervising and coordinating your volunteer efforts (your “Volunteer Coordinators”). These guidelines pertain specifically to the role of volunteers participating in OOS tabling events.

### What is my role as a County Volunteer?

A County volunteer works under the discretion of County staff to address various issues of local importance. Your Volunteer Coordinators will have specific tasks and responsibilities for you and you should let them know if your role is a good fit for you.

### What are the general expectations of County Volunteers?

- As a County volunteer, your professionalism is important. Please be friendly and helpful toward other volunteers and especially the public. We ask that you respect all people regardless of their backgrounds or views.

When asked for information from the public, please do not hesitate to ask your Volunteer Coordinators if you do not know the answer. If you are interviewed by the media, please remember that, while you are free to share your own views, you are not authorized to speak on behalf of the County.

- Your responsibilities as a volunteer require a commitment of time, resources, and training to perform. It is important to communicate with your Volunteer Coordinator(s) if you cannot dedicate enough time or resources to complete your volunteer responsibilities, or if you cannot be available for the entire duration of your volunteer term. As a courtesy, please let your Volunteer Coordinator know if you can no longer attend an event you have signed up for at least 24 hours in advance.

Please keep track of the time you volunteer, as the County collects general data on the contributions of all of its volunteers. Although County volunteers are not compensated for their time or reimbursed for expenses, we believe you will find your volunteer experience to be rewarding, both on a personal level and also in the knowledge that you have made a contribution to improving your local community. As part of a professional environment, we ask that you please refrain from soliciting or distributing private literature, products, or services while volunteering. This extends to the virtual realm, as well, and please do not use County email lists or contact information for private uses.

Depending on the project, you may come into contact with sensitive or confidential information, such as email addresses and phone numbers. If there is any doubt about whether information is sensitive, please defer to keeping it private and ask for clarification from your Volunteer Coordinator(s).

Your Volunteer Coordinator(s) may have more detailed requirements and expectations for you, depending on your role. For example, should your volunteer service involve access to any sensitive or confidential information, or should your responsibilities include unsupervised interaction with minors, it may be necessary for the County to request your permission to perform a standard background check in accordance with the County policies.

If you are not meeting the volunteer guidelines or expectations (e.g. being disrespectful to members of the public or County staff while you are serving as a volunteer), OOS has the right to discontinue your participation in the program.

## Do I have any special authority as a County volunteer?

Generally, no. While you are in a unique position to help the County in fulfilling its service to the public, volunteers do not have any special authority, for example, to speak as a representative of the County or its Board of Supervisors, to bind the County to contracts, to perform law enforcement duties, or to commit the County to any specific course of action or position.

## What should I do if I get in an accident or get injured while volunteering?

Volunteers are not covered under the County's insurance for injury to themselves or another individual. If you are seriously injured while volunteering, call 911 immediately. If you are injured in any way during volunteering, please stop your volunteer activities, notify the Volunteer Coordinator(s), and seek medical attention.

Please think about your emergency plan in advance and have your Volunteer Coordinator's contact information at hand. Know your location, cross-streets and nearest medical treatment facility.

## Tips

Below are a few tips on handling conversations when you volunteer at a tabling event for OOS.

### Respect others' values

- Understand that what motivates *you* to care may not be the same things that motivate the person you're speaking with; find common ground in the interests and needs of your audience.

### Keep your tone conversational

- Try to maintain a conversational approach that emphasizes collective action and the many opportunities we have to motivate change.

### Stay on topic

- Keep the conversation on the topic to maximize the clarity of your message and minimize the chance of mixed messages.

### Questions

- You can direct questions regarding the OOS's programs to the Office's email ([sustainability@smcgov.org](mailto:sustainability@smcgov.org)) or phone number (1-888-442-2666). More information can also be found at <http://sustainability.smcgov.org>.

## Volunteer Signature

Understanding of Volunteer Guidelines: I have read and understand the information contained in the above Volunteer Guidelines.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent of Volunteer (if under 18 years old of age): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Key Messaging Worksheet

*This short worksheet is designed to help you think through some of the potential opportunities and challenges when you communicate to different types of people. By spending a few minutes ahead of time thinking about your goals, knowledge, skills, and objectives, you'll be better able to communicate, educate, and advocate effectively!*

### Why am I doing this?

*What motivates you to care, and to want to communicate to others about it?*

---

---

---

### With whom am I speaking, and in what context?

*Your vocabulary, tone, and message will vary depending on your "audience" (i.e., tabling a community event, talking at a club, giving a presentation to peers, interacting with children, etc.)*

---

---

---

### What do the people I'm speaking with already think or know about this topic?

*What does your audience already know or believe? How much time will you have with them?*

---

---

---

### What is the **SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT THING** for my audience to know or do, as a result of speaking with me?

*Tip: Repetition is key - begin and end with your most important message.*

---

---

---

### What do I not know about this topic?

*We all have the impulse to try to answer every question we're given. But sometimes it's better to defer questions to other experts, so get clear about the things you aren't able to answer.*

---

---

---

## **Planning Your Shift**

### **Prior to Your Shift**

Location of the event, and/or booth location

- This will be provided via email by your Volunteer Coordinator(s) before your shift.

Transportation

- Plan your transportation to and from event. Plan ahead to see if alternative transportation methods that reduce greenhouse gas emissions are available:
  - Caltrain
  - BART
  - SamTrans Bus
  - Walk
  - Bicycle
  - Carpool

Know your scheduled shift time

- Review your scheduled shift time. You should have received an email confirming your shift from Shiftboard or your Volunteer Coordinator(s).

### **During Your Shift**

Handouts

- After setting up the booth or arriving for your shift, familiarize yourself with any handouts or provided materials.
- Give the customers an Office of Sustainability flyer and tell them to call us with any questions.

Count the Number of People We Talked With

Please use the counters and click them to record the number of people that we talked with. Staff can put the total number from each shift on the information sheet on the clipboard. Please try to get an estimate of how many are from San Mateo County. It doesn't need to be exact.

### **After Your Shift**

Volunteer feedback

- The Office of Sustainability encourages volunteers to make suggestions, voice concerns, and give ideas about how the agency fulfills its mission to the community. We are always looking for new ideas so if you have any ideas to share, please speak with the staff.

### **Questions**

If you have any questions prior to the day of the event, contact your Volunteer Coordinator(s) or call 1-888-442-2666.

## Office of Sustainability Programs and Talking Points

OOS website: [www.smcsustainability.org](http://www.smcsustainability.org)

Within the OOS, there are four working groups that address specific areas within sustainability through programs, services, and resources to inspire new ideas and solutions.



**Climate Change:** During the past several years, this group has been working hard to meet our San Mateo County Shared Vision 2025 by addressing climate change with a variety of plans, programs, and education efforts.



**Energy and Water:** As energy and water are deeply intertwined, we are planning for tomorrow by coordinating two main energy programs and three water programs. The energy programs are the residential BayREN Home Upgrade program and the municipal and commercial San Mateo County Energy Watch. The water programs include stormwater, groundwater, and water conservation.



**Livable Communities:** This team works to develop culturally, generationally and economically diverse communities with accessible transportation and more affordable housing within San Mateo County. Support to the community is provided through a variety of program areas such as Active Transportation, Commute Alternatives Program, and the Home for All initiative.



**Waste Reduction:** The goal of the waste reduction team is to reduce the amount of waste generated, and increase diversion of recyclables and organics from the landfill. This effort is sustained by facilitating access to information, working with key community members, and providing key waste services.

---

### Waste Reduction- [www.smcsustainability.org/Waste-Reduction](http://www.smcsustainability.org/Waste-Reduction)



- Visit our website for an online database on where to reuse, recycle or buy recycled materials.
- Residents can call the Sustainability hotline **(1-888-442-2666)** to connect with someone to help find out where to reuse, recycle or buy recycled materials.
- The Schools' Program offers classroom workshops, curriculum assistance, onsite compost assembly and more available to all schools in the County.
- There are several guides on composting, a Reuse Guide and a Recycling Guide to help you learn where to reuse or recycle items.
- Surplus property sales are held where you can buy used equipment and furniture from the County.
- San Mateo County residents can attend a composting workshop and receive a \$65 discount off a composting worm bin and \$15 off for accessories.

**Schools, contact:** Gerald Schwartz, [gschwartz@smcgov.org](mailto:gschwartz@smcgov.org)

**Surplus sales, contact:** Russ Hayes, [rhayes@smcgov.org](mailto:rhayes@smcgov.org)

**General questions, contact:** 1-888-442-2666

---

## Green Business Program- [www.recycleworks.org/green\\_business](http://www.recycleworks.org/green_business)



- The San Mateo County Green Business Program is part of the Bay Area Green Business Program and the larger California Green Business Network (there are currently 30 city and county programs statewide). The Program serves a wide variety of business types in **ALL** cities and unincorporated areas.
- The Program partners with public agencies and local utilities to provide participating businesses with cost free energy and water audits, Environmental Health and food safety inspections, FISHNICK consultations, etc.
- The Green Business checklist of sustainability measures covers energy conservation, water conservation, pollution prevention, waste reduction, and wastewater. The certification process includes enrollment and registration, initial walk-throughs and consultation, audits and compliance checks, implementation of measures, final site visit and verification, certification and recognition!

**Contact:** Emi Hashizume, [ehashizume@smcgov.org](mailto:ehashizume@smcgov.org)

---

## Active Transportation- [www.smcsustainability.org/Livable-Communities/Active-Transportation](http://www.smcsustainability.org/Livable-Communities/Active-Transportation)



- Active transportation is bicycling, using scooters or skateboards to add healthy physical activity to the short trips we make each day. That's what Active Transportation is about: getting some activity while reducing traffic and cutting pollution."
- The goal is to enhance communities in San Mateo County so that it's easy and comfortable for everyone to make some of their daily short trips by walking, bicycling, scootering or taking transit. Using the bus or train adds enough daily steps to meet recommended physical activity.
- **Active Transportation resources can help you see if there are more opportunities for shifting a short car trip to walking. The "Change One Trip" Challenge can be a good way to start.**
- **What's the "Change One Trip" Challenge?**

1. Take a map of your location – home, work, school, any destination
  2. Draw a ½ mile-radius circle around the location
  3. Identify destinations within that circle and plan to walk to those.
- **Safe Routes to School-** contact the County Office of Education to find out if your school is involved – or to help start a program.
  - **May is National Bike Month** and San Mateo County is supplying bicycle safety education in conjunction with a month of festivities.

#### What to say about the printed materials:

- **Bicycle Commuter Booklet:** A wealth of information to help get started with riding to work or school. Tips on the rules of the road and how to follow traffic rules on a bike. Includes great pointers on understanding how your bike works, how to carry your belongings, and how to securely lock your bike.
- **Bike Map:** A terrific resource for helping plan your bike route along quiet streets and trails. The color coding shows where the trails are and which streets have dedicated bike lanes. The best part is finding the trail bridges that allow low-stress access across highways and train tracks. The map is from data in 2009, so in many areas even more bike lanes have been installed.

**Contact:** Gwen Buckley, [gbuckley@smcgov.org](mailto:gbuckley@smcgov.org)

---

## Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN)-



[www.BayAreaEnergyUpgrade.org](http://www.BayAreaEnergyUpgrade.org)

- There are rebates available to **single family homeowners** in any of the 9 Bay Area Counties who are interested in making energy efficiency upgrades to their homes. Upgrades include: high efficiency furnaces, water heaters, air conditioners, windows, insulation, air sealing and more.
- Rebates **do not** cover renewable energy or water efficiency upgrades like solar panels, artificial turf or washing machines.
- You must choose a participating contractor from our website to be eligible for rebates.
- If someone is interested in rebates:
  - Direct them to the website so that they can connect with a contractor and get started
  - Direct them to our hotline to speak with a building science professional. They can help them understand this rebate, they can help them find a contractor, review technical specifications of equipment, review contractor bids, and refer them to complementary rebate programs.

**For general questions, call:** 1-866-878-6008 **or email:** [rlonder@smcgov.org](mailto:rlonder@smcgov.org)

---

## Peninsula Clean Energy- [www.PeninsulaCleanEnergy.com](http://www.PeninsulaCleanEnergy.com)



- Peninsula Clean Energy (PCE) is a new organization in San Mateo County that will provide an alternative electricity supply from what people are currently receiving. For the first time ever, residents in the County will be able to choose their electricity supplier and more renewable energy.

### How is PCE different than your current supplier?

- PCE will allow residents to choose a cleaner power supply, while maintaining competitive rates, and keeping program profits in the County.
- PCE will offer customers a default electricity product that is at least 50% renewable – that's nearly double the amount of renewable energy County residents currently receive!
- If you choose PCE, your current level of service won't be affected. The change will be completely seamless. General maintenance and billing will be exactly the same. The only change you'll notice is that your electricity bill may be lower!

### What is the PCE timeline?

- PCE is serving all residents and businesses as of April 2017

### Where can residents get more information?

- County residents can visit the PCE website at [PeninsulaCleanEnergy.com](http://PeninsulaCleanEnergy.com).
- We also host public meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00pm at 101 Twin Dolphin Drive in Redwood City.

### How can residents choose PCE?

- Residents who want to receive service from PCE do not have to do anything – you will be automatically enrolled in the program, but will have the option to opt-out if you choose.

**Contact:** Call Customer Care Center at 1-866-966-0110 or email

[support@peninsulacleanenergy.com](mailto:support@peninsulacleanenergy.com)

---

## Sustainability Academy-



[www.smcsustainability.org/Climate-Change/Sustainability-Academy](http://www.smcsustainability.org/Climate-Change/Sustainability-Academy)

- OOS' Sustainability Academy that offers two master courses (Solid Waste and Composting, and Resource Conservation) as well as workshops about topics ranging from composting, energy, water, transportation and other sustainability topics to community members.

- This is a no-cost education and outreach program designed to raise awareness around sustainability and empower community members with the knowledge and skills to be able to promote sustainability. The diverse range of classes are taught by local experts and offer participants access to cutting-edge sustainability information and best practices. This is a great way to get involved with sustainability projects, build leadership skills, and meet new people who share the same interest!
- After the completion of one of the two master courses, participants are required to complete 40 hours of volunteering using the skills learned in the classes to promote sustainability within the one year period following the course.
- You must be (1) 14 years or older to attend the classes and (2) a resident, business owner, employee, or student in San Mateo County.
- **Contact:** Academy Coordinator, [sustainability@smcgov.org](mailto:sustainability@smcgov.org)

## Water Pollution Prevention Program - [www.flowstobay.org](http://www.flowstobay.org)



- Storm drains carry water and pollutants directly to our local creeks, the Bay, and the Pacific Ocean.
- Ways you can prevent stormwater pollution:
  - a. Make sure to pick up after your dog! Pet waste has high amounts of bacteria.
  - b. Wash your car on your lawn or at a commercial car wash to prevent soaps, oils, and metals from polluting stormwater.
  - c. Get a rebate for a **rain barrel** or for **replacing your lawn with native plants**. This prevents runoff.
  - d. Learn more from the “You are the Solution to Water Pollution” trifold or at [flowstobay.org](http://flowstobay.org).

**Contact:** Andrea Chow, [achow@smcgov.org](mailto:achow@smcgov.org)

## Sea Change SMC- [www.seachangesmc.com](http://www.seachangesmc.com)



- Why are sea levels rising?
  - Higher temperatures cause land-based ice to melt, and ocean waters to warm and expand. These two factors results in higher sea levels.
- How much will seas rise? We could see:
  - 1 foot by 2030
  - Up to 2 feet by 2050
  - Up to 5.5 feet by 2100

- New sea level rise projections predict sea levels could rise as much as 7-10 feet by the end of the century.
- What's at risk? 3.3 feet of sea level rise plus a 1% annual chance storm puts the following at risk:
  - Natural areas, including 7,000 acres of the County's wetlands
  - \$34 billion in assessed value of built assets
  - 360 miles of roads and
  - Over 100,000 people who live in low-lying areas
- What is the County doing?
  - Understanding what is at risk through a Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment: the Vulnerability Assessment is a tool to guide the County and its cities in understanding and preparing for sea level rise. More information about this is available at <http://seachangesmc.com/current-efforts/vulnerability-assessment/>
  - Draft Vulnerability Assessment released April 5, 2017. Final report expected end of September 2017.
  - Developing resources to assist the County and others in planning ahead for sea level rise
  - Coordinating efforts across all 20 cities in the County.
  - Raising public awareness about sea level rise through public workshops, youth education programs and virtual reality initiatives such as the 'OWL viewfinder'.
- What are some of the strategies that communities may want to consider to prepare for sea level rise?
  - Avoid new development in vulnerable areas
  - Design to accommodate risks
  - Remove at-risk structures
  - Protect critical structures
  - Restore wetlands
- How can I get involved?
  - Sign up to receive updates and stay current on project efforts: [www.seachangesmc.com/get-involved/](http://www.seachangesmc.com/get-involved/)
  - Join our SeaChange SMC Facebook Group to stay up to date on our program: [www.facebook.com/groups/ SeaChangeSMC](http://www.facebook.com/groups/SeaChangeSMC)
  - Attend (or host) future SeaChange SMC community events or presentations in your community to raise awareness and share your thoughts and concerns on the issue.
  - Participate in Citizen Science Projects– Share photos of king tides on [www.flickr.com/groups/cakingtides/](http://www.flickr.com/groups/cakingtides/)

**Contact:** [Jasneet Sharma, jsharma@smcgov.org](mailto:jsharma@smcgov.org)

---