

Eco-tip for 5-19-19

Revamped Public Works Day Uses Hands-on Learning to Expose Students to Environmentally Beneficial Careers

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The theme of this year's annual Public Works Day, "Lean Forward. Leading Excellence," refers to an emphasis on innovation, opportunity, and accomplishment in careers with a positive environmental impact. Featuring hands-on learning and thematic stations, displays and activities the event will highlight careers within public works agencies.

The free, one day event takes place Tuesday, May 21, in the Ventura County Government Center parking lot, and will be comprised of interactive informational booths, demonstrations, and a variety of hands-on learning opportunities designed to engage attendees of all ages. Among today's youth, there is an undeniable interest in environmental protection and regeneration. In fact, according to the Masdar Generation Z Global Sustainability Survey, 59 percent of those in "Generation Z" - those born between roughly 1995 and 2010 - want to work in sustainability in some capacity.

Staff at the event will highlight the environmentally beneficial work of their agency, showcasing projects such as sustainable revegetation; rain and stream flow measurement; composting with worms; solar power development; constructing landscape channels to naturally clean watersheds; supporting natural predation through the installation of raptor perches to control rodent populations; and installing porous surfaces to filter storm water, capture pollutants, reduce flooding, diminish runoff to the ocean, and re-charge underground aquifers with much-needed water.

Not only will the displayed projects inspire students to explore career paths they expect will be both interesting and fulfilling, they also provide attendees with examples of opportunities to preserve the environment.

Additionally, attendees will have the opportunity to learn about the most recent innovations in safety, science, and environmental sustainability as they explore newly enhanced 'zoned stations' which will highlight the five departments of VCPWA. Each "zoned station" will feature booths from each department that will cover activities like:

- The Public Works Agency's Transportation Department is partnering with the Ventura County Transportation Commission to demonstrate an app that makes taking public transit easier than ever. The system allows you to plan your trip on-line and track your bus in real-time while you wait, so you do not have to just rely on a posted bus schedule. The system also helps transit planners collect data to

design more attractive routes and services. Staff will emphasize to students how using public transportation reduces pollution.

- The Watershed Protection District will give away drought resistant plants and California poppy seeds, explaining the importance of low water using landscapes and native plants in conserving resources and providing habitat for additional native species. They will also hold a raffle for a free rain barrel; enter the raffle at their table inside Hall of Administration lobby.
- The Integrated Waste Management Division will have two booths. One will help people identify which products become household hazardous waste. The other will show how public agencies are responding to state mandates for reduction of food waste. Attendees will take home guides providing handy tips regarding proper produce storage, including information on how to reuse, revive, or compost fruits and vegetables instead of disposing them. For example, to keep a stone fruit fresh longer, do not wash it until it is ready to eat, and to prevent browning after slicing, sprinkle on lemon juice. Children will tear paper for worm box bedding, pick winners in worm races, and learn about vermicomposting as an alternative to disposing food waste.
- The City of Ventura's Environmental Sustainability Office's booth at Ventura County Public Works Week will feature a recycling education wheel, with prizes awarded for correct answers.

A career booth will highlight important disaster response work done by public works agencies and brave first responders. There is a large career fair during the event, with special opportunities for those looking to work in scientific fields, with the General Services Agency, or with the Public Works Agency.

A related Public Works Week event -Public Works Week Open House- will take place in Thousand Oaks on May 21 and 22 at the Municipal Service Center, 1993 Rancho Conejo Boulevard, in Newbury Park. To reserve a tour, visit www.toaks.org/pww

All community members are welcome to attend either event.

On the net:

<http://www.vcpublishworks.org>

<https://thriveglobal.com/stories/will-gen-z-be-the-one-to-save-the-environment/>

<https://www.toaks.org/departments/public-works/operations/municipal-service-center/public-works-week-open-house>

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