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Nearly 300 households participate in the Sustainable Moraga Challenge

By Vera Kochan

In October 2020, the town council authorized Moraga to partner with Sustainable Contra Costa to inspire its citizens to make environmentally friendly choices in their daily activities with regards to home, work and community life. The partnership helped to further the goals set by the town's Climate Action Plan directed at energy efficiency, transportation and water usage.

The Sustainable Moraga Challenge began in December, with participating households creating online profiles in order to track their progress. Team challenges were also encouraged to promote additional friendly yet competitive goal setting.

Parks and Recreation Director Breyana Brandt's Oct. 13 staff report noted several categories where changes could have been made: Big Actions (purchase or lease an electric vehicle; install solar panels), Energy Efficiency (adjust thermostat; weatherize or insulate home), Transportation (telecommute; carpool; take the bus), Water (take shorter showers; install efficient irrigation systems), Renter Friendly (wash clothes wisely; catch the rain), and Easy (upgrade dishwasher; install low-flow toilets; turn off the faucet).

Within less than one year, 296 households have registered in the Moraga Challenge, and between Dec. 14, 2020, to Oct. 4, 2021, a combined total of 173 tons of CO2 (equivalent) emissions have been reduced. Not stopping there, reports show 4,017 therms (natural gas) saved, along with 61,398 kWh of electricity saved. Nearly 375,000 gallons of water have been saved, as well as 4,244 gallons of gasoline. Perhaps the most significant and inspiring figure is the cash savings of \$71,240.

To join the Sustainable Moraga Challenge visit: <https://cleanercontracosta.org/moraga>.

Reach the reporter at: vera@lamorindaweekly.com

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