

An Environmental Affair

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September 2001

The City of Los Angeles Environmental Affairs Department was established in 1990 to advise the city on environmental issues and provide a centralized source of environmental information. The Environmental Affairs Department seeks to protect and enhance the environmental quality of life for residents, workers and visitors in the City of Los Angeles.

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EAD Participates in Mercury Replacement



Mercury Project partners receive donation from Lynn Cole representing Kaiser Permanente. To her left: Dr. Anne O'Meara, Sylvia Drew-Ivie, Johanna Congleton, EAD General Mgr. Detrich Allen, Councilman Mark Ridley-Thomas, and James Langley of the Public Works Dept.

Believe it or not, sometimes the thermometer you use to check your temperature may be more dangerous to your health than that nagging cold or headache.

Mercury, the liquid metal found in many thermometers, is a toxic pollutant that poses serious health risks. One gram of mercury, the amount found in a single fever thermometer, contains enough mercury to contaminate an entire 20-acre lake. To help Los Angeles prevent mercury pollution, Councilman Mark Ridley-Thomas announced a new medical equipment exchange program on July 18.

The program allows patients from ten community health clinics to trade in their mercury fever thermometers for safer alternatives and replaces clinic blood pressure gauges that contain significant amounts of mercury with safe, accurate alternatives.

The exchange program was made possible by a \$30,000 pollution prevention grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency and a \$10,000 grant from Kaiser Permanente. The Environmental Affairs Department helped to obtain the USEPA grant and is managing the project. Other participants in this unique partnership include the Physicians for Social Responsibility, the City's Public Works Department, and the ten clinics currently participating. It is anticipated that additional clinics will be able to participate as more funds become available.

Brochures and posters highlighting the new exchange program will be distributed at participating clinics in seven different languages including: English, Spanish, Chinese, Thai, Japanese, Cambodian and Korean. For more information about the project and a list of participating clinics, call EAD's Hazardous and Toxic Materials Program at 213-978-0891.

An Environmental Affair is produced monthly by the EAD to inform residents about environmental issues and activities in Los Angeles.

For questions, or to update or cancel your free subscription, call the Environmental Information Center Hotline at (213) 978-0888, send an e-mail to: info@mailbox.lacity.org, or visit our website at www.lacity.org/ead. You can also reach us by fax at (213) 978-0893. As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services and activities.

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PLEASE POST

Pollution Prevention Week is Coming



In order to highlight the need for pollution prevention in California, September 17-23 is Pollution Prevention Week. During the week, sponsors from various backgrounds come together to show how preventing pollution is good for the environment, business, and everyday people. Events will present various looks at how to reduce pollution and educate people about the dangers of pollution. For more information about P2 Week programs, head to: <http://www.p2.org>

Port of Los Angeles Fights Ballast Stowaways

Every time a ship enters the Port of Los Angeles, it can bring freight, crews, cars, people, and even tiny microscopic stowaways hitching a ride around the world.

To maintain stability and trim in the ocean and to regulate how high a ship rides in the water in port, ships control their buoyancy by using ballast. In modern sea travel, this ballast is usually water, which can be taken on and released as necessary. However, in the last few decades, scientists have begun to see that this ballast water can become a highway for aggressive organisms to invade new areas.

When a ship leaves a port, it may pick up large amounts of water from that coastal area – water that can contain a variety of organisms. Without any treatment or exchange of that water, those organisms can survive until they are ejected back into the water wherever the ship docks again.

These untreated ballast water samples can bring organisms such as single-celled algae called dinoflagellates that can cause red tides or even *Vibrio cholerae*, the bacteria responsible for cholera. Before screening of ballast samples began, organisms as large as fish and mussels would occasionally turn up in a ship's tanks. In the face of what can be severe environmental consequences, scientists have developed procedures to curb the transplant of non-indigenous life.

Locally, the Port of Los Angeles, governed by the National Invasive Species Act and California state law, must fight off aggressive transplant species every day.

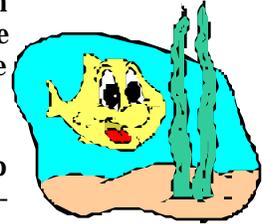
Primarily, these life forms are regulated by open sea ballast water exchange. In this process, coastal ballast water is replaced by water from the deep ocean, in areas at least 200 miles offshore and 2000 meters deep. This purges the ballast tanks of water with coastal organisms. Because mid-ocean organisms have difficulty propagating themselves in coastal waters, this lessens the chance of ecological contamination. As an alternative, ships may simply not release any of their ballast water while they are docked.

To ensure that these regulations are met, the State of California monitors the ballast of incoming ships. Upon entering the port, some ships are boarded and their ballast water is routinely sampled for salinity. During these routine checks of about 25 percent of ships coming into port, evidence of invasive species occasionally turns up.

Using these methods of control, Los Angeles has been very successful in limiting invasions of foreign life. The Port of LA routinely tests its own waters and has found a very high level of marine diversity and that no single species is monopolizing the ecosystem. This diversity and predominance of indigenous life indicate that their efforts to control ballast stowaways have been successful so far.

Los Angeles Prepares for Coastal Clean-up Day

Providing 9.9 billion in tourism revenue and at least one day of fun annually for an estimated 90 percent of all Californians, the Pacific Coast and its beaches have been good to the Golden State. On Saturday, September 15, Los Angeles and the rest of the California have an opportunity to pay the Coast back.

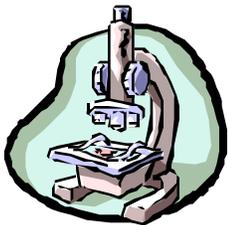


September 15 is Coastal Cleanup Day, a statewide volunteer event designed to help cleanup the state's entire coastline from Mexico to the Oregon border. The program is organized by the California Coastal Commission's (CCC) Adopt-a-Beach program and is locally supported by Heal the Bay, a non-profit environmental organization.

From 9:00 to noon, Heal the Bay workers will help volunteers scour the beaches throughout Los Angeles County picking up trash, cataloging what kind of debris they find, and reporting those findings back to the CCC. Volunteers of all ages are encouraged to go out and lend a hand in cleaning up some of the astronomical amounts of trash that have been left on the coastal beaches. Even inland areas get some help as areas such as the Madrona Marsh, Malibu Creek, and the LA River are targeted for some of this year's cleaning efforts.

This will be the 17th year for the event, which has logged significant success in past years. According to the CCC, 52,182 Californians participated and were successful in picking up 600,000 pounds of trash in 1998. Programs like this one also received a boost from the new State budget signed by Governor Gray Davis at the end of August. With it, the State provides nearly an additional 34 million dollars earmarked specifically for coastal cleanup programs. For more information about Coastal Clean-up Day 2001, contact Heal the Bay at 800 HEAL BAY.

Toxic Mold Presents Hidden Danger



When someone says mold, most people think of the grime in their shower tiles, the slippery green stuff growing on rocks, or the annoyance that makes its home in bread. However, for those unlucky homes and businesses who have encountered toxic bacteria, images conjured by the word mold are far more menacing.

Ultimately, businesses have been forced to evacuate and destroy offices, homes have required thousands of dollars in decontamination, and some people have even resorted to burning their homes to rid themselves of toxic infestations. The spores are so durable that most forms of cleaning are not sufficient to get rid of the bacteria.

So can something like this happen in Los Angeles to you or your business? While mold cannot be completely eliminated, its growth can be limited by reducing moisture. If you have concerns that mold has infested your home or business, the Los Angeles County Environmental Health Services have pamphlets and information regarding toxic mold and can arrange for an inspection if necessary. They can be contacted at 323-881-4015.

Even in our arid environment, untreated leaks, large spills that remain standing or unclean for several days, leaky roofs, and broken pipes are all common culprits for giving mold a place to grow. By controlling moisture, homes and businesses can vastly reduce the danger of a mold invasion.

This is not a new problem as mold has always been around, but now with better science, we are becoming more aware of it as a problem. The State of California is also dealing with the mold problem as it has been debating a bill that would establish health codes regarding toxic forms of mold. Prior to the bill, there was nothing in State law addressing toxic mold. For more information visit <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/moldresources.html>.

\$\$\$ FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES \$\$\$
(See the EAD website for other current grant opportunities.)



Climate Change Assessment Grants

Program to conduct assessments of the impacts of climate change and variability on aquatic ecosystems and water quality. State, local, and tribal environmental protection agencies are eligible. Deadline for proposals is October 18, 2001. Contact David Kelley at 202-564-3263 for more information.

Pulling Together Initiative

Provides a means for federal agencies to be full partners with state and local agencies, private landowners, and other interested parties in developing long-term weed management projects within the scope of an integrated pest management strategy. Full Proposal Due Date: November 6, 2001, Notification Date: April 1, 2002. Contact: Gary Kania, kania@nfwf.org, and visit: http://www.nfwf.org/programs/rfp_2002.html.

Wetlands Conservation Grants

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act small grants program is accepting grant applications from state and local governments, public agencies, institutes for higher education, and non-profit organizations. The deadline is November 30, 2001. For more details contact Keith Morehouse at 703-358-1784.

California Community Foundation

Support for the rehabilitation, maintenance and beautification of parks and recreation areas. Contact Sr. Program Secretary at (213) 413-4130, or visit the website at www.calfund.org for more info.

California State Coastal Conservancy

Proposition 204 funding specifically allocated for LA River Projects that focus on habitat restoration and construction of public access facilities. Projects must show linkage to the coast. Call (510) 286-4169 for more info.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund

Loan program established by the Clean Water Act to local agencies for water quality improvement projects. Call the EPA Water Division at (415) 744-1948 for more info.

Economic Development Administration Grants

The US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration will give priority consideration to projects that achieve and sustain economic growth. Visit the website at www.doc.gov/eda for more info.

Energy Research Grants

The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy is seeking applicants for up to \$6 million in grants to research renewable energy programs. Call the US Department of Energy at (800) 683-0751 for more info.

Jobs Through Recycling

Recycling business development program that seeks to foster recycling/reuse businesses that increase the use of recyclable or reusable materials and contribute to economic development and jobs creation. Call Julia Wolfe with the EPA Waste Management Division at (415) 744-2131 for more info.

Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund

Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund—Provides loans to ensure that drinking water remains safe and affordable. Call EPA's Drinking Water Office: (415) 744-1852 for more information.



SEPTEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EACH MONTH:

Down-by-the-River Walks



Friends of the Los Angeles River and the Sierra Club are sponsoring monthly walks along the banks of the LA River. Join them at 4:30 pm. on the third Sunday of each month for an informal, leisurely, hour-long walk. The walk is canceled if it rains. For more info., visit the FoLAR website: www.folar.org, or call Joe Linton: (213) 381-3570.

Japanese Garden Tours

Docent-led tours of the Japanese Gardens at the D.C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant in Van Nuys are offered during the day on Monday through Thursday and again on Saturday. Reservations are required. Call (818) 756-8166.

Hyperion Wastewater Treatment Plant Tours

Free public tours of the facility (located near El Segundo in Los Angeles) are available Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday starting at 9 a.m. Contact Felice Kidd: (310) 648-5363 for details or to schedule a tour.

Habitat Restoration Days

Help restore wildflowers, trees and shrubs that were once here 200 years ago at the Madrona Marsh Preserve.



You are invited to help in planting, weeding and collecting and growing seeds every second Saturday of the month. Morning maintenance is done from 9 am-noon every Tuesday and Wednesday. Call (310) 32-MARSH.

Afternoons in the Lab

Cabrillo Marine Aquarium's education staff and volunteers are available every Wednesday from 3-5 pm to answer questions and involve students of all ages in exploring local marine life in the hands-on Discovery SEA Lab. Activities cover a wide range of scientific fun. The lab, located at 3720 Stephen White Drive in San Pedro, opens with a different theme each week. The science education afternoon is free. Groups should make reservations. For more info., call: (310) 548-7562.

Satwiwa Sundays

From 10 am to 5 pm at Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa. Meet guest hosts, watch demonstrations and share the experiences of the Native American LA Community. Call (805) 370-2301.

Smart Gardening Workshops

The Los Angeles Countywide Yard Waste Program hosts Smart Gardening workshops year-round throughout the County. Topics covered include backyard and worm composting, grass recycling, and water-wise gardening.

For more information, call (888) CLEAN-LA or visit www.smartgardening.com. "Smart Gardening" and Composting workshops also are held at Griffith Park. Call the Bureau of Sanitation: (213) 473-8228 for more information.



Nature-Bird Walk

Two walks will take place—one on Saturday, and one on Sunday—both at 10 am. The walks will meander through the Madrona Marsh Preserve, starting at the Natural History Center in Torrance. Call (310) 32MARSH.



The EAD website, located at www.lacity.org/EAD, contains updated information on this month's events. To ensure your event is included in our monthly newsletter, submit information to the editor by the 10th of each month prior to publication. After the 10th, events can be entered into our website calendar only.

The EAD reserves the right to edit all submittals and does not necessarily endorse the events listed. All events are subject to change, so call listed event contacts to verify information.

Recycling Workshops

Many workshops and seminars are regularly provided throughout the year on source reduction, recycling and composting. Please call the Bureau of Sanitation: (213) 473-8228

Tyke Hike

This hike is scheduled every first Thursday of the month in the Madrona Marsh Preserve and involves looking for animal tracks, listening for singing birds, observing habitat changes and wildflower cycles. A \$5 donation per family is requested for the Natural History Center Education Programs; reservations appreciated. Call Friends of Madrona Marsh: (310) 32MARSH.



Baldwin Hills Hikes

These are held by the LA Audubon Society on the 3rd Saturday of each month at Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area. For details, see the LA Audubon Society website: www.LAAudubon.org or call: (323) 876-0202.

THIS MONTH:**September 1
Science at the Seashore**

A Native Garden Workday from 8-10 am and a Discovery Lab from 12 noon to 2 pm at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium. Both activities are free. For more information, visit <http://www.cabrilloaq.org> or call (310) 548-7562.

September 2**Nature in Different Light**

Sponsored by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, this full moon night hike explores the wildlife of Happy Camp Canyon at night. Owls and other nocturnal critters should be on display. For further details, contact the Conservancy at 310-589-3200 or by visiting them on the Internet at <http://www.ceres.ca.gov/smmc>.

September 3**Labor Day**

Enjoy the long weekend!

September 6**Red Rock Canyon Trip**

The Children's Nature Institute will conduct a walk through the Red Rock Canyon in Topanga. The cost is \$7 per family or \$5 for member families. Walk times and other information can be found at <http://www.childrensnatureinstitute.org> or by calling (310) 364-3591.

Registration is required ahead of time and online registration is available.

**September 8****Prickly Pals**

The Zoo takes kids ages 5-6 on an educational look at which zoo critters are not to be cuddled with. The program costs \$18 for Zoo members, \$23 for non-members and runs from 9:30 am to noon. More information is at <http://www.lazoo.org> and (323) 644-4211.

Anacapa and Beyond

The Los Angeles Audubon Society will be taking a 12-hour boating trip to watch the birds and even mammals that pop up from Ventura to the Anacapa, Santa Rosa, and Santa Cruz islands. The boat has a full galley on board and the trip will go from 7 am - 7 pm. The cost is \$70 and more information can be found at <http://www.laudubon.org> or by calling (323) 874-1318.

**Solstice Canyon Walk**

The Children's Nature Institute will host a nature walk through Malibu's Solstice Canyon. Information can be found at <http://www.childrensnatureinstitute.org> or by calling (310) 364-3591.

September 12**Science at the Seashore**

Join in for a free Discovery Lab at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium from 3-5 pm. For more info, visit <http://www.cabrilloaq.org> or call (310) 548-7562.

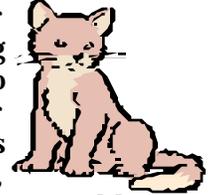
September 15**Coastal Cleanup Day**

Join volunteers all over the state in an effort to clean up

California's coastal and riverside beaches. The event is locally sponsored by Heal the Bay and more information can be found in our Coastal Cleanup Day article on page 3. Heal the Bay can be reached at 800 HEAL BAY or on the internet at <http://www.healthebay.org>.

LA Works Animal Care

LA Works is looking for Animal-loving volunteers to come care for abused pets without homes, including many that need homes but are in danger of being put down. The event requires 20 volunteers from 12:00 noon to 2:30 pm in Beverly Hills. For further details, contact Mary Lawler at 818-655-5783 or by emailing Mjl3@aol.com.

**Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area Field Trip**

The Audubon Society explores one the LA Basin's largest remaining undeveloped areas. Starting at 8 am, the trip will cost \$3 in parking. More information can be found at <http://www.laudubon.org> or by calling (323) 874-1318.

September 16**Science at the Seashore**

The Cabrillo Marine Aquarium hosts a Discovery Lab from 10 am - 12 noon and a Weekend Tide pool Walk from 1:30-3:00 pm. Discovery Lab is free and the Tide pool Walk costs \$1. For more info, call the Aquarium at (310) 548-7562 or visit <http://www.cabrilloaq.org>



Ballona Wetlands Excursion

The Audubon Society will take a group through the Ballona Wetlands and discuss the natural environment there. The hike starts at 8 am. more information can be found at <http://www.laaudubon.org> or by calling (323) 874-1318.

September 15-16 Radical Rain Forests

The LA Zoo presents an educational and entertaining look at the world's precious rain forests. Programs run at 11 am and 1 pm on both days. There is a \$2 fee



and online registration is available. More information is at <http://www.lazoo.org> and (323) 644-4211.

September 22 Griffith Park Bird Sanctuary Nature Walk

Take a walk with your family and the Children's Nature Institute through the bird sanctuary at Griffith Park. Other information can be found at <http://www.childrensnatureinstitute.org> or by calling (310) 364-3591. Registration is required ahead of time.

September 26 Science at the Seashore

The Cabrillo Marine Aquarium

closes the summer with another free Discovery Lab from 3-5 pm. For more information about the program, call (310) 548-7562 or visit them at <http://www.cabrilloaq.org>.

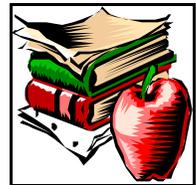
September 28 Breakfast Safari with the Zoo

Parents and kids can meet at the Zoo for some breakfast and a morning wildlife excursion. Registration is required and costs \$35 for each non-member parent-child pair and \$30 for members. More information is at <http://www.lazoo.org> and (323) 644-4211.



TEACHER'S CORNER

Here are some programs run from the LA Zoo that teachers can use to enrich their students' classroom experiences. More information about all of these programs can be found by calling the Zoo at 323-644-4793 or 323-644-4211 or on the web at <http://www.lazoo.org/learnfiles/inclass.htm>. All programs require reservations in advance. Thanks to the LA Zoo for this information.



California Caretakers

For no charge, an informed docent from the Los Angeles Zoo will present a one-hour slide program in your classroom. The slides and presentation cover the plants and animals of the redwood forests, the habitat of Death Valley and Joshua Tree National Parks, the Pacific Coastline, and the migration route of monarch butterflies. This pro-conservation program is targeted to 4th-grade students, but can be appropriate for 3rd through 8th grades.

School Safaris

Docents bring the Zoo to you with this free slide/lecture program. Each 45-minute session can be presented in an individual classroom or a small assembly. There are several topics to choose from:

Why Zoos?: Zoos are important in preserving our dwindling wildlife. This program tells how zoos support conservation efforts and work together to save endangered species.

Predator-Prey Relationships: Stressing the balance of nature, this program describes carnivorous animals (meat-eaters) and the animals they hunt for dinner.

Endangered Species: This presentation discusses which animals are endangered, how they came to be rare, and what steps are being taken to help them.

Meet the Reptiles: Learn more about snakes, lizards, crocodiles, and turtles. What do they have in common and how are they different from us and from each other?

Monkeys and Apes: Let us introduce our students to our closest animal relatives. We'll travel around the world to meet prosimians, monkeys, and apes.



HOTLINE CONNECTION

The Environmental Information Center (EIC) serves as a referral source to the community. Our hotline connection offers a list of the most frequently requested numbers. If the number you need is not listed, please contact the EIC at (213) 978-0888, or toll-free in Los Angeles only at (800) 439-4666. You can also visit our website at www.lacity.org/ead and click on the Environmental Information Center

Air Quality

Calidad del aire
South Coast Air Quality Management District
(800) 288-7664

Asbestos

Asbestos
Environmental Hygiene
(213) 738-4078

Bee Infestations

Infestaciones de abejas
Vector Control
(800) 233-9279

Bulky Item Pick-up

Recogida de articulos grandes
L.A. City Bureau of Sanitation
(800) 773-2489

Hazardous Waste Disposal

Desembolso de materiales peligrosos
L.A. County Dept. of Public Works
(888) 253-2652
L.A. City Bureau of Sanitation
(800) 988-6942

Illegal Storm Drain Dumping

Depositos en los drenajes de desagües
Stormwater Management
(800) 974-9794

Lead Poisoning

Veneno de plomo
National Lead Information Center
(800) 424-5323

Leaf Blowers

Sopladores de hojas
Leaf Blower Complaint Line
(800) 996-2489

Mosquitoes

Infestaciones de mosquitos
L.A. West Mosquito Abatement
(310) 915-7370

Recycling

Reciclaje
City of L.A. Public Works Dept.
(800) 773-2489

Smoking Violations

Infracciones de fumar
Office of the City Attorney
(888) 333-0730

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