

# An Environmental Affair

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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.

## The 23rd Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day is Saturday, September 15, 2007

California Coastal Cleanup Day is the premier volunteer event that is focused on the marine environment in the country. On this day, 50,000 volunteers turn out to over 700 cleanup sites statewide to conduct, what has been hailed by the Guinness Book of World Records as, "the world's largest garbage collection." Since the program started in 1985, over 750,000 Californians have removed more than 12 million pounds of debris from our state's shorelines and coast.



Volunteers cleaning up trash on Coastal Cleanup Day.

When combined with the International Coastal Cleanup, organized by The Ocean Conservancy that takes place on the same day, California Coastal Cleanup Day becomes part of one of the largest volunteer events of the year.

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Coastal Cleanup Day is the highlight of the California Coastal Commission's year-round Adopt-A-Beach program and takes place every year on the third Saturday of September, from 9 am to noon. Coming at the end of the summer beach season and right near the start of the school year, Coastal Cleanup Day is a great way for families, students, service groups, and neighbors to join together, take care of our fragile marine environment, show community support for our shared natural resources, learn about the impacts of marine debris and how we can prevent them, and to have fun! Coastal Cleanup Day is also the kick-off event for Coast Weeks—three weeks of coastal and water-related events for the whole family.

Participating in Coastal Cleanup Day is as easy as 1, 2, 3! Pre-register with a local coordinator, or simply show up at any of the drop-in sites.

For more information, call (800) COAST-4U or visit [www.cleanup.org](http://www.cleanup.org).



*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:

[eadinfo@mailbox.lacity.org](mailto:eadinfo@mailbox.lacity.org), or visit our website at

<http://www.lacity.org/ead>.

TDD (213) 978-0899. You can also reach us by fax at (213) 978-0893.

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**PLEASE POST**

## Carbon Offset Vouchers Now Offered to Individuals

Many people today are concerned about global warming and are attempting to change the way in which they live. Whether it is taking the bus to work, changing inefficient appliances to energy conserving appliances, or just plain recycling, people are taking action. Many people however, still wish they could do more to attain a lifestyle that is pollution-free. Now, there is a new initiative that may help!

For years now, companies have been allowed to compensate for greenhouse gas emissions by purchasing carbon offsets. These offsets are actually vouchers for investment in alternative energy sources, tree-planting, and other projects that can mitigate global warming. In July, the U.S. Forest Service announced that it would be the first federal agency to offer personal carbon offsets to individuals through an initiative called the Carbon Capital Fund.

The Forest Service estimates that the 155 forests it oversees absorbs 10% to 15% of the nation's carbon emissions, and that planting through the new initiative will increase that amount. Through the program, individuals can use a "carbon calculator" to figure out the

size of their carbon footprint. They then can purchase offsets at \$6 per metric ton of carbon dioxide. An average family of four is responsible for approximately 19 to 30 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year, therefore the offsets would cost from \$114 to \$180. The first forests to receive the new trees will be Payette National Forest in Idaho and Custer National Forest in Montana and South Dakota.

If you are interested in the Carbon Capital Fund and would like to calculate your personal carbon footprint, visit the National Forest Foundation's Friends of the Forest website at <http://www.carboncapitalfund.org>.

## Mercury: Safe or Deadly?

Over the years, many companies have used mercury to create many products, such as thermometers, thermostats, and automotive light switches. When handled properly, these generally do not pose great threat to humans, mercury pollution by industrial facilities and chemical manufactures can be potentially dangerous. Mercury pollution can settle into our oceans and waterways, thus contaminating the fish that we eat.

Because mercury is odorless, invisible, and accumulates in the meat of fish, it is not easy to detect or eliminate. Once inside the body, mercury turns into a neurotoxin, which interferes with the brain and nervous system. This is potentially dangerous in children and women of child bearing age. In prenatal and infant children, exposure to mercury can cause mental retardation, cerebral palsy, deafness, and blindness. Even in low doses, mercury can cause learning disabilities, delay walking and talking and shorten their attention spans. In adults, mercury poisoning can cause fertility problems, vision loss, numbness of fingers and toes, tremors and may even lead to heart disease.

To protect your family from potential mercury poisoning, avoid potentially contaminated fish such as shark and swordfish, restrict your portions, check your mercury level, and stay informed. Visit the National Resources Defense Council's webpage at <http://www.nrdc.org/health/effects/mercury/protect.asp> for detailed information on how to protect your family from mercury.

## Climate Change: Make it a Change for the Better

### GreenLA Update

EAD and the Mayor's Office hosted the first Inter-agency Working Group on Climate Change meeting on July 30. General and Assistant General Managers from over a dozen departments were presented with an overview of the GreenLA Plan, including the municipal or government greenhouse gas inventory; a discussion of departmental climate responsibilities; and a review of proposed implementation and monitoring procedures. The participating departments included those whose operations and facilities generate the most greenhouse gas emissions. Meetings with the operational staff from these departments, which will allow detailed discussions of emission reduction strategies, are scheduled to begin in the next few weeks. The complete GreenLA plan can be viewed at: <http://www.lacity.org/EAD>.

### By the Numbers

The City of Los Angeles is working to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (also called a GHG "inventory") and we're asking Angelenos, residents and businesses alike, to reduce theirs as well. The first step is to identify the *sources* of those emissions. Los Angeles and California are different from most of the United States. Thanks to our mild climate, we use less energy to heat

and cool our homes and buildings than residents of the Midwest or East.

Commercial and residential buildings use two-thirds of all electricity consumed in the United States. Here in California, lighting accounts for approximately 28% of home electricity use, and almost 40% of commercial use, so that's a logical place to look for ways to reduce energy usage and emissions.

### What you can do: Energy Conservation and Energy Efficiency

Energy conservation refers to behaviors that reduce energy usage. The classic example is turning off the lights when you leave a room, just like your parents always told you.

Energy efficiency refers to the use of equipment that consumes less energy without sacrificing performance, such as computers that automatically switch to a "power save mode" when not in use, and compact fluorescent light bulbs or CFLs. According to ENERGY STAR, a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Star qualified CFLs use 75% less energy than incandescent bulbs and last 6–10 times longer.

For more information, visit [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).



## Join in on National Clean Up the World Weekend

This year's National Clean Up the World Weekend will take place between September 15th and 17th. Clean Up the World is a community-based environmental program that inspires individuals and communities from all over the globe to clean up, fix up, and conserve their environment.

Held in conjunction with the United Nations Environmental Program, Clean Up the World mobilizes over 35 million volunteers from more than 120 countries annually. Because of the high levels of participation, it has become one of the largest community-based environmental campaigns in the world.

Since 1993, Clean Up the World has conducted its annual National Clean Up the World Weekend where businesses, volunteers, schools, governments and community groups can come together and improve their local environment. While Clean Up the World encourages participants to hold environmental events close to or during this weekend, they still provide support to participants that hold environmental events year-round.

Clean Up the World additionally encourages communities to begin thinking about long term initiatives that could improve the state of their communities. Clean Up the World argues that by having each community improve their own local environment, they are slowly beginning to address global environmental problems. For more information on Clean Up the World Weekend, visit [www.cleanuptheworld.org](http://www.cleanuptheworld.org).

\$ \$ \$      **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**      \$ \$ \$

Visit <http://www.lacity.org/ead> for more grant opportunities.

**Community Beautification Grant** This grant is a competitive annual award given to community groups to fund neighborhood beautification projects. The grant program is administered by the City of Los Angeles' Board of Public Works, Office of Community Beautification. For the 2007-2008 cycle of funding, the Office of Community Beautification has a budget of approximately \$800,000 to award about 90 grants citywide. For information, visit [www.laocb.org](http://www.laocb.org). The deadline to apply is **October 17, 2007**.

Award Amount:  
up to \$10,000

**The Liberty Hill Environmental Justice Grant**

This fund gives grants to grassroots organizations that are working to decrease exposure to toxic substances in neighborhoods and workplaces, particularly in low-income areas and communities of color. Groups engaged in community organizing, applied research, policy advocacy, litigation, or popular education are eligible to apply. For more information, visit [www.libertyhill.org/ejf/](http://www.libertyhill.org/ejf/).

**The Healthy Sprouts Awards** These awards support school garden programs that use the garden to teach about nutrition and the issue of hunger in the United States. In this grant cycle, awards will be presented to 25 schools or organizations. Each will receive a \$200 gift certificate to Gardener's Supply Company and a curriculum package from the National Gardening Association. For more information, visit <http://www.kidsgardening.com/healthysprouts.asp>.

Applications are due **October 15, 2007**.

The non-profit **SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund** focuses on species research, animal rescue and rehabilitation, habitat protection and conservation education. The Fund supports solution-oriented projects that benefit both wildlife and people throughout the U.S. and around the world. Expense limits for salary, compensation, and indirect costs. The Fund has no set minimum or maximum grant amount. Applications are accepted year-round. For more information, visit [http://www.swbg-conservationfund.org/get\\_involved.html](http://www.swbg-conservationfund.org/get_involved.html)

**Sierra Club Angeles Chapter Conservation Grant**

The purpose of this conservation grant is to further the conservation objectives of the Sierra Club within Angeles Chapter's boundaries as proposed by the Chapter's activists. Grants may also be used to assist in international, national and regional conservation projects of the Club. Grants may be used to fund the activities of other 501 (c)(3) organizations that contribute to the conservation goals and objectives of the Sierra Club. For more information, visit their Conservation Grants website at <http://angeles.sierraclub.org/environmental/ConsGrants.asp>.

**Clean School Bus USA Grant**

Clean School Bus USA is a public-private environmental partnership that seeks to reduce children's exposure to air pollution from diesel school buses. The program emphasizes three ways to reduce public school bus emissions through anti-idling strategies, engine retrofit and clean fuels as well as bus replacement. The goal of the program is to reduce both children's exposure to diesel exhaust and the amount of air pollution created by diesel school buses. For more information visit [www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus](http://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus).

**Apprentice Ecologist Initiative** The goal is to elevate young people, including disadvantaged and at-risk youth, into leadership roles by engaging them in environmental stewardship projects. A \$500 scholarship will be awarded annually to the author of the top Apprentice Ecologist essay. For more information, visit [www.wildernessproject.org/volunteer\\_apprentice\\_ecologist/](http://www.wildernessproject.org/volunteer_apprentice_ecologist/).

**Nutrition Education Programs**

The goal of Nutrition Education Programs is to disseminate information regarding healthful nutritional practices and habits. Grants given by the Allen Foundation aim to create support programs for parents so that their children can develop healthy eating habits at an early age. Grants are also awarded to help solve malnutrition problems and emergency hunger. Recent grant awards ranged from \$5,000 to \$100,000. For further information on eligibility requirements and to submit an application, visit [www.allenfoundation.org](http://www.allenfoundation.org). Deadline to apply is **December 31, 2007**.



# SEPTEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## ONGOING:

(EAD recommends contacting event sponsor prior to event)

### LA County Smart Gardening Workshops

County residents are taught to effectively reduce yard waste and improve their lawn and gardens through Smart Gardening Workshops. These workshops cover all of the program components in a presentation of approximately two hours in length. Residents not only receive step-by-step instructions on how to compost, but are also educated on the benefits and biology of compost. To attend a workshop, visit [www.smartgardening.com](http://www.smartgardening.com) or call (888) CLEAN LA.



### Discovery Carts for Kids

Saturdays, 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm. Kids of all ages can explore the world of nature every Saturday at The Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens. "Discovery Carts," located at the Lily Ponds and in the Japanese Garden, welcome budding young botanists with a variety of hands-on learning activities. On the first Saturday of each month, Nature Crafts also are offered near the Entrance Pavilion. No reservations required. Free with museum admission (children under 5 enter free). Activities are subject to cancellation without notice due to inclement weather or volunteer availability. The Huntington Gardens are located at 1151 Oxford Road San Marino, CA 91108, (626) 405-2100. For more information visit

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

### Goose Bumps! The Science of Fear

is a 5,000 square foot traveling exhibition developed by the California Science Center that provides an experiential and holistic view of fear science, examining physiological, neurobiological, and sociological aspects of fear. Engaging activities in Goose Bumps! allow visitors to experience fear in a safe and enjoyable environment, rate their response, understand the science behind the emotion, and reflect upon its personal meaning. The California Science Center is located at 700 State Drive in Exposition Park, Los Angeles. For more information, visit their website at [www.californiasciencecenter.org](http://www.californiasciencecenter.org) or call the Center at 323-SCIENCE.

### Interpretive Arroyo at Kidspace Children's Museum

Kidspace's Interpretive Arroyo is a mini model of Pasadena's own Arroyo Seco, with gentle, rolling water, real arroyo stones found on site at Kidspace, and native plants. With periodic "rain" off



the covered bridge, the Interpretive Arroyo provides a perfect setting for children to learn about the water cycle as they splash around. The exhibit takes place daily from 9:30am-5pm and admission is \$8 for adults and children. Kidspace Children's Museum is located on 480 N. Arroyo Blvd. in the city of Pasadena. For more information

The EAD website, located at [www.lacity.org/EAD](http://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.

### City of Los Angeles Environmental Affairs Commission Meetings

The City of Los Angeles Environmental Affairs Commission (EAC) meets the third Thursday of each month in City Hall, 200 N. Spring Street in Los Angeles. The General Public is invited to attend. Commission Agendas, minutes, meeting times and places are posted at [http://www.lacity.org/EAD/EADWeb-NewsEvents/updateagenda\\_&\\_minutes.htm](http://www.lacity.org/EAD/EADWeb-NewsEvents/updateagenda_&_minutes.htm)

please visit Kidspace's webpage at [www.kidspacemuseum.org](http://www.kidspacemuseum.org) or call (626) 449-9144.

### Dinosaurs Alive! 3D at the IMAX

is a global adventure of science and discovery. Join the world's preeminent paleontologists as they hunt for dinosaur remains, and then experience these gigantic creatures reincarnated on the 7-story IMAX screen in breathtaking 3D. IMAX is located at 700 State Drive in Los Angeles. For show times, call (213) 744-7400 or visit [www.californiasciencecenter.org](http://www.californiasciencecenter.org).

**Star Parties** Free public star parties are held monthly with the assistance of the Los Angeles Astronomical Society and the Los Angeles Sidewalk Astronomers at the Griffith Observatory. They are a chance for the whole family to look at the sun, moon, visible planets, and other objects, and to try out a variety of telescopes. The Observatory is located at 2800 East Observatory Road in Griffith Park, but visitors must make shuttle reservations to attend. For more information, visit the Griffith Park's Star Parties Webpage at [www.griffith-observatory.org/pstarp.htm](http://www.griffith-observatory.org/pstarp.htm) or visit the Los Angeles Astronomical Society's webpage at [www.laas.org/](http://www.laas.org/).

### THIS MONTH:

(EAD recommends contacting event sponsor prior to event)

#### Sat and Sun, Sept 8-9

**Festival of Philippine Arts and Culture** Presented by FilAm ARTS, the Festival of Philippine Arts and Culture is a way for Filipinos and non-Filipinos to experience more complex explorations of the Filipino culture within the multicultural landscape of Los Angeles. The festival will have food, entertainment, as well as art from the Filipino culture. This weekend event will take place from 10am-5pm and has an admission price of \$5. The festival will take place in the city of San Pedro at Point Fermin Park. Point Fermin Park is located at 607 W. Paseo Del Mar Boulevard. For more information visit FilAm ARTS' website at [www.filamarts.org](http://www.filamarts.org) or call (323) 913-4663.

#### Fri, Sat, Sun, Sept 14-16

##### Port of Los Angeles' Lobster Festival

The Port of Los Angeles is having their annual Lobster Festival during the month of September! Enjoy a day of lobster at discounted prices, free entertainment and free arts and crafts tables. Admission is \$8 for adults and children under 12 are free. Lobsterfest will be taking place on 1400 Nagoya Way in the city of San Pedro. For further details, visit the Lobsterfest webpage at [www.lobsterfest.com](http://www.lobsterfest.com) or call the Lobsterfest hotline at (310) 798-7478.

#### Sat, Sept 15

##### Community Greening Workshop

Come and enjoy this free workshop in the Northeast San Fernando Valley and receive Citizen Forester training, Tree Care Supervisor training, Youth Group Teen Leader training, and more. Workshop materials and a light breakfast and lunch will be provided. The workshop is being hosted in part by TreePeople, and the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks. Register by September 11<sup>th</sup>. For more information contact Linda Eremita at [leremita@treepeople.org](mailto:leremita@treepeople.org) or call (818) 623-4878.

#### Tues- Thurs, Sept 18-20

##### The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission

is holding its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Stream Assessment & Restoration Design Workshop at the Los Angeles River Center and Gardens. The event is open to all with technical interest in stream management issues. Tom Moody, of Natural Channel Design will walk through the basics of assessing and restoring semi-arid stream structures and functions, and

stream management strategies. A field trip to streams in the Los Angeles area will also be included. Attendance cost: one day, \$75 or entire workshop, \$125. To RSVP, please contact Jessica Hall at (213) 576-6687. email: [jhall@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:jhall@waterboards.ca.gov)

#### Fri- Sun, Sept 21-23

##### River City Visions Mural Festival

This mural festival, presented by The Friends of the Los Angeles River (FOLAR), aims to exhibit graffiti art at its finest. Over 250 artists will be creating art on a 48,000 square foot section of the Los Angeles river. Join the artists at the section of the Los Angeles River between the Cesar Chavez Street Bridge and the 101 freeway to see some of the work of renowned graffiti artists. The event will take place all weekend from 10 am to 5 pm. For more information visit [www.folar.org](http://www.folar.org) or call (323) 223-0598.

#### Mon to Thurs, Sept 24-27

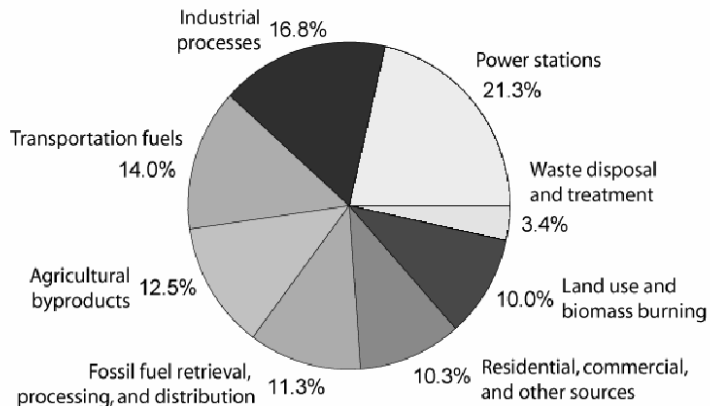
##### Solar Power 2007 Conference and Expo

The Solar Power Conference and Expo is America's largest solar energy event. In just four years of existence, the Solar Power Conference and Expo has grown into the only US solar event considered 'a must' for domestic and global industry and market participants. Solar Power 2007 features over 175 exhibitors, 125 speakers, and networking opportunities galore. For more information on event cost, call 202-857-0898 or visit [www.environmental-expert.com](http://www.environmental-expert.com). This event will be held at the Long Beach Convention Center and Hyatt Regency in the city of Long Beach.

## Methane, the "Other" Greenhouse Gas

Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) is a greenhouse gas that remains in the atmosphere for approximately nine to fifteen years. Methane is more effective in trapping heat in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and is emitted from a variety of natural and human-influenced sources. Human-influenced sources include landfills, natural gas and petroleum systems, agricultural activities, coal mining, stationary and mobile combustion, wastewater treatment, and certain industrial processes.

### Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector



Methane also is a primary constituent of natural gas and an important energy source. As a result, efforts to prevent or utilize methane emissions can provide significant energy, economic, and environmental benefits. In the United States, many companies are working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) in voluntary efforts to reduce emissions by implementing cost-effective management methods and technologies.

Methane in the Earth's atmosphere has a global warming potential of "25" over a 100 year period. This means that a one ton methane emission will have 25 times the impact on temperature of a one ton carbon dioxide emission during the following 100 years. Methane has a large effect for a brief period (about 10 years), whereas carbon dioxide has a small effect for a long period (over 100 years). Because of this difference in effect and time period, the global warming potential of methane over a 20 year time period is 72. The methane concentration has increased by about 150% since 1750 and it accounts for 20% of the total radioactive forcing from all of the long-lived and globally mixed greenhouse gases. The average concentration of methane at the Earth's surface in 1998 was 1,745 ppb (parts per billion). Its concentration is higher in the northern hemisphere as most sources (both natural and human) are larger. The concentrations vary seasonally with a minimum in the late summer.

Slightly over half of the total emissions are due to human activity. However, long term atmospheric measurements of methane by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) show that the build up of methane has slowed dramatically over the last decade, after nearly tripling since pre-industrial times. It is thought that this reduction is due to reduced industrial emissions and drought in wetland areas.

Currently there are world-wide efforts to reduce methane emissions to decrease its contribution to global warming. The Methane to Markets Partnership is one international initiative that advances cost-effective, near-term methane recovery and use as a clean energy source. The goal of the Partnership is to reduce global methane emissions in order to enhance economic growth, strengthen energy security, improve air quality, improve industrial safety, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

The United States and 13 other countries launched the Methane to Markets Partnership in November 2004. By 2015, Methane to Markets has the potential to reduce annual methane emissions by up to 50 million metric tons of carbon equivalent – roughly equal to three times the greenhouse gas emissions from the electricity generated in New York State each year. For more information on what is being done to combat the methane gas contribution to climate change, visit [www.methanetomarkets.org](http://www.methanetomarkets.org).



### **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**. You can also visit our website at <http://www.lacity.org/ead> and click on *Environmental Information Center*.

#### **Air Quality**

*Calidad del aire*

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

#### **Asbestos**

*Asbestos*

Environmental Hygiene  
(626) 430-5100

#### **Bulky Item Pick-up**

*Recogida de articulos grandes*

L.A. City Bureau of Sanitation  
(800) 773-2489

#### **Hazardous Waste/e-Waste**

*Desembolso de materiales peligrosos*

L.A. County Dept. of Public Works  
(888) 253-2652  
L.A. City Bureau of Sanitation  
(800) 773-2489

#### **Housing and Building Complaints**

*Las quejas del construccion y albergar*

Housing Code Enforcement  
(213) 482-0000

#### **Illegal Storm Drain Dumping**

*Depositos en los drenajes de desagües*

Stormwater Management  
(800) 974-9794

#### **Indoor Air or Mold Concerns**

*Aire interior ó preocupaciones de moho*

Environmental Hygiene  
(626) 430-5440

#### **Lead Poisoning**

*Veneno del plomo*

National Lead Information Center  
(800) 424-5323  
Los Angeles County Lead Program  
(800) LA-4-LEAD

#### **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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