

BHNA General Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2014, 7:30pm
Beresford Rec. Center

Speakers: Kathryn Cooke, Pollution Prevention Specialist and Timothy Swillinger, Program Lead, San Mateo County Environmental Health Services

Topic: San Mateo County's Pollution Prevention Programs

Number of Attendees: 17 current BHNA members, 3 nonmembers, 20 total attendees

Board Members in Attendance: Lisa Taner, Jan Prisco, Kaye Sharma, Andrea McCutchin, Ellen Wang, Heinz Plischke and Susan Rowinski.

The meeting was hosted by Ellen Wang.

Donna Bischoff was introduced by Ellen. Donna discussed the upcoming \$338M Bond Measure for the San Mateo Community College District. She is trying to get a link with the details of the plan to the Board for those of us who are interested. Ellen then read a portion of a letter from Caltrans about the Electric train survey regarding interior design. This survey is available on www.caltrain.com. Ellen also announced that 3 board members are retiring this year and encouraged anyone interested in joining the Board to contact any Board members and attend one of the next two upcoming board meetings.

Timothy Swillinger, Program Lead, San Mateo Environmental Health Services and Kathryn Cooke, Pollution Prevention Specialist, San Mateo Environmental Health Services, were then introduced.

The Environmental Health Services goal is to provide information to the public and make us aware of some of the environmental issues in San Mateo County. They work closely with the City/County Association of Governments which represents all local jurisdictions.

The Programs:

Household Hazardous Waste Program.

This is a free county wide program. Website is www.smchealth.org/hhw. This program operates year round. Paints, fluorescent bulbs, and household solvents are among the top items dropped off. All are urged to go to www.flowstobay.org for further details on what they take. 20 cities are covered.

Extended Producer Responsibility Program.

The goal of this program is to cut recycling costs through a manufacturer "take back" effort with manufacturers taking responsibility for their product from production to disposal. This shifts the cost back to the manufacturer. A list of participating retailers

and manufacturers includes Sherman Williams, Home Depot, Hassett Hardware, Kelly-Moore Paints, OSH and IKEA. He also discussed a new program to allow the recycling of paint.

Used Oil Recycling Program.

60 collection centers including O'Reilly Auto Parts Store, Jiffy Lube, and AutoZone will take used oil. There are also curbside collection capabilities.

Pharmaceutical Disposal.

This small program currently allows old medicines to be taken to Police Stations and to the Environmental Shoreway Center.

Healthy Nail Salon Program.

Safer products, safer practices and improved indoor air quality are the goals. 10 criteria are in place and 10 salons have been certified as of this date.

San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program.

The focus of this program is water pollution issues which know no city boundaries. The problem we are struggling with: There are Federal and State laws in place to prevent water pollution but there is no funding to support meeting the legal requirements. Cities are trying to do more with less as laws are getting more stringent (example: Zero litter by 2022 program required by the State).

Storm drains are the biggest water pollution problem as they take pollutants straight to the bay in storm water. In an urban development, 75% of rain flows from storm drains to the creeks, so large scale water quality solutions are needed. A regional push for "green infrastructure" is one attempt to address the problem through incorporation of a design process to allow more surface water to go into the ground in city improvements. Sustainable streets programs are being tied to transportation improvements as a key approach (planted vegetation, larger canopy trees, gardens). Example: Burlingame Avenue improvements. Pollution is primarily organic and the soil more naturally can break down the pollutants.

Sources of Resident Pollution are litter, pesticides, mercury, fertilizers, PCB, and motor waste.

Pest Control and Gardening also cause pollution. Fertilizers and Nutrients cause algae to grow which sucks oxygen out of water, impacting wildlife. Pesticides and Herbicides also cause pollution. Solutions to this issue are available in the Our Water Our World less-toxic weed and pest control product guide. You can download a Chinook Book smartphone app to access less toxic products.

Another source of pollution is litter. Cigarette butts and food/snack wrappers are the #1 and #2 types of litter. Set the example, tell your kids not to litter, and close recycle bins by using correct sized bins for your volume of garbage. Putting bins out in the early morning helps to keep scavengers out of your recycle bins.

Coastal Cleanup Day 2014 is Saturday, September 20 from 9 – noon, Ryder Park in San Mateo.

Dog waste bacteria was also discussed as a pollution issue. 1 gram of dog feces has 23 million fecal bacteria. Pick up your dog waste!

Vehicle pollution is also an issue; oil leaks and washing the car in the driveway spreads copper, phosphate and motor oil. The solution is responsible car care. Use professional car wash service providers. If you choose to **wash your car** at home, wash it on the grass using biodegradable soap. Ecogreen Auto Cleaner uses water free wash techniques. They are located in Redwood City.

A Pollution Prevention Trivia contest followed as attendees named pollutants of concern and what can be done to keep the pollutant from harming the environment.

Styrofoam blocks are a big problem as there is no economical way to recycle. Most recycled materials go to China to go into remanufacturing. Packing peanuts can be taken to UPS Stores.

Colma Creek is one of the worst sites in the County in terms of pollution from urban development. There is a list of cleanups on www.goestothebay.com for your use and you are encouraged to participate.

The speaker at the next general meeting, Kevin Mullin, was announced by Susan Rowinski. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Meeting minutes submitted by Jan Prisco, Secretary.