



**HMR ASSOCIATES®**  
*(Help Me Rhonda!)*

## **TIPS FOR HOW TO GREEN YOUR BUSINESS!**

### **SECTIONS**

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### **I. 3 R's - REDUCE, REUSE AND RECYCLE**

#### **A. REDUCE**

1. Reduce/Eliminate Junk Mail/Catalogues. Please see separate document on Junk Mail
2. Try to purchase items with little or no packaging to help reduce waste and resources required to make the packaging, like oil.
3. Print and copy double-sided

#### **B. REUSE**

1. Buy Recycled/Environmentally Friendly Office Products
  - a. Purchase office-related products made from 100% or high post-consumer recycled material, e.g., white multi-purpose paper. The cost is not much more than non-recycled products.
  - b. Office Max has its own brand of high quality 100% post-consumer recycled multi-purpose white paper. They also sell file folders, hanging folders, etc. Office Depot and Staples do too, but they tend to not have as high a recycled content. And of course there are other on-line companies you can find.
  - c. A few companies that sell green office supplies as well as other green products, like biodegradable tableware, etc. are:
    - **Give Something Back** at [www.givesomethingback.com](http://www.givesomethingback.com) donates profits to local charities

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- **Green Earth Office Supply** at [www.greenearthofficesupply.com](http://www.greenearthofficesupply.com)
- **The Green Office** at [www.thegreenoffice.com](http://www.thegreenoffice.com). Bay Area Certified Green Business. Is the only company that automatically ranks office products by Greenness (Dark Green, Green, or Conventional) and provides customers with at-a-glance tools to facilitate their decision-making process about products.
- **Radstons Office Plus**, [www.radstons.com](http://www.radstons.com). A Bay Area Certified Green Business in Hercules
- **World Centric** sells biodegradable tableware at [www.worldcentric.org](http://www.worldcentric.org)

d. Go to Co-Op America's *National Green Pages* on-line and search for various types of green businesses who sell green products. Go to [coopamerica.org/pubs/greenpages](http://coopamerica.org/pubs/greenpages)

e. Buy refilled ink and toner cartridges. Inksmile is very good - [www.inksmile.com](http://www.inksmile.com).

## 2. Eco-Friendly Printing

a. All of your business marketing material can be printed on recycled paper with environmentally friendly inks and the cost isn't through the roof. Kinko's has recycled paper and check out local certified green printers at [www.greenbiz.ca.gov/AboutUsCCC.html](http://www.greenbiz.ca.gov/AboutUsCCC.html). Also, you might wish to include the phrase "Printed on Recycled Paper with Eco-Friendly Ink" on all of your marketing material to let people know of your choice to go green and to encourage others to do the same!!!

b. Buy business checks on recycled paper using non-toxic inks. Check Gallery is excellent at [www.checkgallery.com](http://www.checkgallery.com); 800-354-3540

## C. RECYCLE - General Recycling

1. Now, much of what we use in business can be recycled, such as office paper, newspaper, mail, glass bottles, aluminum cans, plastic bottles and containers, post-its, etc.

2. To see what can and cannot be recycled, look on your recycling bin or check with your recycling company. For Contra Costa home businesses and residents, go to [www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/options/](http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/options/) for a list of what is collected in each Contra Costa city.

**NOTE: Please be careful to recycle only the items indicated as acceptable for recycling as some items, like plastic bags, rubber bands, styrofoam, etc., can actually break recycling equipment, and should - NOT be placed in the recycling bins.** Other items can injure workers, like hypodermic needles. Also, it helps if food containers are rinsed out. And - even though paper is recyclable, we should NOT put shredded paper in the recycling bin as the pieces are so small and fine that they create a real problem at the recycling plant. Unfortunately, we just have to bag the shredded paper and throw it away.

3. If your business is in the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority's jurisdiction (LOM, WC, Alamo, Blackhawk, or Danville), you might qualify for free recycling. Contact CCC Solid Waste Authority at 925-906-1801 to find out about business recycling programs. Their website is [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org).

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4. If your business is in West Contra Costa County, contact Richmond Sanitary Service at (510) 262-7100, ext 4, then 1. As long as your company has garbage service with them, you qualify for commercial recycling at no additional charge. And for further info, go to [www.recyclemore.com/](http://www.recyclemore.com/).

5. If your business is in any of the other CCC cities, to find out what commercial recycling services and programs are available in your city, call Contra Costa County Community Development at (800) 750-4096/(925) 335-1290 or go to [www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/options/](http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/options/) and click on your city (ignore that it says residential curbside recycling - the hauler listed for each city will still be the one to contact for commercial recycling). For example:

a. For Antioch, contact Allied Waste Management at (925) 685-4711

b. For Pleasant Hill, contact Stacy Antonel, Allied Waste Management at 671-5853. Recycling is mandatory for businesses. Cost is **FREE** regardless of size of recycling bin needed.

c. For Martinez & Clayton, contact Jennifer Brennan, Allied Waste Management at 671-5806. Although recycling is not free, cost is only 70% of garbage costs. Furthermore, because recycling will significantly reduce the amount of garbage produced, businesses should be able to downsize their current garbage container, thus reducing garbage costs so they are either balanced out or lowered by recycling.

d. For Concord and Pittsburg, contact Mt. Diablo Recycling at (925) 682-4518. In Concord, as long as a business has garbage service with Concord Disposal, recycling is **FREE**.

e. For San Ramon, contact Waste Management at (925) 837-3356

6. Have bins/wastebaskets designated exclusively for recyclable items and separate bins/wastebaskets for garbage and make sure your staff and janitors know the difference - AND that the janitors actually throw the recyclable material in the recycling cart that's picked up!!!! Good luck with that one!

7. You can also get the *Contra Costa Recycling & Reduction Guide, 2005* (the most recent version) Contact 335-1290 to have one mailed to you. Excellent source of information and it's free!

8. If your company uses a professional shredding company, make sure they recycle the paper! One company is Shred-It, 925-363-7301; [www.shredit.com](http://www.shredit.com).

9. Another useful website is [www.stopwaste.org](http://www.stopwaste.org). It serves Alameda County but is very useful.

#### **D. RECYCLE - Composting**

Start an office compost program! Food scraps, such as vegetables and fruits, can be composted to further reduce the waste generated by your office. There are several ways to set up an office compost program:

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1. Have an office compost container
  - a. Place a sealed compost container in the office kitchen, under the sink or wherever it will fit
  - b. Have staff take turns taking home compost material to add to their home compost piles
  
2. Do worm or vermi composting as it's called. A simple, compact and low maintenance indoor way to recycle food waste using red earthworms to consume organic waste in an odor-free compost process. For more info go to: [www.ciwmb.ca.gov/organics/Worms/default.htm](http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/organics/Worms/default.htm)
  
3. Lamorinda residents can place compostable items in the GREEN YARDWASTE bin for weekly pick-up. For more info go to [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org).
  
4. For info about composting workshops and purchasing composting bins at a reduced price in CCC, go to [www.ccrecycle.org](http://www.ccrecycle.org) or call 800-750-4096. Another CC County resource is [www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/compost.htm](http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/compost.htm).
  
5. For a complete composting guide, go to [www.compostguide.com](http://www.compostguide.com)

**NOTE: IT IS NOT RECOMMENDED TO PLACE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN THE COMPOST** (even though they will decompose eventually, they take a long time and may smell and attract pests during the process)

- Meat and meat products
- Dairy products
- High fat foods like peanut butter and salad dressing

#### **E. RECYCLE - Electronic Equipment (e-waste)**

1. Electronic Waste Management  
1900 Marina Blvd., San Leandro  
888-335-3373  
[www.noewaste.com](http://www.noewaste.com)

I worked with this e-waste company. They regularly holds free public e-waste disposal and recycling events at Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill. They will also do on-site **business** pickup. Contact Nathan Johnstone at (866) 335-3373, cell at (510) 750-2066; [nathan@noewaste.com](mailto:nathan@noewaste.com).

2. Hauling Pros, Green Certified Business; 1-866-HAULERS; [www.haulingpros.com](http://www.haulingpros.com); drop-off site is in Martinez
  
3. Recycle for Breast Cancer  
SafKeep Storage, (925) 735-7203, 200 Purdue Road, San Ramon 94583  
Non-profit electronics recycling organization. FREE. Open 7 days a week, 9:30am - 4:30pm (no appointments necessary); [www.recycleforbreastcancer.org/dropoffanytime.htm](http://www.recycleforbreastcancer.org/dropoffanytime.htm)
  
4. Contra Costa Stationers in Lafayette takes cell phones, re-chargeable and regular household batteries, ink and toner cartridges for recycling - free of charge.

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5. Rapid Recycle, Green Certified Business in Pacheco, [www.rapidrecycle.net](http://www.rapidrecycle.net), 925-671-8008.
6. ASL Recycling, <http://aslrecycling.com> holds events throughout the Bay Area.
7. Pacific Rim Recycling in Benicia takes e-waste and also does the Reuse Pick-Up days in Central Contra Costa. Go to [www.pacificrimrecycling.com](http://www.pacificrimrecycling.com), 800-999-6067.
8. GreenLight Recycling, [www.greenlight-recycling.com](http://www.greenlight-recycling.com); (408) 347-9753
9. There are a plethora of e-waste companies in the Bay Area including other companies holding local events locally. The companies listed above are ones that I know are highly reputable and follow strict State standards to process and recycle e-waste correctly and in accordance with the state requirements.

#### **F. RECYCLE - Batteries**

1. CCCSWA has a program for common **household** battery recycling at various locations in Central CCC. Go to [wastediversion.org/battery-recycling-program.htm](http://wastediversion.org/battery-recycling-program.htm) for a list of drop-off locations.
2. Contra Costa Stationers in Lafayette takes rechargeable and household batteries at no charge
3. Bill's Ace Hardware stores in Martinez, Concord and Pleasant Hill take all batteries at no charge.
4. Contra Costa County's Hazardous Waste facilities will take all batteries but check if there is a charge for businesses. (800) 750-4096 [www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/options/v5951.htm](http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/options/v5951.htm)

#### **G. RECYCLE - Other Types of Recycling**

1. Appliance recycling - contact JACO to pick up appliances for a relatively small recycling fee required by the State. Contact 800-741-0172. Also Rapid Recycle (listed above) may take for a fee.
2. Computer disks/diskettes/CD's/Videos - contact GreenDisk, 800-305-DISK. May be a small fee
3. Hauling Pros, Green Certified Business; 1-866-HAULERS; [www.haulingpros.com](http://www.haulingpros.com); drop-off site is in Martinez. These guys take a bunch of stuff that all gets recycled or reused!!
4. Fluorescent tubes can be taken to Contra Costa County's Hazardous Waste facilities. There is a charge for businesses. (800) 750-4096 [www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/options/v5951.htm](http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/options/v5951.htm)
5. FreeCycle.org is a global non-profit organization with local groups that provides ways to get rid of unwanted stuff for free! Local group's website is <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/walnutcreekfreecycle/>. Main website is [freecycle.org](http://freecycle.org).
6. Take styrofoam peanuts to local UPS stores for reuse

7. Donate unwanted office furniture, equipment, etc. to local charities or sell on craigslist

## II. WATER CONSERVATION

A. If you are an EBMUD customer, contact them to see what kind of cost-saving and rebate programs are available for businesses, as well as what water saving devices you can receive as a business. For info call 866-403-2683 or go to [http://ebmud.com/conserving\\_&\\_recycling/non\\_residential/](http://ebmud.com/conserving_&_recycling/non_residential/). (FYI - residents can receive a water-saving kit for free!)

B. Contra Costa Water District offers several rebate and incentive programs to all customers in the District's treated water service area including: Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Pacheco, Port Costa and parts of Martinez, Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek. In addition programs are also offered to customers in the District's untreated water service area including: Antioch, Bay Point, Pittsburg, Oakley, and a small portion of Brentwood. For info, call (925) 688-8320 or go to [www.ccwater.com/conserves/rebates.asp](http://www.ccwater.com/conserves/rebates.asp).

C. For all other cities, contact your local water company to see what type of conservation and rebate programs they may have in place.

D. Replace high flow toilets with water efficient 1.6 gallon or less per flush models. Again, check with EBMUD to see if you can get these free.

E. Zippy Pro Handyman Services, Craig Fixler at 674-8000; [craig@zippopro.com](mailto:craig@zippopro.com). Installs low-flow toilets for \$300 each.

F. Install 1.5 gpm (or lower) aerators in all sinks and 2.5 gpm (or less) showerheads in all showers. Again, check with EBMUD to see if you can get these free.

G. Clean outdoor walkways with a broom or low flow (less than 3 gpm) spray nozzles rather than a garden hose.

H. Water landscaping during early morning, pre-dawn hours to reduce loss from evaporation.

## III. ENERGY CONSERVATION

A. An excellent resource for a cost-saving energy program is the **California Best Program**; [www.californiabestprogram.com](http://www.californiabestprogram.com). Funded by the California rate payers' fund (we pay as part of our PG&E bill), businesses can go to the website to pick an approved general energy contractor who is a participant in the program. Many of these contractors offer a no cost/no obligation audit of businesses. The California Best Program services the following cities:

**Contra Costa County:** Alamo, Blackhawk, Canyon, Danville, Diablo, Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, Walnut Creek

**Alameda County:** Castro Valley, Dublin, Fremont, Hayward, Livermore, Newark, Pleasanton, San Leandro, San Lorenzo, Sunol, Union City

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B. For other cities, e.g., Concord and East CC County cities, Oakland and Berkeley, go to the **Smart Lights** program, [www.ebenergy.org](http://www.ebenergy.org). Smart Lights will actually come out to a business, perform an audit and then indicate what needs to be done. They also arrange for which contractor will do the work and then return to see if the work was done properly. Upon completion, the business will receive a bill.

C. Purchase Energy Star labeled office equipment, such as computers, monitors, printers, etc. [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

D. Use energy-efficient lighting. There are thousands of lighting products available, many of which offer significant energy savings and improved lighting. Examples include:

1. Occupancy sensors for frequently vacant rooms
2. Replace older T-12 fluorescent lighting with energy efficient T-8 or T-5 fixtures with electronic ballasts
3. Compact fluorescent lights or LED's (light-emitting diodes) in place of incandescent bulbs and old inefficient lighting. (**NOTE:** CFL's have mercury in them and should NOT be thrown in the trash unless they are already broken. At present, there is no quick and easy way to properly dispose of CFL's. Orchard Supply Hardware in Moraga takes from residents as does the Household Hazardous Materials facility in Martinez. Not sure if they take from businesses.) IKEA will also take CFL's. As a LAST resort, place CFL in ziploc bag, seal and throw in trash to hopefully prevent mercury from spilling out.
4. Swap out inefficient fluorescent tubes. (FYI - Old fluorescent tubes can be taken to Contra Costa County's Hazardous Waste facilities. There is a charge for businesses. (800) 750-4096 [www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/options/v5951.htm](http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/options/v5951.htm))
5. Timers to turn off lighting; and energy-efficient exit signs
6. Many of these can pay for themselves in as little as a few months

E. Install energy efficient hv/ac's; dual pane windows, etc.

F. Install Solar Power Systems. Several resources include:

1. Light Energy Systems, 925-680-4343; [www.lightenergysystems.com](http://www.lightenergysystems.com)
2. Gayler Community Solar Program, 925-820-0185, [darlene@gaylerconstruction.com](mailto:darlene@gaylerconstruction.com); or SolarCity at 888-SOL-CITY, [www.solarcity.com](http://www.solarcity.com)

#### IV. POLLUTION PREVENTION

A. Use Green Seal Certified biodegradable and eco-friendly cleaning products and encourage your janitor service/property management company to do the same. Examples and where to purchase:

1. Many Ace Hardware stores carry an excellent selection of very green household products, including Concord, Martinez, Moraga, North Concord, and Pleasant Hill. Check with other stores.
2. Target now carries 7<sup>th</sup> Generation products

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3. Whole Foods carries a lot of eco-friendly cleaning products
4. Shaklee products are excellent as well
5. Simple Green
6. Bon Ami instead of Comet, which is excellent and can be found at several Ace Hardwares

B. A recommended Green Maintenance/Cleaning firm, serving the entire Bay Area, is Service by Medallion, [www.servicebymedallion.com](http://www.servicebymedallion.com); 800-427-2250.

C. Hire carpet/drape cleaners who use eco-friendly cleaning products. You can find certified green carpet cleaners at CCC's website - [www.greenbiz.ca.gov/ShopGreenCCC.html](http://www.greenbiz.ca.gov/ShopGreenCCC.html) - [carpetcleaning](#)

- D. Use Alternate Transportation
1. Take public transportation; carpool, biking, etc.
  2. Encourage employees to use alternate transportation by implementing some kind of Bonus Incentive program. Give gift cards, days off, etc. to reward use of alternate transportation.
  3. Install showers/bike racks for people who bicycle to work

E. **Prevent** polluting water resources by **NOT** washing cars, equipment, floor mats or other items outside where run-off water flows directly into the storm drain. Wash water should **ONLY** flow into a sewer drain.

F. Use unbleached and/or chlorine free paper products

G. Use low or no VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) paint, paint removers, etc.

## V. GREEN BUILDING PRACTICES

A. If you or your building's owner/property management company is remodeling, etc., recommend or work with local experts specializing in construction recycling, eco-friendly building materials, etc.

- B. Resources for a business directory of local consultants, contractors, etc.:
1. Green Sage, located in San Francisco with a free newsletter. [www.greensage.com](http://www.greensage.com)
  2. Build It Green, Bay Area non-profit. [www.builditgreen.org](http://www.builditgreen.org).
  3. Hauling Pros, Green Certified Business; 1-866-HAULERS; [www.haulingpros.com](http://www.haulingpros.com). These guys take a bunch of stuff that all gets recycled or reused!!
  4. Premier Recycle recycles building materials. Services Contra Costa County; 408-297-7910.
  5. MoonDance Painting, Certified Green Business, eco-friendly paints; 925-383-4537; [www.moondancepainting.com](http://www.moondancepainting.com)

C. Work with builders, architects, engineers, etc. who are using the LEED® process for green building. LEED® is the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Green Building Rating System™ that encourages and accelerates global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices through the creation and implementation of universally understood and accepted tools and performance criteria. The LEED® certification provides independent, third-party verification that a building project meets the highest green building and performance measures. All certified projects receive a LEED® plaque,

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which is the nationally recognized symbol demonstrating that a building is environmentally responsible, profitable and a healthy place to live and work. [www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=222](http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=222)

D. Chris Avant of Canyon Construction is a LEED® accredited local builder, specializing in sustainable building. Office is in the old Moraga Barn which he has completely renovated from the ground up using entirely sustainable materials. It's amazing! <http://canyonconstruction.com/sustainablebuilding/index.htm>

## VI. SOCIALLY-RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES

A. Support sustainable/eco-friendly/fair trade businesses. Green is not necessarily limited to just environmental practices but can also include socially-responsible practices. Look for local sustainable businesses at the county certified green business site, [www.greenbiz.ca.gov](http://www.greenbiz.ca.gov)

B. Purchase Fair Trade certified chocolate, coffees and teas. See information about fair trade at Co-Op America <http://coopamerica.org>. (There are real horror stories of African children and coffee, etc.).

Another recommendation I found is [www.equalexchange.com](http://www.equalexchange.com). They offer bulk wholesale prices to small businesses not just on their fair trade organic coffee, but on tea and hot chocolate. It's possible to also buy unground beans in 5 lb. bags for an even better savings.

C. Purchase organic food/products whenever possible, especially from local farmers/markets.

D. Practice Consumerism. The power of the consumer is significant. Choose to patronize socially-responsible, sustainable, and green companies as much as possible. An excellent guide that rates companies in several key categories (like the environment, fair trade, etc.) is the *Better World Shopping Guide*.

## VII. MISCELLANEOUS IDEAS

A. Purchase Green Web Hosting. Typically powered by renewable energy like wind and solar; often donate to green organization(s); plant a tree for each new client; practice social responsibility, etc.

**\*\*NOTE\*\***: I have formed a partnership with a highly reputable and reliable **green web hosting** company called **Canvas Dreams** at <http://www.canvasdreams.com/>.

The company is a 10-year old, family-owned company located in Portland, Oregon. A committed sustainable company since its inception, Canvas Dreams' facility is 100% wind-powered, purchased from PG&E's local Clean Wind program. Canvas Dreams is also a Co-Op America approved green business with a proven track record for quality, honesty and integrity.

Anyone wishing to sign up for web hosting services from Canvas Dreams can receive a **One-Time 15% Discount** off any web hosting, domain registration, and/or reseller hosting plan. (Sorry, discount does NOT apply to dedicated server plans). Simply go to their website at <http://www.canvasdreams.com> or call them toll free at **800-574-4299** and include the **Coupon Code of HMR** to receive your one-time 15% off discount. I can't recommend this company highly enough!

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- B. Use Socially-Responsible Long Distance/Mobile Phone, and/or Internet Access Companies
1. Earth Tones (phone and internet services): [www.earthtones.com](http://www.earthtones.com)
  2. Working Assets (phone, credit card and more): [www.workingassets.com](http://www.workingassets.com)

C. Purchase Eco-Friendly Promotional Products

1. Blagency at [www.blagencystore.com/](http://www.blagencystore.com/) (then click on the Eco Friendly search category)
2. Rainbow Magnetics at [www.rainbowmagnetics.com](http://www.rainbowmagnetics.com)

D. Become a Certified Green Business

Businesses can qualify to become a Certified Green Business in CCC after meeting various environmental requirements. It's free and businesses also receive some marketing/promotion once certified. For info, go to: [www.greenbiz.ca.gov/AboutUsCCC.html](http://www.greenbiz.ca.gov/AboutUsCCC.html)

E. Join Local Sustainable Associations/Organizations

1. Lafayette Chamber's Green Committee, [www.lafayettechamber.org](http://www.lafayettechamber.org)
2. Sustainable Moraga, [www.sustainablemoraga.org](http://www.sustainablemoraga.org) (free to join)
3. Sustainable Lafayette, [www.sustainablelafayette.net](http://www.sustainablelafayette.net) (free to join)
4. Lamorinda Green Drinks, local green networking group (see [Sustainable Lafayette](#) or [Sustainable Moraga](#) for event announcements)
5. Green Chamber of Commerce; [greenchamberofcommerce.net](http://greenchamberofcommerce.net) Currently meets in Oakland area, but hopefully will be meeting in CCC in near future.
6. Women's Environmental Network; [www.wencal.org](http://www.wencal.org) Bay Area and free to join
7. Sustainable Business Alliance; [www.sustainablebiz.org](http://www.sustainablebiz.org) Meets in Berkeley
8. Co-Op America, <http://coopamerica.org>, national organization with a plethora of information, resources, environmentally focused businesses, etc.

F. Attend Green Festivals

1. Co-Op America's Green Festival, held annually in San Francisco, Seattle, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. Go to <http://coopamerica.org/> for more info.

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