

Green Notes

Companies Honored for Sustainability Efforts

MONTEREY, CA—*Bicycle Retailer and Industry News* recognized bike suppliers and retailers last month for their sustainable practices and efforts to reduce their businesses' environmental impact. BRAIN editor Megan Tompkins announced the 2009 Greeny Award winners at a reception at the Bicycle Leadership Conference. Winners in the manufacturers category for small and mid-size to large companies were Planet Bike and Quality Bicycle Products, respectively. In the retail category, the Greeny went to Peloton Cycles in Fort Collins, Colorado. Among the green changes at Planet Bike was the installation of a 10-kilowatt solar power system—the third largest of its kind in Madison, Wisconsin—that helped the company reduce its carbon emissions by 15 tons annually. Planet Bike also uses 100 percent recycled paper and soy-based inks on all of its packaging and has switched to high-efficiency lighting and revamped heating and cooling systems with a focus on conservation. A longtime environmental steward, QBP has implemented several green initiatives over the years, including a 100,000-square-foot addition to its warehouse in Bloomington that has earned LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certification. And Peloton Cycles owner Trent Schilousky made sustainability a priority in the construction of his second store, which opened last August. Schilousky decreased his store's electricity use by 45 percent, water use by 42 percent and used 34 percent recycled content for the building.

N.J. Retailer Embarks on Building Renovation

MORRISTOWN, NJ—Marty Epstein is updating his oldest store in downtown Morristown—housed in an 1840s building—and using sustainable materials and practices with hopes to gain LEED certification. “Anybody who’s not building green right now is building an obsolete building,” said Epstein, owner of Marty’s Reliable Cycle. Epstein began the process over a year ago and is still waiting for permits, but expects construction to begin this summer. “It’s taken forever—I had seven bids on this project. It’s been fascinating, and considering the economic downturn, we got such good deals,” he said. Epstein estimates he’ll spend around \$300,000. A local architect helped steer him through the elaborate process, which included an energy audit to gain a baseline of energy usage. Changes include replacing baseboard heating with a more efficient boiler; installing efficient lighting, water-saving dual-flush toilets and sky lights; using sustainable woods and materials and no or low-VOC paint. “It will have a seven-year payback in energy savings and be at least 40 percent more efficient,” he said. Epstein, who chairs the sustainability committee of the Morristown Partnership community organization, a nonprofit charged with growing the downtown business district, admitted being a bit nervous at first about taking on the expense in light of the nation’s financial troubles. But, he added, “I see it as a way of marketing our business and what we’re trying to do in our town, too. We’re trying to get our town to embrace sustainability.”

Sea Otter Lowers Impact Through Recycling

MONTEREY, CA—Sea Otter Classic organizers offered consumers attending the four-day festival an incentive to throw recyclables in the correct bins. Volunteers at the event handed consumers a “ticket” in the form of a Sierra Nevada bottle cap each time they deposited recyclable items in the marked bins. The tickets were redeemable for prizes donated by exhibitors and local businesses that ranged from stickers, clothing and bike parts to videos, books, sunglasses and water bottles. Consumers also had the option to hold on to their tickets and enter a raffle for a Thule bike rack. Sierra Nevada sponsored the new program, managed by local nonprofit Offset Project, providing 30,000 recyclable bottle caps. “The Sea Otter Classic has consistently been one of our most successful events in terms of the recyclables they keep out of the garbage stream and the involvement they inspire from the individuals at the event,” said Matt Fore, supervising environmental health specialist with Monterey County Health Department Recycling Services. “Sea Otter has an excellent record for an event that sees the public only once a year.” Sea Otter was held April 16-19.