

NEWS RELEASE



Attorney General Edmund G. Brown Jr.
California Department of Justice
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Brown Challenges Counties To Combat Climate Change

OAKLAND—At the 113th annual meeting of the California State Association of Counties, Attorney General Edmund G. Brown Jr. today challenged supervisors representing the fifty-eight counties of California to “combat global warming through green buildings, alternative energy and wise land use rules.”

During the meeting, held today at Oakland’s City Center, Attorney General Brown said: “California is committed to cutting greenhouse gas emissions back to 1990 levels. This radical change in our fossil fuel economy demands imagination, massive investment and extraordinary ingenuity. The counties should immediately lead the charge against climate disruption and combat global warming through green buildings, alternative energy and wise land-use rules.”

Under California law, the state is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and then reducing 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. To achieve the state’s 2020 target, California must reduce current emissions by at least 25%. Brown emphasized that global warming is a growing threat to California, the nation and the world. Potential problems, he said, include:

- Reduced water storage in the Sierra snow pack that threatens half of the state’s surface water
- Rising sea levels that increase coastal erosion and introduce seawater into the delta and levee systems
- Increasing smog and extreme heat events that raise the risk of heatstroke and heart attack.
- Rising electricity demands that overburden the state’s power grid.

Local government agencies are responsible, under the California Environmental Quality Act, to address the potential impacts of global warming. In comments to thirteen local jurisdictions, on projects with potentially large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions, Attorney General Brown has outlined feasible mitigations which include: green buildings, alternative energy and land use mitigations.

After providing these comments, Attorney General Brown has reached landmark agreements with San Bernardino County and ConcoPhillips that will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions attributable to these major projects and developments.

Under the global warming agreement with San Bernardino, the County is embarking upon a thirty-month public process to cut greenhouse gas emissions attributable to land use decisions and government operations. The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan mandates:

- An inventory of greenhouse gas sources in the County.
- An inventory of 1990 emissions levels, current levels, and projected levels for 2020.
- A reduction target for the emissions attributable to discretionary land use decisions and internal

government operations.

Other local jurisdictions across California—including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sonoma, Santa Monica, Berkeley, Marin, Palo Alto, Chula Vista, Modesto and Healdsburg—are also initiating their own measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Some of these greenhouse gas mitigation proposals include:

- High-density developments that reduce vehicle trips and utilize public transit.
- Parking spaces for high-occupancy vehicles and car-share programs.
- Electric vehicle charging facilities and conveniently located alternative fueling stations.
- Limits on parking.
- Transportation impact fees on developments to fund public transit service.
- Regional transportation centers where various types of public transportation meet.
- Energy efficient design for buildings, appliances, lighting and office equipment.
- Solar panels, water reuse systems and on-site renewable energy production.
- Methane recovery in landfills and wastewater treatment plants to generate electricity.
- Carbon emissions credit purchases that fund alternative energy projects.

The Institute for Local Government is taking seriously its leadership role in the fight against global warming and has partnered with the California State Association of Counties and the League of California Cities to launch a California Climate Action Network to fight global warming.

The Network proposes actions that local jurisdictions can take to cut greenhouse gas emissions including: conserving energy, reducing travel distances, and using lower carbon fuels. For more information visit: <http://www.ca-ilg.org/climatechange/>

The California State Association of Counties advocates for county governments at the State and Federal level in addition to educating the public about the value and need for county programs. California counties employ approximately 330,000 people and provide services to all 36.5 million Californians.

The theme of this year's conference is: "58 Counties, One California: Creating a Better Tomorrow."

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