

community **RESILIENCE** challenge



SAVE
water

GROW
food

CONSERVE
energy

REDUCE
waste

BUILD
community

Business Toolkit

*A guide to ensure your organization
makes the most of the Challenge*



because every choice matters



because every choice matters



www.dailyacts.org
thechallenge@dailyacts.org



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Community Resilience Challenge

WELCOME!

Thank you so much for your interest in joining the Community Resilience Challenge. There has never been a more powerful time to take action that builds leadership and local self-reliance in our communities. The Challenge is a community-powered, sustainability extravaganza and your voice and engagement as a business leader is vital to our shared success.

To inspire you to join us, we've created this toolkit just for YOU. It includes background information, how to host an event or join a planned activity, how to get your employees and customers to sign up, and how to become a sponsor. In addition to your participation, we would love your insight on how to make this toolkit even more helpful for you, our business community, and communities around California and the country seeking to replicate the inspiring success of this initiative.

The Challenge culminates at the end of May and includes actions registered throughout the spring. It is a great way to demonstrate your company's commitment to community and sustainability as well as engage employees and customers in your efforts.

However you choose to participate, know that your presence is helping make our communities more vibrant and resilient, and that your company will receive major sustainability points from an engaged audience of customers that want to support businesses who give back. Here at Daily Acts, we are ready to help you make a lasting impact this May and beyond, one that will strengthen and enrich our communities and local economy. Join us and rise to the Challenge!

In community,



Trathen Heckman
Executive Director

THE CHALLENGE IS A CALL TO ACTION

In March, April, & May; thousands of people across Sonoma County will rise to the challenge of creating more healthy, just and resilient lives, homes, neighborhoods and communities. Formerly the 350 Home & Garden Challenge, the Community Resilience Challenge (the Challenge) is continuing year after year of inspiring and mobilizing individuals, schools, organizations, municipalities and businesses to take practical actions that Save Water, Grow Food, Conserve Energy, Reduce Waste and Build Community.



Save Water



Conserve Energy



Build Community



Grow Food



Reduce Waste

Building on the successes of 628 gardens registered in 2010 to 2015's incredible 8,363 local actions, Daily Acts plans to continue to deepen and spread our shared impact. Our goal is to inspire pledges for local actions across Sonoma County while we increase our collaboration with regional and national partners to grow this critically important movement. This is a pivotal moment for our planet, and the need for increased awareness and community-based, local solutions has never been greater.

WHY RESILIENCE?

In short, when faced with adversity, resilience is the ability to adapt and spring back, be it a person, a community, an economy or an ecosystem. Given the urgency of California's worst drought on record and a growing confluence of social and environmental challenges, now is the time to act. Communities are at risk of running out of water, farms have had water allocations cut off and ten times the normal number of wildfires were recorded in California in 2015. But together we *can* adapt and spring forward, by catalyzing significant action towards becoming more food, water and energy independent, and building our communities stronger, healthier, more beautiful and resilient!

WHEN IS THE CHALLENGE?

Every year, the Community Resilience Challenge takes place in the spring from mid-March through May. If you want to undertake a project but can't complete it during March, April or May, that's fine! All we need is for you to register your project by May 31st to have it counted in our tally. We harness the natural rhythm of robust spring activity to tell the story of our community united in resilience!

GET INVOLVED

Join this amazing community-wide effort by registering your actions today. Doing a lot already? Great! Inspire others to act. Small or large, every action counts!

As part of the Challenge, we will measure our collective impact based on actions registered. The Challenge inspires new actions and collaborations and it also highlights and supports efforts already in motion to tell the story of our collective successes. Together, we are creating more resilient food systems, local economies and communities, while reducing our use of water and energy. A more sustainable and resilient future is arising through our collective genius and each of our daily acts.

PARTNERING AS A BUSINESS

Daily Acts is actively seeking increased participation from members of our business community and we've created this toolkit to support your involvement. Not only can your business play an important role in the success of the Challenge, but it can help you meet your sustainability, employee engagement and community volunteer goals. We'll acknowledge your commitment and work alongside you to ensure your success. That's a win for everyone!

There are two ways your business can be involved in and contribute to the success of the Challenge:

- 1** Become a Challenge Business Partner by doing any or all of the following:
 - Create an event for your employees to participate in.
 - Outreach to your employees and/or customers to get them to register actions.
 - Get your employees and/or customers to sign up as volunteers and we'll connect them with a project in their community.
- 2** Sponsor the Challenge:
 - Make a financial contribution or donate a relevant product for our incentive program.
 - Receive promotion through our event materials, press blitz, mailing list, and outreach to Challenge participants.
 - Contact thechallenge@dailyacts.org for more information.

HOW WE'LL MEASURE SUCCESS

We are boldly calling on our community to commit to taking action in March, April & May. After the Challenge wraps up, we'll report back on the number of people engaged in the Challenge, as well as the total number of actions registered. For our Challenge Business Partners and Challenge Sponsors, we'll analyze data specific to your business and report the results back to you so that you can share your success with your employees and customers.

We'll also be digging deeper to quantify the significance of actions taken in relation to each action area such as gallons of water saved, amount of energy conserved, number of fruit trees planted, square feet of turf transformed, etc.

While the annual Challenge and its outcomes alone are inspiring, our dream is that this initiative becomes a positive catalyst that will transform participants' relationship to water, food, energy, waste and community throughout the entire year. We believe that business involvement has the potential to create huge ripples in both your employee's and your customer's daily lives. After all, daily acts do matter and they really do add up!



“The Challenge went really well....the idea that there was a community of others working toward this goal helped me along.”

- John, Challenge participant

ENGAGE & ACTIVATE

The Community Resilience Challenge is the perfect opportunity to engage your employees and/or customers in your sustainability initiatives and corporate social responsibility (CSR) goals. Jumpstart your volunteerism, show your customers you care and make a measurable impact this year by partnering with us to organize an event, engage your employees to participate individually, and/or to volunteer on a community project. Whichever you decide, the Challenge will catalyze your company's sustainability efforts and engage your audience both at work and at home.

THE BENEFITS

The Challenge is a great opportunity to flex your sustainability power and build your company's association with community-based activities. By participating in the Challenge you can:

- Support existing or new community engagement programs and meet employee volunteerism goals. Get your employees excited about how your company gives back to your community. The Challenge supports the intersection between work-life values in a fun and exciting way that allows you to communicate your commitment to resilience internally and externally.
- Integrate sustainability and resilience in your company's day-to-day operations while accomplishing internal sustainability goals. Get your employees to reduce their use of company materials and/or find ways to make the company's products more sustainable. This in turn might save your company money.
- Provide team-building opportunities.



- Garner greater visibility for your company through press and media surrounding the Challenge.
- Provide metrics that you can use to communicate your company's important role and impact in building a more resilient community.
- Prove your sustainability goals to your customers.
- Meet your Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) objectives by getting involved in this community-based event.

Remember that awareness, which starts in the work place, carries out into homes, communities and beyond! Behavior change started in the work place has a ripple effect!

Another way to garner some positive PR and support a community organization is to sponsor the Challenge and be featured in our promotional materials. You may also donate product that we can use through our incentive program. Either way, associating your company with this grassroots event committed to making our communities more sustainable and resilient will lead to a positive response from our community.

HOW YOUR BUSINESS CAN SUPPORT THE CHALLENGE

1. **Get this party started.** Select a point person for the Challenge and have this person email us at thechallenge@dailyacts.org. We'll work directly with your contact to answer questions and will provide them with information and resources.
2. **Dig In.** Choose your level of participation and decide what you want to accomplish this year. Options include:
 - Implementing a Challenge event
 - Getting people to register actions
 - Volunteering as part of a community project
 - Donating or discounting products and/or services as incentives for participants
 - Donating money to support the Challenge
3. **Create your Challenge Plan.** We've provided lots of ideas throughout this toolkit for you to create your plan. If you're signing up employees, one person can handle all the outreach. If you want to create your own Challenge event, you may want to convene a small planning team to figure out logistics. If you decide to implement an event, why not engage your employees/co-workers in the development of the plan including setting priorities and goals? You may get more buy-in

“ ***The Challenge was wonderful - it really got me thinking outside the box and doing things I didn't normally do.*** ”

- Angel, Challenge participant

“ ***My 15-month old son and I delivered sunflowers to the neighbors on our block in a red wagon and talked about the Challenge with them. My family also planted a big garden and are now eating the fruits.*** ”

- Beth, Challenge participant

4. **Invite everyone you know to join in.** Conduct Challenge outreach to your employees (emails, staff/manager meetings, etc.) and to your customers (fliers, postcards, electronic newsletters). If each individual inspires a co-worker, customer or neighbor to sign up, we'll accomplish our goal in no time. We'll provide you with print and digital materials as well as engagement emails to support involvement in the Challenge.
5. **Register! Stand up and be counted.** Register your business event and/or encourage employees and customers to commit to action by signing up online. Be sure your employees know to list your business when they register so we can give you an accurate assessment of your company's involvement. If you create your own project, remember to register it by May 31st to have it counted in our tally.
6. **Prepare for the Challenge.** If planning an event, you'll need to obtain materials (soil, plants, solar panels, rain barrels, etc.) and get volunteers committed to make it all happen. Make sure to set some clear goals and communicate them to your staff. If you're simply getting people signed up for the Challenge, we'll be offering incentives to encourage participation in the form of discounts and free items (like organic compost) from our sponsors. A resource list of these incentives will be provided to all registrants via email. If you are interested in providing discounts or free items, please contact us.

7. **Create some fun rewards.** Provide your employees with useful resource saving items such as reusable drink containers, personalized mason jars, shower timers, LED lightbulbs, or reusable bags. You could also create a fun inter-departmental competition with prizes, allow employees to use work time to participate in the Challenge, or even reward the employee who commits and follows through on the greatest number of actions. The more engaged your business, the more excitement is created for your employees.
8. **Share your success.** At the end of the Challenge we'll provide you with a summary of your company's participation including metrics on your impact that you can share with your employees and/or customers. For example: Who completed the most actions? What did you all accomplish together? This is the time to share all the fun and inspiring outcomes.
9. **Celebrate.** Host an awards event or organize a happy hour after your event. However you decide to celebrate, it's great to acknowledge what you were able to accomplish as a team.
10. **Tell us about your accomplishments.** We can't wait to hear all of the inspiring stories that come out of your participation. We'll send you an evaluation survey after the event and will be looking forward to hearing about your experience and how we can improve the Challenge. If you are undertaking a project, please be sure to take before and after pictures.

“ *I fully support and want to be part of this inspirational, viral effort to help people shift their habits to live more conscientiously and sustainably.*

- Janeen, Challenge participant

ACTION IDEAS

Here are some great actions that you can implement within your work place. Don't forget to register them to be counted!

1. Create a recycled-material task force to find ways that your company can utilize more recycled products in your day-to-day operation. This task force could also be responsible for figuring out ways to help employees recycle more. These changes count as actions!
2. Set up a composting system at work.
3. Eliminate disposable cups, plates, and silverware. Encourage reusable water bottles.
4. If you have space, why not plant a garden? You could give the produce grown in the garden to employees, incorporate it in your cafeteria for lunch, or donate the food grown to a food bank.
5. Offer to become a community supported agriculture (CSA) drop-off site for a local farm. CSAs are weekly shares of whatever's in season and are a great way to support local farms. Select a farm and find out what they need to make your business a drop-off site. Bonus points if you subsidize a weekly share for your employees as a wellness benefit!
6. If your bathrooms need an upgrade, install low-flow toilets, aerators on the faucets, and/or hand driers.
7. Offer sustainable items to your employees (see Incentives section for ideas).
8. Set up printers with recycled paper.
9. Swap out all incandescent bulbs to LED lights in your business. Or, give bulbs away to your employees for home use.
10. Create signage that reminds employees of how easy it is to take action: Turn off the lights! Don't let the water run! Check for leaks! Join a carpool!
11. Sheet mulch your business' lawn and plant native and/or drought tolerant plants instead.

INCENTIVES

Now that you have your plan and know how you're going to partner with Daily Acts on the Challenge, why not provide some incentives for your employees and/or customers to participate? You can write them off as a marketing expense and it will help to create a buzz at your company. Here are some ideas for inside and outside of your organization:

- Offer freebies to encourage sustainable actions like shower timers, hose nozzles, reusable mugs or water bottles. There are variety of items you can even have your business name or logo printed on for your own corporate schwag!
- Provide a discount coupon for customers who participate.
- Donate product to Daily Acts so that we can inspire participation to a greater audience.
- Create an interdepartmental competition with prizes attached such as a party to celebrate their commitment to the Challenge.
- Provide a free lunch or host a happy hour for employees who participate in the Challenge.
- Formally recognize participants via emails, at meetings, in newsletters and/or through award certificates.
- Support an activity for departments to use as a team-building exercise.
- Create rewards/prizes for participation.

GET STARTED

Ready to get going? Just email thechallenge@dailyacts.org and we'll be more than happy to get you started!

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE CHALLENGE

In 2010, Daily Acts was inspired by the Santa Monica 100 Garden Challenge, 350.org and Portland's Village Building Convergence and the first 350 Garden Challenge for Sonoma County was launched. The first year we had a goal of creating 350 gardens in a single weekend. The 350 Garden Challenge (as it was initially called) was an overwhelming success and resulted in hundreds of individuals and over 40 partner organizations registering the planting, expansion or revival of 628 gardens. In 2011, the Challenge was expanded to include home actions and a whopping 1,044 home and garden actions were registered. That year the Challenge was replicated locally by the Marin Garden Challenge, the Victory Garden Foundation and nationally through Transition U.S.

In 2012 and 2013 the number of actions grew exponentially (2,300 and 3,558 actions respectively) and other groups such as Sustainable Contra Costa successfully replicated the Challenge in other communities. In 2014, we registered 7,058 actions and changed the name to the Community Resilience Challenge to more accurately reflect the spirit of the event. In 2015, an amazing 8,363 actions were pledged. In addition, the Challenge was replicated on a regional and national level in collaboration with our partner organizations.

We expect this year to take us to a completely new level and with your help, we will!

ABOUT DAILY ACTS

Daily Acts was formed in 2002 with the simple belief that through the power of our daily actions, we each hold the potential to create a more healthy, just, reverent and resilient future. The organization started with *Ripples Journal*, a publication that sought to catalyze more inspired, engaged and sustainable living. Since that time, powered by a passionate community of supporters and partners, Daily Acts has grown into an award-winning organization and a significant force for community transformation. Daily Acts creates collaborative programming to engage municipalities, nonprofits, businesses, schools and citizens in creating a more rich and resilient future. Learn more about us by visiting our website at www.dailyacts.org.



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