



Going green earns county recognition

Alameda County officials were presented April 22 with a special award from the U.S. Green Building Council in recognition of the environmentally friendly design and construction of the Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center in San Leandro.

The 379,000-square-foot facility has been nationally recognized for incorporating solar power generation, waste reduction and efficient water usage into its design, reducing the building's environmental impact and saving taxpayer dollars. During construction of the facility, heavy equipment powered by biofuels was used to reduce carbon emissions by an estimated 200 tons of carbon dioxide.

"This honor makes Earth Day a very special day in Alameda County," County Administrator Susan Muranishi said in a statement. "The Juvenile Justice Center is a point of pride because it provides a safe and supportive environment for at-risk youth in our community. It also is a shining example of what we can do when we commit ourselves to minimizing our impact on the environment."

The juvenile facility is the first of its kind in the nation to receive the building council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Gold certification, a county news release said. David Gottfried, the council's founder, presented a plaque honoring the county at a Board of Supervisors meeting.

The facility's design and construction came as a result of the county's Green Building Ordinance, adopted in 2003, that directed all capital building projects to meet the council's LEED Silver standard.

Scott Haggerty, president of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, said such environmental policies would be how public officials would be measured in the future.

"We all know that a healthy environment is critical," he said. "Our health is linked to it, our economy depends on it and it makes Alameda County a beautiful place to live."