

JULY  
2009



VOLUME II  
ISSUE 7

## In This Issue...

<i>Around the Texas Green Network</i>	Page 1
<i>Calendar</i>	Page 2
<i>News and Announcements</i>	Page 6
<i>Feature:</i>	
<b><i>Protect our Children's Health!</i></b>	
<b><i>Relocate Pure Casting!</i></b>	
<b><i>Build Affordable Housing!</i></b>	(Also Page 6)

## Texas Green Network August Meeting at Southwest Key Center – Connecting the East Austin Business Community with Environmental Leadership

Wednesday, August 26<sup>th</sup> 5-8pm  
Southwest Key Center, 6002 Jain Lane, Austin, Texas 78721 (map & information at: [http://www.swkey.org/Contact\\_Us.html](http://www.swkey.org/Contact_Us.html) )  
R.S.V.P. at [rsvp@TexasGreenNetwork.org](mailto:rsvp@TexasGreenNetwork.org)

Texas Green Network and P.O.D.E.R. Austin bring together the east Austin business community and the sustainability leadership community for a networking event centered on supporting our local best interests.

We will showcase the issue at hand with the Pure Casting plant in east Austin and, together, draft a joint letter of local businesses to the city. Suzana Almanza of P.O.D.E.R. Austin will speak about this current and hot issue of the Pure Casting plant in east Austin.

In addition to our usual TGN open mike, attendees will have an opportunity to sign up for 6-person breakout networking groups. Participation provides a fun and intimate setting and new introductions to network and deepen our community collaboration. Sign up for a group and for the open mike when you arrive.

Please rsvp at [rsvp@TexasGreenNetwork.org](mailto:rsvp@TexasGreenNetwork.org) and join us on August 26<sup>th</sup> in bringing two important communities together. Information available at: <http://www.texasgreennetwork.org/meetings.html>.

## TGN Update and Recent Events

Hi TGN-Thusiasts,

Thank you everyone for continuing to be on the scene with Texas Green Network. We have had to step back and have a slow time with regard to events, etc. but have had great opportunity for TGN to participate in a newly developed coalition in Austin, driving some important initiatives, which I will get to in a second. Regular meetings are resuming in August (info above), after I have a chance to recover from back surgery that happens July 23<sup>rd</sup> (yikes). Thank you friends for your support during this time. I have felt it (yes, the support in addition to the back)!

As a side note, it is gratifying to us that TGN has reached a critical mass and has the legs to go on. Our need to not do meetings for a few months ends up being brief in the big scheme and we have received the message loud and clear everyone wants us to continue. Continue we will. A new website version to be rolled out soon and the TGN mailing list is about to hit 1000 individuals!

Our membership growth and further development of synergistic partnerships with other organizations continues to benefit our members and our community.



June 25<sup>th</sup> at City Hall (Photo by Ann Harkness)

On June 25<sup>th</sup>, the Texas Green Network joined Austin Eco-Network, S.O.S., Public Citizen, P.O.D.E.R and many other organizations for an "Austin Eco-Exchange" at City Hall (photo above). We had close to 300 in attendance

**JULY  
2009**



**VOLUME II  
ISSUE 7**

and TGN was noted as being a helpful contributor to the attendance (thank you folks).

All groups got a chance to set up tables and meet attendees. We had many great conversations. It was an energized opportunity for the groups to engage in some nice cross-pollination.

Each attendee was given a set of 8 green dots to use in voting on which issues are most important to them. The goal was to create a citizen's voice to the city in setting priorities for the upcoming budget cycle. Although the groups are still looking at how to interpret the data and present it to the city, also on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, the buzz is still evident and a coalition of organizations has grown out of the event. This is further empowerment for a unified community in Austin and in Texas.

The buzz around the leadership of the June 25<sup>th</sup> event is still evident and a coalition of organizations is currently developing, name to be finalized soon, with an overall objective of providing a unified voice in affecting the path of the city of Austin.

Please, please consider joining the Texas Green Network folks. Many of you have been thinking about signing up with TGN for a while. We ask not for the money but rather for the voice that you add in becoming a part of our network and for promotion of the value that you provide to the community as a resource to worthy causes yourself. Remember the dues are amazingly minimal and it is so easy to sign up - <http://www.texasgreennetwork.org/membership.html>. Thank you so much if you have signed up already.

Have you heard that Austin Energy is the latest full member of the Texas Green Network? Each new member creates a stronger network and we need your voice too!

More info will be coming soon and will include updates on TGN events for August through December. It will be great to see all of you again soon. Thank you again for your support.

*Regards,  
Reed Sternberg  
President, Texas Green Network*

## **About the Texas Green Network**

The Texas Green Network seeks to accelerate the adoption of sustainable practices in the business community. Our vision is to provide an innovative, fun and rewarding infrastructure that fosters networking and communication among businesses, organizations, our government and individuals.

We do this through a variety of channels including our online member directory and website, monthly networking meetings, forums focusing on target issues, newsletter, partner events and more.

Step up to the open mike at one of our meetings and meet a passionate bunch of leaders and thinkers that make up the TGN community for over a year and a half now.

## **Calendar**

### **Uplift Austin Volunteer Days**

UpLift and Garza worked together earlier this summer to enter the International Open Architecture Outdoor Classroom Competition -

<http://www.openarchitecturenetwork.org/projects/4945>.

The work was so rewarding and exciting that the students have decided to implement some of the designs. They have chosen to work on three aspects of the design they submitted and split into three teams to get them completed by the end of their summer semester. The projects are currently underway and the students, who are limited by the time they have in the classroom, *need your help to manifest them!* The projects include accent painting, building a pathway out of crushed granite and tumbled glass with brick edging and building an arched entranceway to an existing fence.

The volunteer days will be held at *Garza High School* on *July 19th and 26th* from 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m., with a completion and project celebration party on the 30th.

**JULY  
2009**



**VOLUME II  
ISSUE 7**

*WHERE: Garza High School - 1600 Chicon St, Austin, TX 78702-1230*

<http://www.austinschools.org/campus/garza/html/location.htm>

Come get your hands dirty, meet some new friends, eat some snacks and *help the students achieve their goals!!* If you have a pair of work gloves, or an extra shovel, please bring those along with LOTS of water. We will provide water, but working in this heat, it is always a good idea to bring extra!

*We look forward to working with you!  
~The UpLift Austin Team.*

Please R.S.V.P to Trinity White at: [info@upliftaustin.org](mailto:info@upliftaustin.org) and use "Volunteer Days" as the subject and include the date you'd like to participate with the # people that will be joining us!

## **ImagineSolar presents: Solar First Saturdays**

*August 1, 2009, 9am to 12pm – we plan to get a lot done in three hours – be ready. For the Seminar, bring a pen and notebook. You don't need to have a laptop computer.*

*Habitat Suites*

*500 East Highland Mall Boulevard  
Austin, Texas 78752*

Habitat Suites is Austin's award winning "green hotel." Ecological Consciousness in Action is Habitat Suites' commitment to creating an environmentally sustainable future for us all. Click here for more information on Habitat Suites.

The first Saturday of each month, ImagineSolar brings you seminars on hot solar topics. We are excited about our August seminar – please see details below. Our goal is to always be sure that you're going to leave our seminars with valuable, actionable insights.

"Solar First Saturday" is sponsored by the Texas Solar Energy Society (TXSES). Discounts are offered to current TXSES members. Go to [www.txses.org](http://www.txses.org) to learn about their great work and to become a member.

**August Topic: HB1937 a.k.a. "The Berkeley Plan"...  
What it is... What it will do for you... and how to implement it.**

HB1937 gives municipalities the authority to create special districts to finance energy conservation improvements like PV systems and solar water heating for individuals who then pay back the loan over a period (expected to be 20 years) as a line item added to their property taxes. This means that essentially there would be no out-of-pocket expense for the homeowner to put solar on their home. Coupled with the rebates offered in Austin and many other parts of the state, it makes for a very compelling proposition for those interested in clean renewable energy for their homes.

The bill becomes effective on September 1st, but the work has only just begun. Although the Governor has signed the bill, it is up to the grass roots efforts of each community interested in such a plan to get it implemented.

We will also discuss PV system configurations including micro-inverter approaches.

You should attend if you are a solar project decision-maker such as:

- Homeowners
- Business Owners
- Facility Managers
- Architects & Designers
- Home Builders
- Real Estate Professionals
- Financiers and Investors
- Solar Advocates & Policy Makers
- Solar and Electrical Contractors

Cost:

\$35 for members of the Texas Solar Energy Society  
\$50 for non-members

Register: [http://imaginesolar.com/?page\\_id=19](http://imaginesolar.com/?page_id=19)

**JULY  
2009**



**VOLUME II  
ISSUE 7**

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**100th anniversary of the Bureau of  
Economic Geology**

*“Water and Energy for the 21st Century”*  
Friday, August 7, 2009 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
(breakfast will be served from 7:30 a.m. until 8:30 a.m.)  
AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center on  
U.T. Austin Campus, Amphitheater 204



*THE BUREAU OF ECONOMIC GEOLOGY invites you to attend a free symposium in celebration of our 100th anniversary!*

*THE BUREAU OF ECONOMIC GEOLOGY, established in 1909, is the oldest research unit at The University of Texas at Austin, and it also functions as the Texas State Geological Survey. Our mission is to provide research related to energy and environmental issues and to perform Geological Survey functions as requested by the Texas State Legislature.*

*NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED EXPERTS will explore the issues surrounding the water–energy nexus. WHO SHOULD ATTEND: This 1-day seminar targets a broad cross section of decision makers, industry experts, academic specialists, and interested citizens.*

*YOU MUST REGISTER TO ATTEND. To register and for a complete agenda and directions to and parking for the event, visit this link:  
<http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Invitation.aspx?e=88ac8d22-3db5-4eec-....>*

*ATTENDANCE IS LIMITED TO 300 and registration must be submitted no later than July 31, 2009.*

**Green Innovation for Business –  
Austin Unconference**

Wednesday, September 16, 2009 from 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM  
Registration at <http://greeninnovators-aus.eventbrite.com>  
(The Texas Green Network joins our organizers as a co-sponsor.)

**--Connecting business innovators to improve the environment**

JULY  
2009



VOLUME II  
ISSUE 7

## Austin Unconference (con't)

Are you driving environmental innovation within your company?

- Do you have ideas for operating more efficiently?
- Are you exploring "greener" products or services?
- Are you looking for new ways to engage employees, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders in sustainability?
- Do you have insights about what motivates or blocks environmental innovations in your business?
- Do you want to redefine "business as usual" for your company and your industry?

Environmental Defense Fund < <http://innovation.edf.org/home.cfm> > and Ashoka < <http://www.ashoka.org/> > are organizing events in Washington DC, Boston, Silicon Valley and Austin - <http://greeninnovators-aus.eventbrite.com/>

These "unconferences" will bring together dozens of professionals engaged in making their organizations more efficient, sustainable and leading-edge. Our goal is to connect you with other internal innovators to share experiences and ideas, explore new trends and opportunities, and brainstorm out-of-the-box solutions to the challenges we're all facing.

Unlike traditional conferences, there will be no formal panels or speeches. We'll use an participatory, "open space" format. All participants will have an opportunity to share, discuss, network, collaborate and learn throughout the day.

What will you get?

- New ideas for saving money and making money while helping the environment
- Practical lessons about what works (and doesn't work) in trying to make a company more sustainable
- New relationships with partners and colleagues in other businesses as well as non-profits, academics, and government.
- The opportunity to share what you have learned and multiply its value

Who should attend?

- Individuals working in corporations, from small to large, directly involved in sustainability efforts

- Senior management committed to, or curious about, the opportunities that sustainability initiatives can offer
- Staff and management of non-profits working in partnership with corporations to improve environmental performance
- Staff from public sector agencies working with corporations and/or pursuing entrepreneurial innovations to take more sustainable practices to scale
- Academics and consultants creating tools, forging partnerships and supporting models of what works in business sustainability

For more information, visit the Green Innovation for Business Unconference <http://greenbusinessinnovators.wetpaint.com/> or contact Dave Witzel [dwitzel@edf.org](mailto:dwitzel@edf.org) or Odin Zackman [odin@digin.org](mailto:odin@digin.org)



## BORDER ENERGY FORUM

A vibrant and growing economy consistent with a clean and healthy environment for both sides of the border has been the vision shared by Border Energy Forum participants and organizers since the first forum was held in El Paso in 1994.

## FORO SOBRE ENERGIA DE LA FRONTERA

Una economía dinámica y creciente en consonancia con un medio ambiente limpio y sano para ambos lados de la frontera ha sido el ideal compartido por los participantes y organizadores del Foro sobre Energía de la Frontera desde su inicio en El Paso en 1994.

## BORDER ENERGY FORUM X

<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/energy/border/forum/10/index.html>  
October 23-24, 2003 Austin, TX

JULY  
2009



VOLUME II  
ISSUE 7

## News & Announcements



### **Protect our Children's Health! Relocate Pure Casting! Build Affordable Housing!**

The Pure Casting facility (2110 E. 4th Street) is a polluter of heavy metals and uses hazardous chemicals in our East Austin neighborhood. Pure Casting is located right next to Zavala Elementary School and surrounded by homes.

East Austin needs your support in protecting the health of our children and the residents that live in the area. It is crucial that we let the City Council and Pure Casting know that we will not allow children to be exposed to hazardous chemicals!

The Pure Casting facility is an ideal location to build affordable housing. It is 30,152 sq. ft. of land. The City Council should use the Affordable Housing Bond money (\$55 million) to purchase the site. This site abuts to the property owned by the City of Austin (the Brown Building on Chicon & E. 4th Street). Call Mayor Lee Leffingwell and Council members at 974-2250.

The following letter is available for you to download from the P.O.D.E.R website at <http://www.poder-texas.org/>

Please mail it in and let's keep our children safe from harmful chemicals!

\*\*\*\*\*

Mayor Leffingwell  
and Council Members  
P O Box 1088  
Austin, TX 78767-1088  
Re: Relocation of Pure Casting facility and building  
affordable housing

Dear Mayor Leffingwell and City Council Members:  
East Austin residents, neighborhood associations and community organizations have worked hard to cleanup the environment in East Austin and to protect the community's health. Since 2001, hundreds of industrial and commercial properties have been rezoned in order to complement neighborhood compatibility. Unfortunately, numerous hazardous industrial properties remain adjacent to schools and homes. As long as these facilities continue to do business, they keep their past zoning designation. Additional work is needed to relocate these facilities to an industrial park area and/or a non-residential area. Pure Casting Company operates an industrial metal castings plant at 2120 E. 4th Street, next to Zavala Elementary School and is in a residential area. Pure Casting uses and emits various chemicals into the air. Huge 18-wheeler trucks enter the neighborhood to pickup and drop off merchandise to Pure Casting. These trucks are a health and safety hazard to the children of the community. It is unacceptable, unethical and immoral for school children and families to have to breathe these emissions and tolerate constant industrial traffic and noise pollution. It's time to protect the residents of East Austin.

We have the opportunity to bring desperately needed affordable housing to East Austin and to protect the health of the residents. We request that the Austin City Council use some of the \$10.5 million Affordable Housing Bond money set aside for year 2009, to purchase the Pure Casting property. This site is ideal for affordable housing, since it is adjacent to city-owned property (the Brown Building), and surrounded by single-family homes, Zavala Elementary, and the historic Pan-American Recreation Center.

*(Please join us on August 26<sup>th</sup> for the Texas Green Network August meeting. TGN and P.O.D.E.R. join forces*

**JULY  
2009**



**VOLUME II  
ISSUE 7**

*to highlight this issue at our east Austin networking event. More information is in our calendar section on page 4.)*

## **City expands Web-based public outreach efforts**

*In an ongoing effort to increase transparency and public involvement, the City of Austin is launching several Internet-based outreach initiatives designed to take some of the mystery out of the way the City does business.*

*Beginning today, City Manager Marc Ott will be posting his thoughts on timely City issues to the City Manager's Web site at [www.cityofaustin.org/citymgr](http://www.cityofaustin.org/citymgr). These messages will be posted to the site at least once a week – more if needed – and archived appropriately. The page will include a section for residents to submit their comments and questions directly to the City Manager's Office.*

*The second initiative is Austin Notes, a subscription-based e-mail system that will allow residents to sign up for electronic updates on a range of issues. The initial categories included in the launch phase are citywide news and events, Library programs, Parks and Recreation activities, news releases, neighborhood news, AustinGo and the Austin Climate Protection Plan. Users can also choose to receive the Manager's Update automatically.*

*"Our intent with these programs is to provide more 'real-time' outreach and communications directly to our residents," Ott said. "I am confident that this is just the start of a new approach to connecting with and engaging the Austin community."*

*You can also now follow the City on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/austintexasgov](http://www.twitter.com/austintexasgov).*

*Manager's Update:*

*[www.cityofaustin.org/citymgr/cm\\_update.cfm](http://www.cityofaustin.org/citymgr/cm_update.cfm)*

*Austin Notes sign-up page:*

*[www.cityofaustin.org/news/notes](http://www.cityofaustin.org/news/notes)*

*Contact: Office of Communications and Public Information, (512) 974-2220*

## **Texas Green Network Contact Information**

*Reed Sternberg, Founder, President, Spokesperson*

*[reed@TexasGreenNetwork.org](mailto:reed@TexasGreenNetwork.org)*

*Paul Severin, Founder, Vice President of Operations*

*[paul@TexasGreenNetwork.org](mailto:paul@TexasGreenNetwork.org)*

## **Texas Green Network**

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