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New green programs recognize environmentally sustainable businesses in Los Angeles

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The Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation has implemented two new programs as part of the city's Green Business Certification Program: the Los Angeles Green Business Program and the Los Angeles Green Arts Program, as well as the continuation of the Los Angeles Green Lodging Program.

The bureau will partner with the Los Angeles Community College District to implement and run the Los Angeles Green Business Program, a voluntary program that will recognize and promote green businesses within the city, initially focusing on the office/retail, restaurant and auto repair business sectors. The program was created through a motion by Councilman Richard Alarcon.

For businesses to become green certified they will have to comply with all environmental laws and regulations and also meet program standards for conserving resources, preventing pollution and minimizing waste.

The Community College District will implement and publicize the program, provide green business program training and internship opportunities to interested students, conduct outreach to the community and help motivate businesses to become green.

With the Los Angeles Green Arts Program, the sanitation bureau will team up with the Department of Cultural Affairs and Arts: Earth Partnership (AEP). The program, which was created by a motion of former 11th District Councilman Bill Rosendhal, will certify green cultural and arts facilities throughout the city. AEP will certify facilities using its environmental standards for cultural facilities, while Cultural Affairs will promote the program and the Bureau of Sanitation will serve as coordinator.

A partnership of the sanitation bureau, the Los Angeles Tourism and Convention Board, and Green Seal Inc., the Los Angeles Green Lodging Program will certify green hotel and lodging properties in the city. Green Seal will certify facilities using its environmental standard for hotels and lodging properties; the tourism board will promote the program and the sanitation bureau will serve as coordinator.

Eight hotels have received certification, including some of the largest hotels in the city.

"One of the first actions I took when I returned to the City Council was to introduce a motion to create the Los Angeles Certified Green Business Program and I'm extremely pleased to know that it is finally coming to fruition," said Alarcon.

"The green business program is a win-win-win for businesses, the public and the environment, helping business save money on resources, allowing shoppers to choose environmentally responsible businesses and reducing our carbon-footprint and usage of resources all at the same time."

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