



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - A Green Facelift for the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium**

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September was “sustainability month,” in Santa Monica, and the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium celebrated by becoming a certified green business. The program, sponsored by a collaborative of City of Santa Monica agencies and business organizations, encourages companies to incorporate environmentally sound business practices into their everyday business.

The Aquarium went through an extensive greening checklist to qualify for the program. While the majority of items required were already in practice, the Aquarium did replace the overhead lighting fixtures and bulbs throughout the facility with smaller, more energy efficient, low-mercury fluorescent bulbs. Timed light switches in the restrooms, a more energy efficient plumbing and filtration system, and laminated, reusable work sheets used during education programs - rather than paper handouts –all received kudos for being eco-friendly, innovative measures.

With the help of consultants Eco Consulting LA, a LEED consulting firm in Los Angeles, September remodeling projects upgraded the Aquarium in general and enhanced its profile as a green business as well. The new sandy-colored material on the base of each tank is made from 100% recycled post consumer polyethylene, a plastic resin used in products and packaging like milk jugs, detergent bottles and margarine tubs. According to the product’s manufacturer, Loll Designs of Duluth, Minnesota, for every pound of weight in materials, an estimated eight recycled milk jugs are used, saving natural resources and reducing landfill waste.

New shades in the Kids’ Corner made from slats of tortoise bamboo brighten the area, and bamboo is a rapidly renewable material, which means it will replenish itself within a 10-year cycle. Recycled flooring material for the offices came from a local manufacturer, lessening the carbon footprint of delivering the product.

Another green component will be added in December, when the new flooring in the Aquarium’s classroom is installed, giving the facility a LEED credit for being 50 percent post industrial and for meeting the limits for VOC (volatile organic compounds).

Remodeling with materials that pose minimum impact on the environment provide yet another way to educate the public on the importance of “reduce, reuse, recycle.” “This is an educational space, and every surface is an opportunity to learn about the ocean and the environment,” said Aquarium director Vicki Wawerchak.

The Green Business Certification Program is a collaborative effort between the city of Santa Monica, the Chamber of Commerce, Convention & Visitors Bureau and Sustainable Works. The official “Green Certified,” window decal alerts tourists, community members, and other visitors that a business has qualified for special recognition as a green business. The certification is good for two years.

For more information about green business certification, please visit: [www.smgbc.org](http://www.smgbc.org).