

THE ORANGE COUNTY BETA REGISTER

Earth Day Festival honors 'green' businesses

By FRED SWEGLES
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Did you know the cups and spoons at Velvet Yogurt in San Clemente are 100 percent biodegradable and compostable and all the paper products are from recycled materials?

Or that Metagenics, a San Clemente-based firm, has a "Green Team" that not only has adopted Earth-friendly practices companywide but also has saved the company thousands of dollars in energy, waste-management and transportation costs?

They are among five local companies saluted for "green" practices Saturday at San Clemente's Earth Day Festival beside the pier at Parque Del Mar.

Bill Hart, who heads the San Clemente Watershed Task Force, issued Blue Water Business Awards and told why each company was selected.

Besides Metagenics and Velvet Yogurt, Hart saluted Big O Tires for recycling oil and tires and using recycled water and recycled paper for floor mats.

He cited Bemus Landscape for encouraging its clients to use less-thirsty plants when possible, minimizing chemicals, using water-efficient irrigation and recycling 95 of the green waste at the company's facility.

He honored homebuilder Standard Pacific for making sure construction debris and materials don't enter the storm-drain system.

Each year the Watershed Task Force and the city produce an Earth Day event and recognize businesses, organizations or schools for being eco-friendly. Booths promoted everything from becoming a marrow donor to turning any kind of water except salt water into drinking water.

This year's recipient of the Stephanie Dorey Blue Water Dolphin Award was Colleen Canfield, director of San Clemente's Adopt a Beach program, who coordinates dozens of volunteers who regularly clean beaches and collect data on what they find. The award is named in memory of a former San Clemente mayor for her role in protecting the coast and bringing forth the Watershed Task Force and the local Earth Day event.