



King County

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King County, green builders host 'confluence' exploring sustainable construction solutions

May 5 event helps region's jurisdictions jumpstart green-building efforts

Local governments across the region are learning that sustainable design and green building aren't just vague concepts – they are real, on-the-ground efforts that can help conserve resources and save money over time.

That was the message heard loud and clear today by participants in the GreenTools Government Confluence, hosted by King County and the Cascadia Region Green Building Council (CRGBC) in Bellevue.

Featuring multiple discussion topics with nearly three dozen renowned public and private sector presenters, the Confluence provided representatives from governments big and small with an opportunity to learn how they can incorporate green-building components into their planning efforts.

"The built environment is a key component of the fight against climate change and we are excited to learn about King County's strategy for green development," said Josie Noah, an environment and energy fellow at the Clinton Global Initiative, and a participant in the all-day event.

"We are always looking for replicable models to share with the global community and attending the Government Confluence allows us to look at one of the leaders in the field," Noah said.

In King County, cities are learning how they can shape large-scale green concepts to benefit their planning and design efforts.

"The GreenTools Government Confluence inspires the smaller cities, showing that we are not alone in our pursuit of greener communities and giving us knowledge and ideas to take home with us," said Snoqualmie Mayor Matt Larson.

"This year the City of Snoqualmie will be integrating sustainability goals and strategies into our comprehensive plan, prepare a greenhouse gas emissions inventory, and support green building and development strategies partially due to the support of GreenTools," Larson said. "The accessibility of GreenTools will help implement our sustainability strategies as we move forward toward the future."

King County has updated its nationally acclaimed GreenTools program, "Toolkit2," a Web-based network of tools, resources, examples and a peer-to-peer networking forum to support a municipality's role in making green building a priority and a reality. It is available at <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/greenbuilding/sustainable-cities.asp>.

Toolkit2 includes a "roadmap" that cities can follow to help them become sustainable, by creating a green building program and systematically setting objectives for improving the environmental performance of the built environment. The roadmap was developed in collaboration with the Sustainable Cities Roundtable, a coalition of King County jurisdictions.

The GreenTools Government Confluence is a prelude to the Living Future "unConference," which starts tonight at the Seattle Westin Hotel, and is hosted by the CRGBC.

The "unConference" begins with a keynote speech by James Howard Kunstler. Living Future brings together deep-green building professionals from all over North America and beyond for three days of meetings, networking, inspiration and education. Details are available at <http://cascadiagbc.org/living-future/10>.

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