

# CASE STUDY

August 2015



COOLCALIFORNIA BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

## Capitola Veterinary Hospital

Santa Cruz, CA

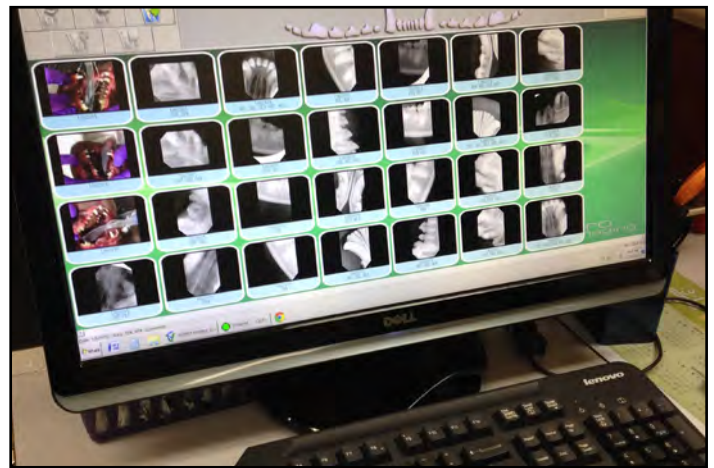
*Hospitable to clients and the environment*



*Assembly Member Mark Stone with Capitola Veterinary Hospital's River May and Senator Bill Monning*

Capitola Veterinary Hospital is a full-service veterinary medical facility that has become an ecofriendly center for all pets and clients. They have taken a number of significant actions to reduce their carbon footprint over the years. For example, they have eliminated paper use by converting to paperless medical records, invested in a paperless fax machine, and retrofitted all of their old fluorescent tubes with high efficiency LED tubes and T8 tubes. To further their resource conservation efforts, they have also converted their X-rays from film to digital, reducing the amount of chemical and hazardous material waste produced as a result. For these actions, Capitola Veterinary Hospital was presented with a CoolCalifornia Small Business Climate Leader Award in 2013.

In 2014, Capitola Veterinary Hospital continued to find opportunities to enhance their business in order to become even more eco-friendly. They partnered with Arcadia Power to purchase 100 percent clean energy for their electrical usage in the form of wind power Renewable Energy Credits, also known as RECs. They also created a clean energy incentive program for their clients, providing them with gift certificates to their



*Instead of using film, Capitola Veterinary Hospital uses digital X-rays*

## BUSINESS SNAPSHOT

Capitola Veterinary Hospital is a full-service veterinary medical facility providing medical, surgical, and dental care for patients

### Green Practices:

- Replaced all lighting with energy-efficient bulbs
- Converted x-rays from film to digital
- Installed low-flow toilets and foot pedal operated cleaning station to conserve water
- Uses ENERGY STAR® rated computer monitors and thermostat system
- Provides a program to reuse plastic pet E-collars
- Utilizes paperless options for patient records, invoices and handouts whenever possible

### Cost Savings:

- Roughly \$550 annually in paper costs
- Around \$600 a year in electricity for lighting

hospital if they sign up for clean energy, or RECs for their home. Capitola Veterinary Hospital upgraded their dated analog thermostat to a programmable ENERGY STAR thermostat, to conserve energy and gas. They ceased advertising in the yellow pages and instead began to market their business online, which proved to have a much greater return on their investment. Capitola Veterinary Hospital's cumulative efforts and achievements make them an eco-friendly model for other hospitals and small businesses to follow.



*Laminated sheets are scanned into their digital records system and then rinsed to be used again and again*

### Previous Award Winning Actions

*What actions did Capitola Veterinary Hospital take to save paper?*

Employees use a paperless fax machine and store all medical records electronically. Support staff uses and reuses laminated sheets with a dry erase pen in order to take down patient information and

communicate with veterinary staff. The information is then scanned into their electronic database. Information is provided to all patients through e-mail and printed on recycled paper when a physical copy is requested. Customers also able to sign documents electronically on an iPad. Capitola Veterinary Hospital also transformed their marketing techniques from paper-based to primarily radio and online.

*How has Capitola Veterinary Hospital saved other resources?*

Recycling bins are provided throughout the facility for employees and customers. Capitola Veterinary Hospital also purchased ENERGY STAR rated computer monitors and an ENERGY STAR rated thermostat system. To conserve water, they installed low-flow toilets and faucets. In renovating the hospital, staff had the floor remodeled using recycled linoleum flooring and walls were painted using zero volatile organic

compound (VOC) paint.

*How has Capitola Veterinary Hospital taken a community approach to green business?*

Capitola Veterinary Hospital wrote a "Commitment to Green Practices Agreement" for employees in their employee manual and strongly encourages employees to further their commitment to the environment in their daily actions— some of the hospital uniforms are even made of recycled materials! The hospital supports other green businesses by purchasing biodegradable and earth-friendly cleaning products and organic dog treats. Capitola Veterinary Hospital documents their green actions and teaches the community about green programs that they offer through their website and social media sites. They encourage pet owners to use environmentally conscious methods to care for their animals, such as using biodegradable 'poop' bags and nontoxic flea medication.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

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