

CASE STUDY

August 2015

COOLCALIFORNIA CLIMATE LEADER

Lake Merritt Dental Oakland, CA

Setting High Standards as an Eco-Friendly Dental Business



Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP Senior Advisor Jon Costantino with the staff of Lake Merritt Dental

Lake Merritt Dental is a comprehensive, eco-friendly, top rated whole oral healthcare clinic. Their dentists perform a full gamut of dental services from preventive hygiene care to complex implant surgeries, while also working to conserve energy, reduce water, and manage waste.

In evaluating their business operations, Lake Merritt Dental utilized PG&E's online portal to monitor their energy practices and create goals to reduce usage levels. They enrolled in PG&E's SmartAC Program, a technology initiative that automatically cycles minimal temperature increases with participating air conditioners during energy peak demands. This helps prevent power interruptions for PG&E customers. Lake Merritt Dental only uses ENERGY STAR appliances and is changing their lights to LED once the current light's lifespan has ended. They create monthly, quarterly, and annual goals to bring down the office's energy consumption, and have so far seen a very steady decrease.

Lake Merritt Dental also received a 2014 WaterSmart Business Certification from East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD). This certification process allows participating businesses to learn how to reduce operating costs and how to obtain rebates for water efficiency improvements.



At Lake Merritt Dental, food compostables, garbage, and recyclables are sorted into separate containers

BUSINESS SNAPSHOT

Lake Merritt Dental offers preventive oral hygiene care and comprehensive dental services

Green Practices:

- Sorts and recycles paper, plastic and glass recyclables
- Works with Recology East Bay to compost food waste from the patient waiting room and employee kitchen break room
- Replaced disposable products with reusable items
- Exclusively buys green cleaning products
- Creates quarterly written initiatives that the office "green team" is responsible for implementing
- Uses energy efficient equipment

Recognized Affiliations and Certifications:

- Sustainable Business Alliance – Oakland Grown Program Participant
- Bay Area Green Business Program – Certification
- East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) – WaterSmart Certification
- Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) – SmartAC Program Participant
- Oakland Indie Awards – 2014 Finalist for Pillar Category
- Chinook Book – Featured Sustainable Business

EBMUD staff completed a water use assessment, recommended cost-effective water-saving measures, and provided resources for water-efficiency upgrades. Lake Merritt Dental is currently determining water saving measures to implement at their office.

One of Lake Merritt Dental's biggest achievement is that currently 70 percent of their products are eco-friendly! This is a difficult achievement to obtain considering that medical and healthcare equipment need to meet high standards of cleanliness. In addition to this success, they look for ways to incorporate green standards into both dental assisting and office administrative assignments. For example, Lake Merritt Dental uses the latest digital equipment, such as the 3D digital panoramic x-ray, to reduce paper waste.



Lake Merritt Dental encourages patients to bike to the office and to use their new indoor bike parking room

Furthermore, Lake Merritt Dental is proud to say that 90 percent of their employees take public transportation, bike, or walk to work each day. The business incentivizes biking and walking through a partnership with the local nonprofit, Walk Oakland Bike Oakland. They offer bike parking and monthly donations to the nonprofit (Walk Oakland Bike Oakland) based on the volume of walkers/bikers to their office.



Lake Merritt Dental considers their whole oral healthcare and eco-friendly practices as setting the standard in the heart of Oakland, and for the larger dental industry. They work with many vendors to discuss the green standards their business is looking to implement. This helps set high expectations, and can in turn help vendors develop better practices for other businesses that they serve. It also creates healthy competition for other dental offices in the area because Lake Merritt Dental proves that their business can be very environmentally conscious and cost effective in an untraditional eco-friendly industry. Setting an example for others to follow, Lake Merritt Dental won the 2015 National Green Leader Award from the American Association of Dental Office Managers.

"Going green for us means digital. When everything's digital, you're adapting to the modern age and you're making things more efficient. So it ends up saving us a lot of money. A lot of people think it's a lot to take on all these steps, but it's actually well worth it in the end."

-Paulina Song, Executive Administrator, Lake Merritt Dental

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